



Developing the INTERNISA network of synergies to increase the number of digitally skilled women employed in the ENI CBC MED territories via matching demand and supply in the labour market

Output 3.4 Recommendations report for advancing the participation of young women in the labour market



Project Summary

Title	Developing the INTERNISA network of synergies to increase the number of digitally skilled women employed in the ENI CBC MED territories via matching demand and supply in the labour market
Acronym	INTERNISA
Duration (months)	30
Thematic Objectives	A.3 – Promotion of social inclusion and fight against poverty (Promote economic and social development)
Priority	A.3.1 – Provide young people, especially those belonging to the NEETS and women, with marketable skills
Target EU Partners/Countries	5
MPC Partners/Countries	4
Associate partners	1
Geographic Coverage	Greece, Jordan, Spain, Spain, Greece, Tunisia, Lebanon Palestine, Italy
Budget	3.860.430.36 €



Contents

Introduction	11
Methodology	14
Desk research design and findings.....	15
Quantitative research design	17
Survey with managers	17
Survey with women	20
Data analysis	23
Qualitative research design.....	24
Quantitative research: <i>Soft skills supply</i>	27
Soft skills supply: <i>Greece</i>	27
Demographics	27
Soft skills	30
Soft skills supply: <i>Italy</i>	35
Demographics	35
Soft skills	38
Soft skills supply: <i>Lebanon</i>	43
Demographics	43
Soft skills	47
Soft skills supply: <i>Spain</i>	52
Demographics	52
Soft skills	53
Soft skills supply: <i>Palestine</i>	59
Demographics	59
Soft skills	61
Soft skills supply: <i>Jordan</i>	66
Demographics	66
Soft skills	68
Soft skills women in total	73
Personal skills: <i>All countries</i>	74
Social skills: <i>All countries</i>	75
Methodological skills: <i>All countries</i>	76
Quantitative Research: <i>Soft skills demand</i>	78
Soft skills demand: <i>Greece</i>	78

Demographics	78
Personal skills	81
Social skills	81
Methodological skills	82
Soft skills demand: Italy	85
Demographics	85
Personal skills	87
Social skills	88
Methodological skills	89
Soft skills demand: Lebanon.....	91
Demographics	91
Personal skills	93
Social skills	94
Methodological skills	95
Soft skills demand: Spain	97
Demographics	97
Personal skills	99
Social skills	100
Methodological skills	101
Soft skills demand: Palestine.....	103
Demographics	103
Personal skills	105
Social skills	105
Methodological skills	106
Soft skills demand: Jordan	108
Demographics	108
Personal skills	111
Social skills	111
Methodological skills	112
Soft skills managers in total	114
Personal skills: <i>All countries</i>	115
Social skills: All countries	116
Methodological skills: All countries	116
Qualitative research: Data analysis and findings.....	119
Focus groups with women.....	119
Focus group with women: <i>Greece</i>	119

Focus groups with women: <i>Lebanon</i>	120
Focus group with women: <i>Palestine</i>	121
Focus groups with women: <i>Spain</i>	122
Soft skills mapping based on focus groups with women	123
Focus groups with managers.....	125
Focus group with managers: <i>Greece</i>	125
Focus groups with managers: <i>Lebanon</i>	126
Focus group with managers: <i>Palestine</i>	127
Focus group with managers: <i>Spain</i>	128
Soft skills mapping based on focus groups with managers	129
Recommendations advancing the participation of young women in the labour market	130
Soft skills catalogue.....	132
References	135
Annexes	136
Annex 1: Questionnaire addressed to companies.....	136
Annex 2: Questionnaire addressed to women	141
Annex 3: Focus group guide with women.....	146
Annex 4: Focus group guide with managers.....	149

Tables and figures

Table 1: Soft skills catalogue	16
--------------------------------------	----



Table 2: Skills and corresponding items used in the questionnaire addressed to managers.	18
Table 3: Skills and corresponding items used in the questionnaire addressed to women	21
Table 4: Focus group thematic axes and sub-themes	24
Table 5: Personal skills ranking for women: Greece	31
Table 6: Social skills ranking for women: Greece	32
Table 7: Methodological skills ranking for women: Greece	34
Table 8: Personal skills ranking for women: Italy	39
Table 9: Social skills ranking for women: Italy	40
Table 10: Methodological skills ranking for women: Italy	42
Table 11: Personal skills ranking for women: Lebanon	47
Table 12: Social skills ranking for women: Lebanon	49
Table 13: Methodological skills ranking for women: Lebanon	50
Table 14: Personal skills ranking for women: Spain	54
Table 15: Social skills ranking for women: Spain	56
Table 16: Methodological skills ranking for women: Spain	57
Table 17: Personal skills ranking for women: Palestine	62
Table 18: Social skills ranking for women: Palestine	63
Table 19: Top ranking methodological skills for women: Palestine	64
Table 20: Personal skills ranking for women: Jordan	68
Table 21: Social skills ranking for women: Jordan	70
Table 22: Methodological skills ranking for women: Jordan	71
Table 23: Soft skills supply ranking in total	73
Table 24: Personal skills ranking for managers: Greece	81
Table 25: Social skills ranking for managers: Greece	82
Table 26: Methodological skills ranking for managers: Greece	83
Table 27: Personal skills ranking for managers: Italy	88
Table 28: Social skills ranking for managers: Italy	88
Table 29: Methodological skills ranking for managers: Italy	89
Table 32: Personal skills ranking for managers: Lebanon	94
Table 33: Social skills ranking for managers: Lebanon	95
Table 34: Methodological skills ranking for managers: Lebanon	95
Table 35: Personal skills ranking for managers: Spain	100
Table 36: Social skills ranking for managers: Spain	101
Table 37: Methodological skills ranking for managers: Spain	102
Table 38: Personal skills ranking for managers: Palestine	105
Table 39: Social skills ranking for managers: Palestine	106
Table 40: Methodological skills ranking for managers: Palestine	107
Table 41: Personal skills ranking for managers: Jordan	111
Table 42: Social skills ranking for managers: Jordan	112
Table 43: Methodological skills ranking for managers: Jordan	113
Table 44: Soft skills demand ranking total	114
Table 45: Soft skills mapping based on focus groups with women by country	123
Table 46: Soft skills based on focus groups with women by soft skills category	123
Table 47: Soft skills mapping based on focus groups with managers by country	129
Table 48: Soft skills based on focus groups with managers by soft skills category	129

Table 49: Highest divergency in mean values between managers and women.....	130
Table 50: Highest ranking soft skills for managers and women.....	130
Figure 1: Mixed methods approach	14
Figure 2: Age group	27
Figure 3: Educational Level.....	28
Figure 4: Household size	28
Figure 5: Average household income.....	29
Figure 6: Employment status.....	29
Figure 7: Position in the company.....	30
Figure 8: Economic activity of the company	30
Figure 9: Personal skills assessment: Greece:.....	31
Figure 10: Social skills assessment: Greece.....	32
Figure 11: Methodological skills assessment: Greece.....	33
Figure 12: Age group	35
Figure 13: Educational level	35
Figure 14: Household size	36
Figure 15: Average household income.....	36
Figure 16: Employment status	37
Figure 17: Position in the company.....	37
Figure 18: Economic activity of the company	38
Figure 19: Personal skills assessment: Italy.....	38
Figure 20: Social skills assessment: Italy	40
Figure 21: Methodological skills assessment: Italy	41
Figure 22: Age group	43
Figure 23: Educational level	43
Figure 24: Household size	44
Figure 25: Household average income.....	45
Figure 26: Employment status	45
Figure 27: Position in the company.....	46
Figure 28: Economic activity of the company	46
Figure 29: Personal skills assessment: Lebanon.....	47
Figure 30: Social skills assessment: Lebanon	48
Figure 31: Methodological skills assessment: Lebanon	50
Figure 32: Age.....	52
Figure 33: Educational level	52
Figure 34: Economic activity of the company	53
Figure 35: Position in the company.....	53
Figure 36: Personal skills assessment: Spain.....	54
Figure 37: Social skills assessment: Spain	55
Figure 38: Methodological skills assessment: Spain	57
Figure 39: Age.....	59
Figure 40: Educational level	59
Figure 41: Employment status	59
Figure 42: Economic activity of the company	60

Figure 43: Personal skills assessment: Palestine	61
Figure 44: Social skills assessment: Palestine.....	62
Figure 45: Methodological skills assessment: Palestine	64
Figure 46: Age.....	66
Figure 47: Educational level	66
Figure 48: Employment status	67
Figure 49: Personal skills assessment: Jordan.....	68
Figure 50: Social skills assessment: Jordan	70
Figure 51: Methodological skills assessment: Jordan	71
Figure 52: Personal skills mean value for all countries	75
Figure 53: Social skills mean value for all countries.....	75
Figure 54: Methodological skills mean value for all countries.....	76
Figure 55: Gender	78
Figure 56: Age.....	78
Figure 57: Educational level	79
Figure 58: Company economic field.....	79
Figure 59: Position in the company.....	80
Figure 60: Personal skills mean value for Managers: Greece	81
Figure 61: Social skills mean value for Managers: Greece	82
Figure 62: Methodological skills mean value for Managers: Greece	83
Figure 63: Gender.....	85
Figure 64: Age category.....	85
Figure 65: Educational level	86
Figure 66: Economic activity of the company	86
Figure 67: Position in the company.....	86
Figure 68: Personal skills mean value for Managers: Italy	87
Figure 69: Social skills mean value for Managers: Italy.....	88
Figure 70: Methodological skills mean value for Managers: Italy.....	89
Figure 71: Gender.....	91
Figure 72: Age category.....	91
Figure 73: Economic activity of the company	92
Figure 74: Position in the company.....	93
Figure 75: Personal skills mean value for Managers: Lebanon	93
Figure 76: Social skills mean value for Managers: Lebanon.....	94
Figure 77: Ranking of items evaluating importance of methodological skills for Managers: Lebanon	95
Figure 78: Age group	97
Figure 79: Gender.....	97
Figure 80: Educational level	98
Figure 81: Economic activity of the company	98
Figure 82: Ranking of items evaluating importance of personal skills for Managers: Spain	99
Figure 83: Ranking of items evaluating importance of social skills for managers: Spain.....	100
Figure 84: Ranking of items evaluating importance of Methodological skills for Managers: Spain ...	101
Figure 85: Gender.....	103
Figure 86: Age category.....	103
Figure 87: Educational level	103

Figure 88: Economic activity of the company	104
Figure 89: Position in the company	104
Figure 90: Ranking of items evaluating importance of Personal skills for Managers: Palestine.....	105
Figure 91: Ranking of items evaluating importance of Social skills for Managers: Palestine	106
Figure 92: Ranking of items evaluating importance of Methodological skills for Managers: Palestine	107
Figure 93: Gender	108
Figure 94: Age category.....	108
Figure 95: Educational level	109
Figure 96: Sector of economic activity	109
Figure 97: Position in the company.....	109
Figure 98: Ranking of items evaluating importance of Personal skills for Managers: Jordan	111
Figure 99: Ranking of items evaluating importance of Social skills for Managers: Jordan	112
Figure 100: Ranking of items evaluating importance of Methodological skills for Managers: Jordan	113
Figure 101: Personal skills ranking in total.....	115
Figure 102: Social skills ranking in all countries	116
Figure 103: Methodological skills ranking for all countries based on managers evaluation	117

Introduction

The present document reports on the activities and the outcomes carried out as part of the project “**Developing the INTERNISA network of synergies to increase the number of digitally skilled women employed in the ENI CBC MED territories via matching demand and supply in the labor market**”. The Project is funded by EU and ENI CBC MED Program and implemented in seven countries (Greece, Jordan, Spain, Italy, Palestine, Lebanon, Tunisia) by the Region of Central Macedonia (Lead partner), ActionAid Hellas, Al Balqa Applied University, Catalan Youth Agency of the Regional Government of Catalonia, Andalusia Federation of Municipalities and Provinces, SQLI Services, Chamber of Commerce Industry and Agriculture of Beirut and Mount Lebanon, Arrezzo Innovazione, and ActionAid Palestine.

The main aim of the **INTERNISA** is to bridge the digital gender gap through interventions in labor demand & supply and, hence, reduce unemployment of women in the ENI area offering them innovative employment services. To achieve this aim, several activities have been designed to be carried out in a time period of 30 months. The activities reported here were implemented as part of WP3: *Mapping and Strategy Development* taking place at an early stage of the project to:

- Identify the needs (women needs, relevant policies, -good digitalisation practices and business models, providing soft skills to women).
- Develop practices and tools (a code of conduct promoting friendly to women HR practices)
- Implement a Strategy and Action Plan

More particularly, **Output 3.4 Recommendations report for advancing the participation of young women in the labour market** consists of a report including a catalogue and analytic description of the soft skills (e.g. communication and leadership skills) women need to overcome structural and cultural problems in ENI CBC MED territories and (re)enter the labour market. The catalogue and description of soft skills will serve as the basis for the development of tailor-made outputs in subsequent WPs that can lead to effective match-making between labour demand and supply.

The present report includes the analysis and outcomes of research activities carried out in order to form the catalogue of the soft skills. More specifically, the report is structured as follows:

Chapter 1: Methodology. The first chapter presents the methodology design of the research activities. The objectives the different research methods and the tools designed to achieve those objectives are presented in this chapter.

Chapter 2: Desk research on soft skills. Chapter 2 reports on the outcomes of the desk research on soft skills. A catalogue with the identified soft skills is provided in this chapter to serve as the basis for the design of research tools.

Chapter 3: Quantitative research: Soft skills supply. This chapter reports on the findings of the quantitative research activity conducted with women to identify the soft skills in supplied by the main target group of the project. The findings are presented first by country and then in total.

Chapter 4: Quantitative research: Soft skills demand. Here the findings from quantitative research activities carried out with managers to identify the soft skills demand for the integration of women in the labour market are presented. As in the previous chapter here as well, findings are presented first by country and then in total.

Chapter 5. Qualitative research findings. The fifth chapter reports on the qualitative research activities carried out to enrich and triangulate quantitative findings.

Chapter 6: Recommendations advancing the participation of young women in the labour market. The final chapter includes the catalogue of soft skills formed based on the outcomes of the research activities is presented together with a description of the skills women need to overcome structural and cultural problems and (re)enter the labour market.





Methodology



Methodology

Output 3.4 Recommendations report for advancing the participation of young women in the labour market aims at identifying the soft skills in supply and demand across countries in the ENI CBC MED territories and providing a catalogue and analytic description of the soft skills (e.g. communication and leadership skills) women need to overcome structural and cultural problems in ENI CBC MED territories and (re)enter the labour market. This catalogue will inform future activities aiming to bridge the existing gap between soft skills supply and demand.

To acquire information on the current soft skills supply and demand from all participating countries a two-stage research methodology, including a preliminary stage and the main stage, was designed. The *preliminary or preparatory stage* involved a desk research on the current skills identified internationally as important, especially in the four economic sectors of interest, and at national level was designed to be carried out. The outcome, a catalogue of soft skills, would be used to design the research tools.

The main research stage involved the design and implementation of the research activities. A mixed research method including both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection was selected. Mixed methods have been extensively used to overcome issues of bias as well as weaknesses of research methods (Creswell, 2009) and refer to a combination and integration of qualitative and quantitative research and data in a study. Different mixed methods designs are available to researchers. Aiming first to overcome weaknesses of research methods and gain a better understanding of the issue at hand, the convergent mixed method is employed. The convergent mixed method involves a merging of quantitative and qualitative data, thus differentiating from other methods in that research activities are implemented simultaneously. In addition, employing mixed methods enables triangulation and ensures validity of the research findings.

Figure 1: Mixed methods approach



Therefore, a quantitative survey was designed to examine the catalogue formed during the preliminary stage of the research and to gather bulk information on soft skills across the countries. At the same time qualitative research activities were designed to enrich and enable interpretation of the quantitative data. According to CEDEFOP¹ qualitative types of data, can help to fill in the gaps where quantitative information is not available; they can also explain the context and add value to the numbers. Can be focused specifically on skills, can bring understanding of the underlying causes and processes. (p. 38, CEDEFOP) Qualitative research is also very helpful when we want subjects to become committed to the project and participate in the next steps, e.g. trainings and pilot.

Since the design of the mixed methods research activities were based on the findings of the desk research, findings of this preliminary stage of research is presented.

Desk research design and findings

The first step to design the methodology was to draft a catalogue of the soft skills at international and national level. The catalogue would be then used at the second and main stage of the research to design the research tools. To draft the catalogue a mapping of the soft skills was undertaken through a review of the existing literature and reports.

The review of soft skills in the area of the European Union and the ENI CBC MED territories involved a search and review of international and national reports regarding supply and demand of skills in the four economic sectors of interest (i.e. agri-food, textiles, finance and tourism). A number of reports were reviewed, especially reports produced by international organizations conducting large-scale research activities, such CEDEFOP and ESCO, as well as national statistical offices and employment services (e.g. OAED, General Secretariat for Lifelong Learning (<http://www.gsae.edu.gr/en/>), KANEP-GSEE (<https://www.kanep-gsee.gr/>)).

As core sources of information for soft skills were the European Skills, Competences and Qualifications is an important source of information on soft skills, both in supply and demand. Providing a specific taxonomy, which is adopted by many countries-members of the European Union, ESCO informed largely the catalogue of soft skills women need to overcome structural and cultural problems. ESCO data were reviewed together with information collected from CEDEFOP. Concerned significantly with bridging the gap between the labour market and the skills offered, CEDEFOP provides data on skills mismatch in different countries and future projections in skills demand. National reports provided information on particular EU countries, namely Greece, Italy and Spain. International Labour Organization's report provided information and data on soft skills in Lebanon and Jordan.

According to the literature review, skills together with knowledge and attitudes are fundamental pillars of competences needed for individuals for personal fulfilment, development, employability, social inclusion etc. (Council Recommendation, 2018). Skills are distinguished in hard and soft skills. Hard skills are job-specific and closely connected to technical knowledge whereas soft skills are closely connected with personal attributes and are transversal.

Soft skills and their significance in employment has been acknowledged the past decades, with international and national institutions around Europe and the Mediterranean focusing on advancing soft skills. According to the International Center for Technical and Vocational Education and Training of the UN, soft skills are *“a set of intangible personal qualities,*

¹ Hana Řihová (2016) Using labor market information, Guide to anticipating and matching skills and jobs. Volume 1. CEDEFOP, International Labour Office, European Training Foundation

traits, attributes, habits and attitudes that can be used in many different types of jobs”². The transversal character of soft skills render them necessary for different economic sectors, since, according to CEDEFOP, “underpin successful participation in work”.

The taxonomy of soft skills varies significantly, however, a well-established and commonly used is the one proposed by CEDEFOP distinguishes soft skills in **personal, social and methodological skills**³.

Personal skills are related to individual attributes, values and beliefs. These skills do not depend on others, unlike social skills which involve interpersonal contact, cooperation and communication. The last group of skills, the methodological skills are related to analytical thinking and management. The skills included in these categories are important regardless of the economic sector.

Table 1: Soft skills catalogue

Personal	Social	Methodological
Adaptability	Collaboration	Management
Attention to detail	Communication	Allocating resources
Autonomy	Conflict management and resolution	Analysis and evaluation
Cognition	Conversation skills	Assign tasks
Commitment	Customer/User orientation	Constructive criticism
Concentration	Emotional intelligence	Coordinating activities of groups and individuals
Continuous improvement	Influence	Risk assessment
Creativity/Innovation	Interpersonal communication	Decision making
Cultural adaptability	Negotiation	Developing objectives and strategies
Endurance	Networking	Gather and evaluate information
Learning skills	Persuasion	critical thinking
Life-balance	Public speaking	Leadership
Literacy	Service and attend	Mentoring
Positive attitude	Teamwork	Motivate and inspiring others
Professional ethics	Working across cultures	Multitasking
Reading	Active listening	Organising activities
Responsibility	Oral communication	Planning
Results orientation		Prioritization
Self-awareness		Proactivity
Self-confidence		Problem solving
Tolerance to stress (work under pressure)		Supervising others
Punctuality		Teambuilding
		Time management
		Vision setting

² TVETipedia Glossary, <https://unevoc.unesco.org/home/TVETipedia+Glossary/filt=all/id=602>

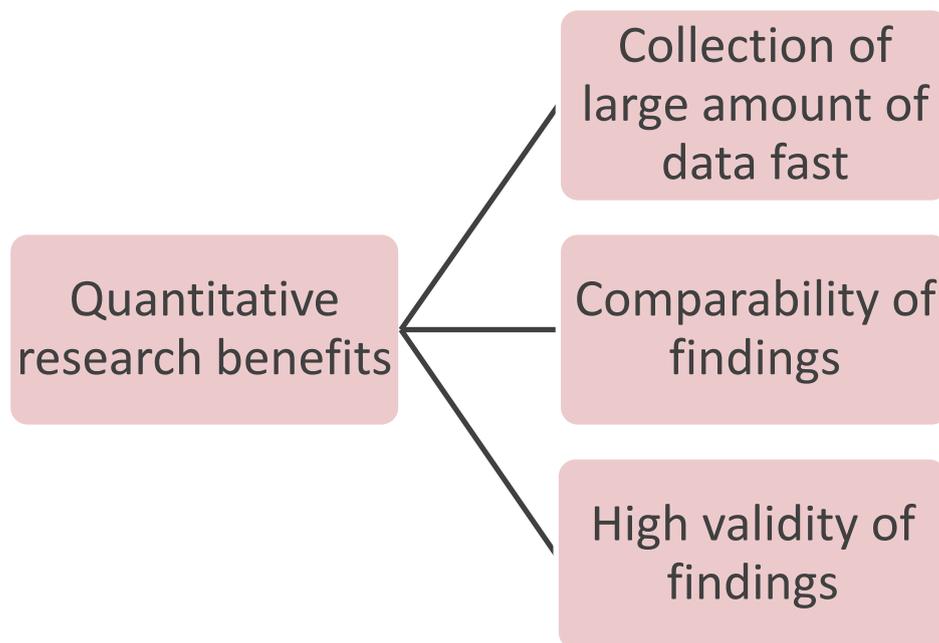
³ <https://skillspanorama.cedefop.europa.eu/en/glossary/s>

The skills included in this catalogue informed the design of the quantitative and qualitative research tools which were then used to collect data across the countries participating in the study. In the next sections, the quantitative and qualitative methodologies are presented.

Quantitative research design

A quantitative research was designed in order to examine the skills in supply and demand in each of the countries participating in the study and in total. This research activity was part of a larger study aiming to explore several issues, such as digital skills and friendly to women HR. This means that the actions taken to achieve the objectives of the specific Output were integrated in the context of the larger study conducted as part of WP3.

Carrying out a quantitative survey enabled collecting large amount of data from all countries in short time. In addition, by using the same data collection tools in all countries, findings of the surveys carried out in each country would be comparable.



To examine both the supply and demand of the soft skills identified in the previous – preliminary stage of the research, two surveys had to be designed:

1. A survey with managers or owners or human resources employees again from the four sectors of interest and
2. A survey with women employed or actively searching for a job in one of the four sectors of interest.

Survey with managers

The objective of the specific survey was to identify the soft skills in demand in the sectors of agri-food, textiles, finance and tourism. To do that the following activities were carried out:

i. Research tool design

A questionnaire was designed based on the soft skills identified during the previous stage of the research.

The questionnaire was organized in four sections:

Consent form:

The first section of the questionnaire stated the terms of the research, the confidentiality

clauses and GDPR regulations. To continue to the next section, participants had to agree with the terms.

Demographics

The second section included 8 questions aiming to gather demographic data, such as age, gender, nationality, highest level of education and economic activity of the company. The questions were multiple choice.

Training and recruitment

The third section included two sets of questions: the first included 7 questions regarding employees upskilling actions taken from the part of the company. The second 10 questions regarding recruitment practices. All questions were formulated as YES or NO.

Soft skills

This section included items evaluating the importance of skills for managers. 10 items referred to personal skills, 7 to social skills and 14 to methodological. The questions measured importance of each soft skill for managers based on a 5-scale Likert scale. At the end of the questionnaire, an open-ended question provided the opportunity to managers to record any other skill they considered as important. This way, the study ensured that all information is collected and recorded.

The questionnaire is attached to this document in Annex 1.

The items formulated and the skills to which they correspond are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Skills and corresponding items used in the questionnaire addressed to managers

Skill category	Skill	Item
Personal skills	Public speaking	Public speaking and presenting
	Autonomy	Working autonomously
	Self-awareness	Being aware of personal strengths and weaknesses
	Balancing work and social life	Balancing work and social life
	Continuous learning	Learning new things
	Responsibility	Taking responsibility for mistakes
	Literacy	Literacy
	Positive attitude	Keep positive attitude
	Adaptability	Adaptability to new conditions
Social skills	Tolerance to stress/ Endurance	Being able to work under pressure
	Negotiation	Negotiating for the best solution
	Networking	Growing the company's network
	Collaboration	Sharing information and knowledge to achieve common goals
	Cultural adaptability	Working with people from different background
	Conversation skills	Constructive dialogue and exchange of ideas
	Customer/User orientation/ Service and attend	Attending to the needs of customers
Communication	Communicate clearly and efficiently	
Methodological	Supervising others	Monitoring the performance of others

skills	Planning	Planning activities
	Problem solving	Developing solutions to problems
	Time management	Managing time effectively to complete tasks
	Teambuilding	Teambuilding
	Prioritization	Prioritizing tasks under circumstances of pressure
	Multitasking	Able to work on multiple projects and tasks
	Mentoring	Imparting knowledge to new employees
	Vision setting	Setting goals and plan their attainment
	Gather and evaluate information	Collecting and evaluating data
	Leadership	Coordinating activities of groups and individuals
	Motivate and inspiring others	Inspiring others to commit to the values and goals of the company
	Proactivity	Take proactive actions to avoid and overcome risks
	Assign tasks	Assigning tasks to others

ii. Questionnaire 's integration to the research tool of the WP3 study
The questionnaire was reviewed and after the suggested changes it was integrated in the research tool designed to explore issues related to other Outputs of WP3.

iii. Development of online tool
Even though initially it was foreseen to use an online platform designed by SQUALI partner in Tunisia, difficulties in managing the platform led to the design of separate tools in each country. In most cases, the questionnaire was translated in the local language (Greek, Italian, Spanish and Arabic). Afterwards an online tool was used to create the e-questionnaire. Most partners used Survey Monkey, whereas one used Google Forms. After the development of the online questionnaire the tool was ready for use.

iv. Sampling
Taking into consideration that the goal of the research activity was to identify the soft skills demands by managers, the criteria for participation in the survey were the following:

- The company should be active in one of the four economic sectors
- The company should be private
- The company could be small, medium or large.

Note: Initially the size of the company was decided to be small and medium. However, taking into consideration that small businesses might lack knowledge or information, the group was widened to include also large companies.

As far as the sample size is concerned, the initial number for each country and sector was calculated according to the latest numbers available from the government. However, as it is also mentioned in the next section, this posed a grave challenge across the participating countries, because these numbers did not correspond to the reality, with many companies

having being closed down.

v. Collecting data

To disseminate the questionnaire and gather the necessary data, a mapping of the companies in all four sectors was carried out. Every partner used their own contact lists and strategies, usually involving contacting Chambers of Commerce to acquire the companies' contacts. The initial contact by email was followed by a contact by phone to ensure participation in the survey.

However, most of the partners came across the same challenges when trying to gather data. The list of companies provided by official institutions were not up-to-date. As a result, many companies were closed.

CHALLENGES

COMPANIES DID NOT EXISTING
COMPANIES DID NOT HAVE EMAILS
COMPANIES' EMAILS WERE WRONG

In addition, many of the companies listed in the chambers did not have an email to send the online questionnaire or the emails were wrong. This indicates low digitalization of the state institutions and of the companies themselves.

To boost participation in the survey and overcome the initial problems, associations related to the four economic sectors were contacted. In addition, press releases were published on webpages informing about the survey and inviting people to participate.

Survey with women

The objective of this research activity was to identify the skills supplied by women in the sectors of agri-food, textiles, finance and tourism. To achieve this objective the following actions were taken:

i. Research tool design

A questionnaire was designed based on the soft skills identified during the previous stage of the research.

The questionnaire was organized in four sections:

Consent form

The first section of the questionnaire stated the terms of the research, the confidentiality clauses and GDPR regulations. To continue to the next section, participants had to agree with the terms.

Demographics

The second section included 5 questions regarding demographic data, including gender, age, educational level, and nationality. The questions were formulated as multiple choice.

Current status

The third section of the questionnaire aimed at examining the current situation of the women participants, main their employment and training status. 4 separate questions of YES or NO were included as well as a question with 5 YES or NO follow-up questions for which respond was conditional.

Soft skills

This section included items regarding soft skills. 14 items referred to personal skills, 15 to

social skills and 19 to methodological. Some of the items cross-checked the validity of the responses. The questions were formulated as a self-assessment test for which women-participants.

The questions measured the agreement of women with each of the items based on a 5-scale Likert scale, thus providing with information on the level of a skill women considered as possessing. At the end of the questionnaire, an open-ended question provided the opportunity to women to record any other skill they considered as having or as important. This way, the study ensured that all information is collected and recorded.

The skills and items through which they were assessed are presented in the following table.

Table 3: Skills and corresponding items used in the questionnaire addressed to women

Skill category	Skill	Indicators	
Personal skills	Attention to detail	I complete each task as flawlessly as possible	
	Commitment	I always finish what I have started	
	Concentration	When I do something, my mind wanders	
	Continuous improvement	I accept feedback without getting defensive	
	Continuous learning	I like to learn new things	
	Life-balance	I spend time with my friends and family every week	
	Professional ethics	When I do something wrong, I lie	
	Responsibility	I take responsibility for my mistakes	
	Self-awareness	I know what my weaknesses are	
	Self-confidence	I can complete the tasks I undertake	
	Tolerance to stress/ Endurance	Stress keeps me from doing things	
	Punctuality	I am always late	
	Positive attitude	I always keep a positive attitude	
Social skills	Critical thinking	I cross check data I try to see different perspectives	
	Persuasion	In conversation I try to make people agree with me	
	Oral communication	I ask questions to acquire information	
	Public speaking	Speaking in front of people is stressful	
	Influence	People agree with my ideas	
	Conflict management		When people fight, I prefer to stay out of it
			I can find common ground in a dispute
	Emotions management	When people are angry, I can calm them down	
	Service and attend	I can provide people with what they need	
	Networking	I make good impression to others People trust me	

Methodological skills	Emotional intelligence	It is easy for me to understand how people feel
	Non-verbal communication	I am aware of how my tone of voice may affect others
	Teamwork	Working with others is creative
	Customer/User orientation/Service and attend	I like helping others
	Communication/Conversation skills	People understand what I am saying
	Collaboration	I prefer to work alone
	Cultural adaptability	I can work with people from different background
	Time management	I rarely complete all the tasks on my daily to do list
	Planning	I often push back deadlines on things I have to do I like planning my day
	Decision-making	I am surprised by the consequences of my decisions
	Prioritization	When I have many things to do, I get confused
	Multitasking	I like doing one thing at a time
	Leadership	I feel confident that others will accept my ideas and decisions I inspire others
	Coordinate teams	I believe that if you want a job done well, you should do it yourself
	Organization	I always have a notepad with me
	Motivate and inspire others	I speak with enthusiasm
	Gather and evaluate data	I can understand easily if a source of information is valid I can collect information on a topic easily
	Developing objectives and strategies	I can identify opportunities for action
	Creativity/innovation	I have artistic abilities
	Supervising others	I can recognize the strengths and weaknesses of other people I always monitor the progress of a task
	Proactivity	I can identify the risks in a plan
	Problem-solving	I weigh the pros and cons of different solutions when trying to solve a problem
	Teambuilding	I can break the ice among people who do not know each other
	Mentoring	People come to me for advice

- ii. Questionnaire 's integration to the research tool of the WP3 study

The questionnaire was reviewed and after the suggested changes it was integrated in the research tool designed to explore issues related to other Outputs of WP3.

iii. Development of online tool

As in the case of the survey conducted with managers, after the finalization of the questionnaire, the online tool was developed. Some of the countries utilized the platform developed by SQLI, whereas others created Survey Monkeys and Google forms to gather their data in their own language.

iv. Sampling

The target group of this present research activity were women either working or actively searching for a job. An age restriction of 30 years was set for women who were not employed to acquire information about the perceptions of women trying to find a job.

Employed women were expected to provide information about the skills required on the job. *Women trying to enter the labour market* would provide information on the skills companies ask in the job descriptions or during the interviews.

Note: The initial design foresaw the participation only of women under the age of 30 and unemployed. However, taking into consideration that women already working have more information on the demands at the workplace, the sample was widened to include employed women as well. This had an impact on the age limit as well, since most employed women are over the age of 30.

v. Collecting data

To collect data the questionnaire was disseminated to women centers, to associations of graduates from schools related to the four sectors of interest etc. An invitation to complete the questionnaire was sent together with the link to the online-survey.

Data analysis

Data analysis was conducted for each target group and each country separately. Taking into consideration the fact that, according to literature, soft skills do not differentiate among different sectors, together with the large amount of data and the limited available time process the data, the analysis was restricted to one factor; that of country. Thus, skills were analysed for each country separately and then in total. The final outcome integrates the findings of the two surveys and of the focus groups presented in the next section.

Regarding the analysis, the mean values for each skill were calculated in order to create a hierarchy of the soft skills according to the responses of the participants. The following items included in the questionnaires were reversed in analysis due to phrasing in order to reflect and measure the skills:

1. *I am always late*, measuring punctuality was reversed to I am never late
2. *When I do something wrong, I lie*, measuring professional ethics was reversed in analysis as *When I do something wrong, I admit it*
3. *I often push back deadlines on things I have to do* measuring planning was reversed to *I rarely push back deadlines on things I have to do*
4. *I rarely complete all the tasks on my daily to do list* measuring time management was reversed to *I often complete all the tasks on my daily to do list*
5. *I am surprised by the consequences of my decisions* measuring decision making was reversed to *I am not surprised by the consequences of my decisions*
6. *When I do something, my mind wanders* assessing concentration was reversed to *When I do something, my mind stays focused*
7. *When I have many things to do, I get confused* assessing multitasking was reversed to *When I have many things to do, I don't get confused*
8. *I like doing one thing at a time* assessing again the ability to multitask was reversed to *I like doing many things at a time*

9. *Stress keeps me from doing things* assessing the ability to work under pressure was reversed to *Stress does not keep me from doing things*.

Qualitative research design

As mentioned before, to gain rich and in-depth information regarding focus groups in relation to each national context, focus groups were foreseen to be conducted in all partner countries. Apart from Italy facing serious challenges at the time, all countries conducted one focus group with women and one with managers. In this report only the findings from Greece, Lebanon, Spain and Palestine are included.

The objectives of this particular research activity were to:

- Explore the position of women in the labour market, perceptions and challenges
- Map initiatives promoting women integration in the labour market
- Identify skills necessary in the four fields of interest
- Collect data on the current situation regarding code of conduct and equality between genders in the workplace and share good practices.

As a data collection method, focus groups were chosen to:

1. Explore in-depth the issues under investigation through the narrations of the participants
2. Gain rich context-related information, since participants are part and active agents in particular national settings.
3. Complement research data collected through desk and primary quantitative research
4. Ensure validity of the research findings through triangulation with the desk research and the quantitative research activities.

The focus groups were carried out using focus groups guides which were designed based on the goals of the research activity. The focus groups guides are attached at the end of this document. Even though the two guides differed, they were both based and structured based on the following main thematic axes:

Table 4: Focus group thematic axes and sub-themes

Thematic axis	Sub-theme
Women entering the labour market	• Presence of women in the market and societal perceptions of women working
	• Employment services
	• Policies promoting women integration and benefiting women
Digital and soft skills in demand	• Companies needs in skills
	• Training to acquire skills
Code of conduct	• Women in the workplace

Number of participants: In each focus group a minimum of 4 people should participate in order to form a group and trigger group dynamics.

Duration: 1,5-2 hours

Working Languages: Focus Groups are expected to be held in the respective country's national language(s). However, the report should be in English.

Venue: Due to the current pandemic, focus groups should be conducted digitally.

Participants selection criteria

The selection criteria for the recruitment of participants in the focus groups coincided with

those of the quantitative surveys to allow comparability of the findings. Therefore, for the focus groups with business representatives, managers, owners or HR employees from small, medium or large businesses active in the four areas of interest were recruited. For the focus group with women, both employed and unemployed women were recruited.

- Women 18-30 years-old employed for at least 1 years in a small-medium company active in one of the four economic sectors of interest. Employed women will share their experience from within the labour market
- Women 18-30 years-old unemployed, actively searching for a job will share their experience regarding the process of finding a job, including searching, applying and interviewing.

Confidentiality and consent forms

Prior to the focus groups, participants were provided with an informed consent form, which informed them about the INTERNISA project, the objectives of the particular activity and the use of the data collected. Participants were asked to sign the consent form and submit it to the organizers. All consent forms are available and can be provided upon request.



Quantitative research: *Soft skills supply*



Quantitative research: *Soft skills supply*

This chapter includes the findings regarding the supply and demand of soft skills in each country. The chapter is divided in two large sections: soft skills supply and soft skills demand. Each section includes the findings for each country. At the end of each chapter, findings are seen in comparison to the rest of the countries participating in the research and in relation to the four economic sectors.

All units include participants demographics, a hierarchization of soft skills and demand in relation to the four economic sectors of interest. More particularly, for the women survey, the demographics include: age, educational level, household size, average household income, employment status, position in the company, economic activity of the company, enrolled in a formal educational program, attend a seminar, actively seeking for a job and challenges met when searching for a job. For the managers survey, the demographics include the following variables: Gender, age, educational level, economic activity of the company and position in the company.

Soft skills supply: *Greece*

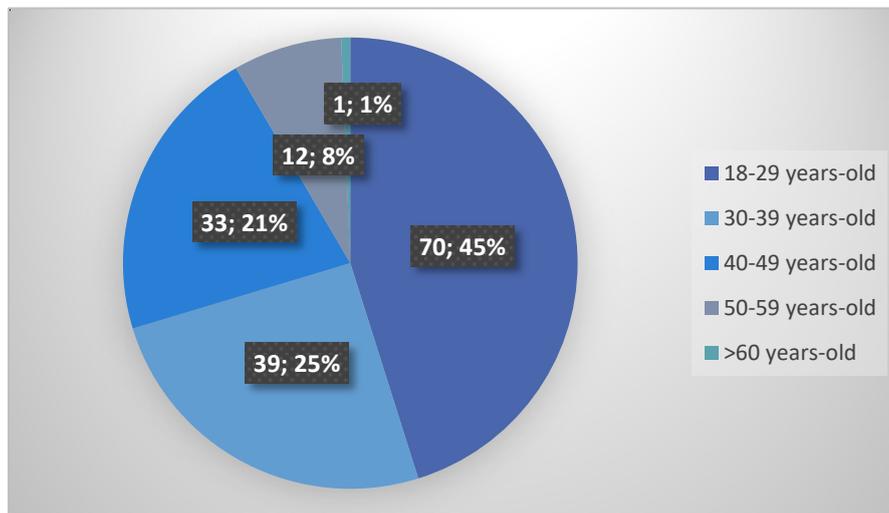
To identify the soft skills women working or actively seeking for a job have, a quantitative survey was conducted using the questionnaire developed at a previous stage of the research. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the survey was conducted online using Survey monkey. In total 205 women participated in the survey. Their demographic characteristics are presented in the next section.

Demographics

Age group

Of the total 205 women who participated in the survey, 45% belonged to the age group 18-29. Women between 30 and 39 years old comprised the 25% of the sample, 21% were between 40 and 49 years old, 12 women (8%) were 50-59 and only one woman was over 60 years old.

Figure 2: Age group



Nationality and place of residence

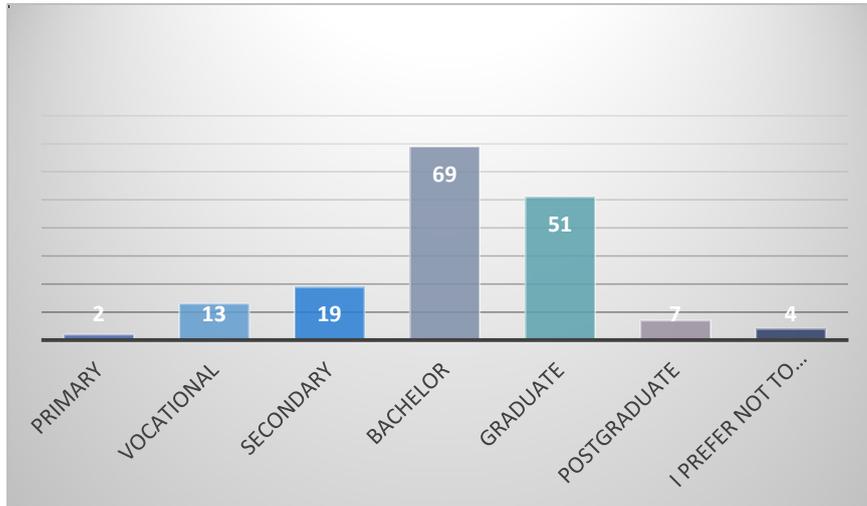
All women participating in the survey were Greek with the exception of three women; one Pakistani, one Albanian, and one Greek-Australian. All participants registered Greece as the place of residence.

Educational level

The majority of the participants were highly educated, with 69 of them possessing a

Bachelor degree and 51 a Masters degree. Only two had primary level educational, 13 secondary and 19 participants had vocational education.

Figure 3: Educational Level

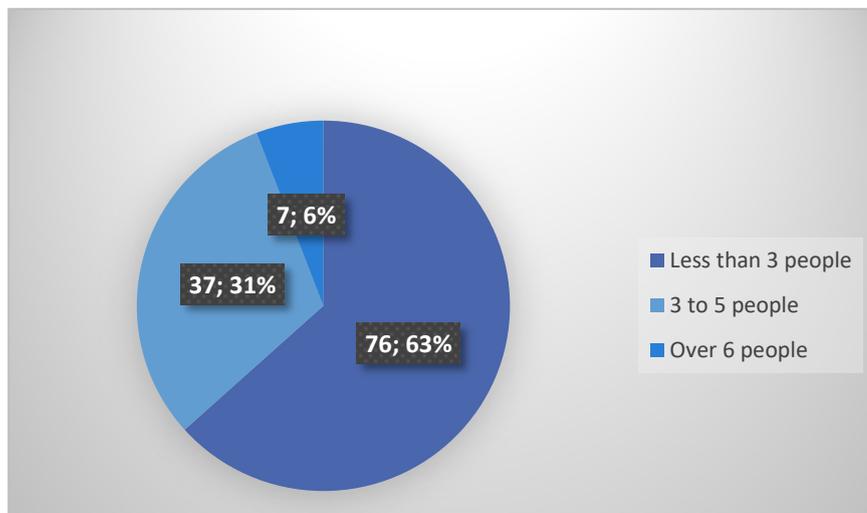


Household

size

By 63%, women living in a household with less than 3 people are the majority of the sample. 31% of the participants live in a household with 3 to 5 people and only 7 women (6%) lived in a household with more than 6 people.

Figure 4: Household size

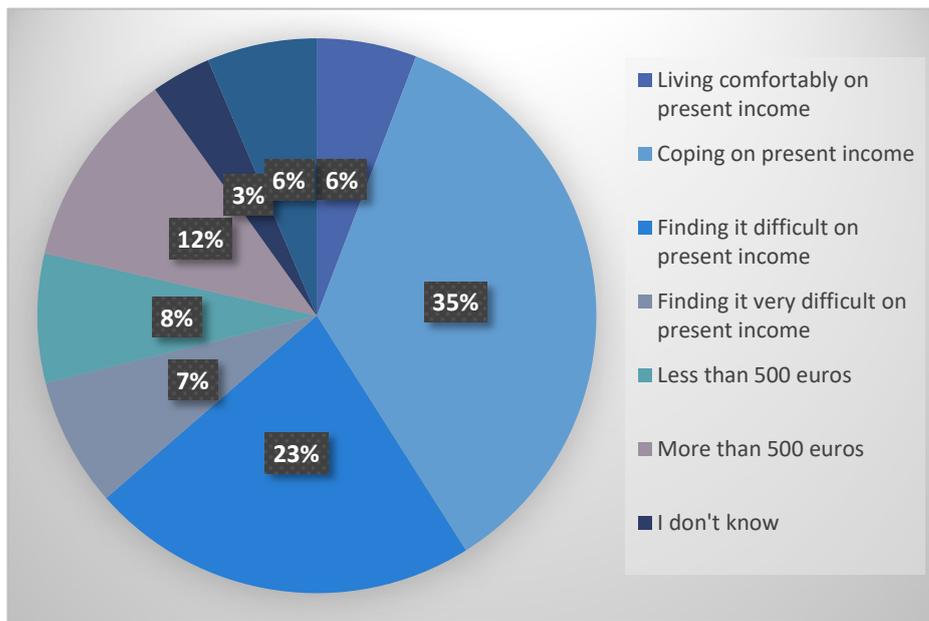


Household

average income

The majority of participants (61 women, 35%) cope on present income, whereas only 10 (6%) of them live comfortably on the present income. 20 women (12%) live in a household with average income more than 500 euros, whereas 13 (8%) participants live in a household with less than 500 euros monthly income. As anticipated due to the sensitive nature of the questions, 11 (6%) women preferred not to mention their income.

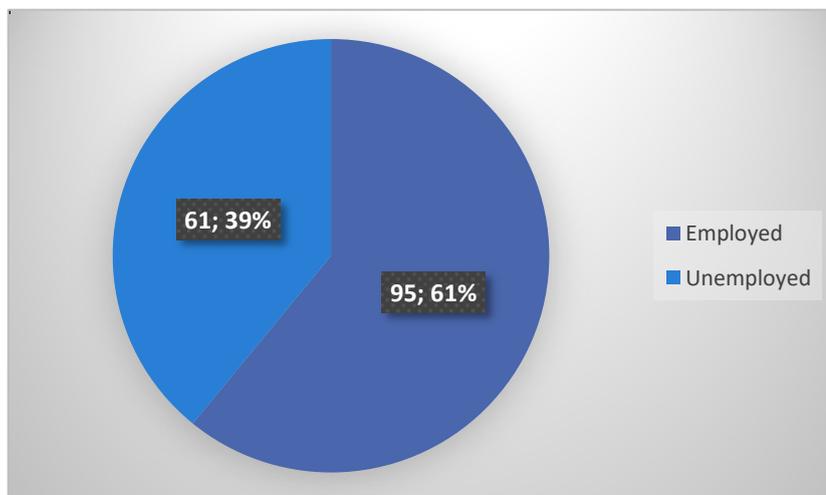
Figure 5: Average household income



Employment

More than half of the participants (95; 61%) were employed at the time of the survey and 39% of them were unemployed.

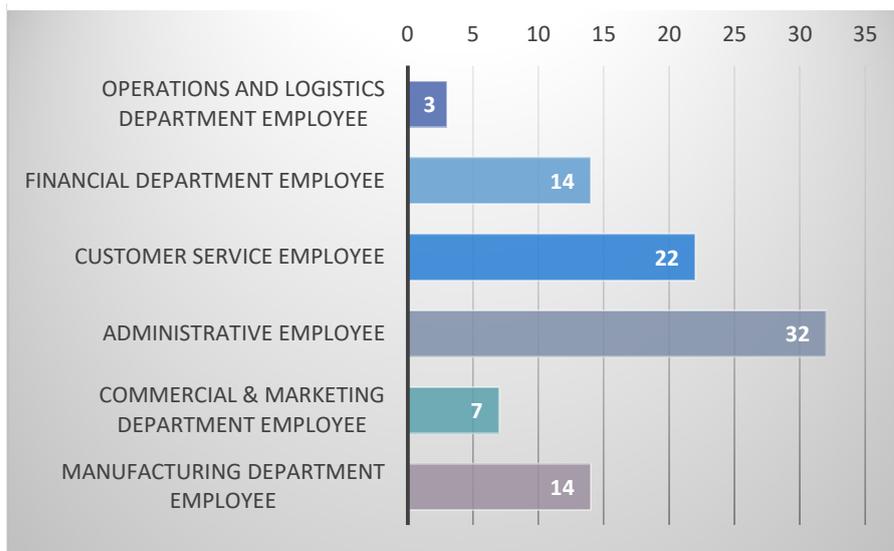
Figure 6: Employment status



Position in the company

Most of the women participating in the survey were employed as administrative staff (32;35%) or in customer services (22; 24%). 15% were employed in financial departments and another 15% in manufacturing. Only three women were employed in operations and logistics.

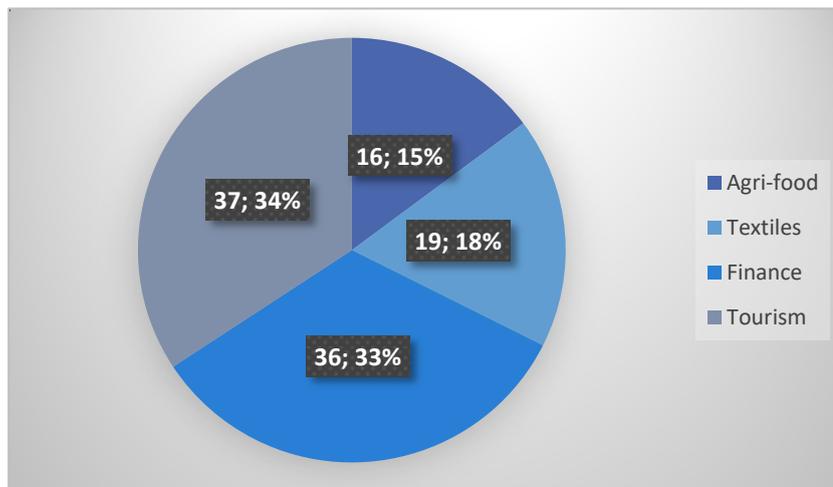
Figure 7: Position in the company



Economic activity of the company

The representation of the four sectors of interest, agri-food, textiles, finance and tourism, is as follows: tourism 34%, finance (33%) textiles 18% and agri-food 15%.

Figure 8: Economic activity of the company



Soft

skills

As mentioned in the methodology sections, women responded to 53 items assessing their whether they possess specific skills based on 5-point Likert scale, where 1=Totally disagree, 2=Disagree, 3= Somewhat agree/disagree, 4=Agree, 5=Totally agree. In the next graph, hierarchization of the soft skills based on the calculated mean of all responses for each item is presented.

Personal skills

All participants scored high in almost all items referring to the personal skills. Therefore, we will mention the items with the highest score (>4). Item “Taking responsibility for mistakes” scored the highest mean value (4,8). “Learning new things” connected to continuous learning and personal development scored second in responses with mean value of 4,5. Trying to see different perspectives was third with 4,4 followed by item “I can complete the tasks I undertake”. Corresponding to self-confidence skill, this item scored 4,3. Not lying

when doing something wrong was fifth with mean value 4,2. Four items scored mean value 4,1; “I spent time with my friends and family every week” which corresponds to life-balance skill, “I cross check data” corresponding to critical thinking skill, “I complete each task as flawlessly as possible” connected to detail oriented or attention to detail skill and I am never late, an item which was reversed for the needs of the analysis and is connected to punctuality. Finally, the item “I know what my weaknesses are” connected to self-awareness skill, scored a mean value of 4.

Figure 9: Personal skills assessment: Greece:

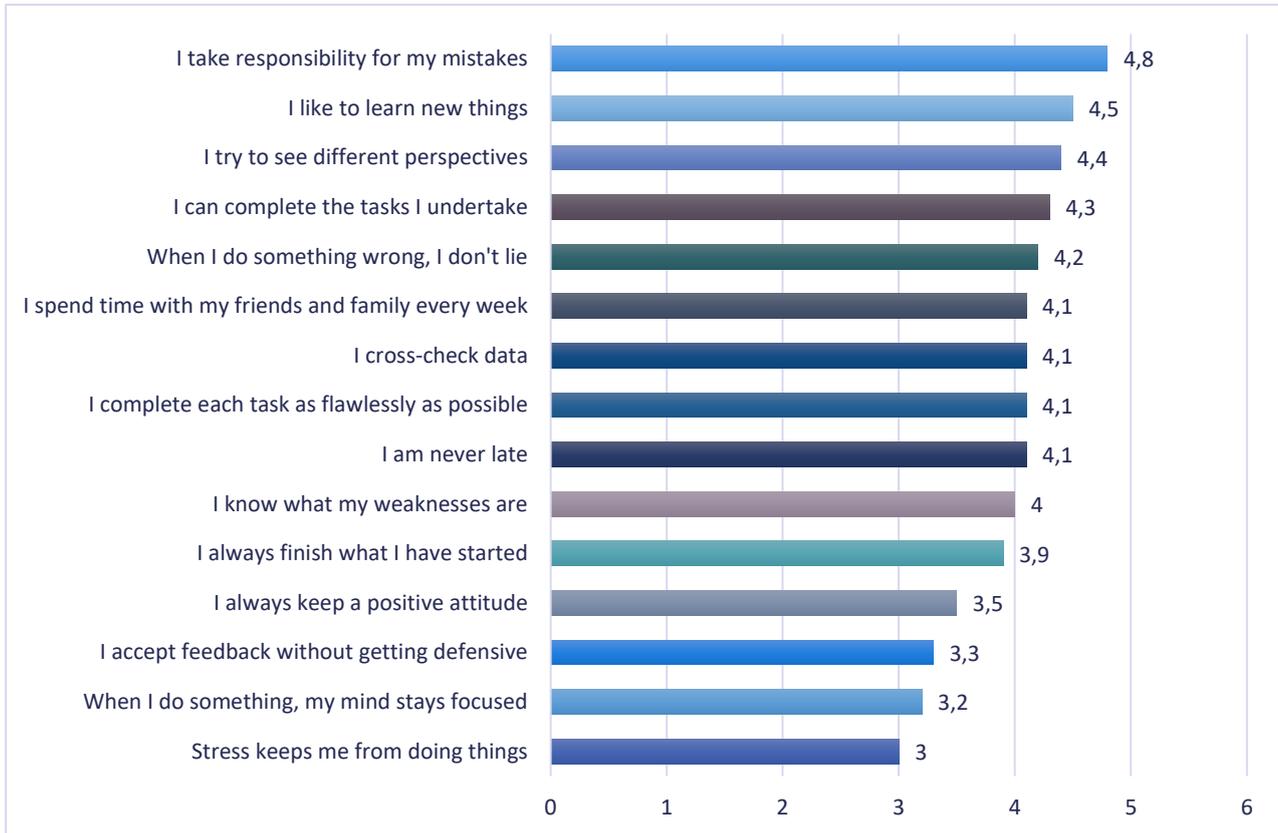


Table 5: Personal skills ranking for women: Greece

Personal skills	Mean value
Responsibility	4,8
Continuous learning	4,5
Critical thinking	4,4
Self-confidence	4,3
Professional ethics	4,2
Punctuality	4,1
Life-balance	4,1
Attention to detail	4,1
Self-awareness	4
Commitment	3,9
Positive attitude	3,5
Continuous improvement	3,3
Concentration	3,2

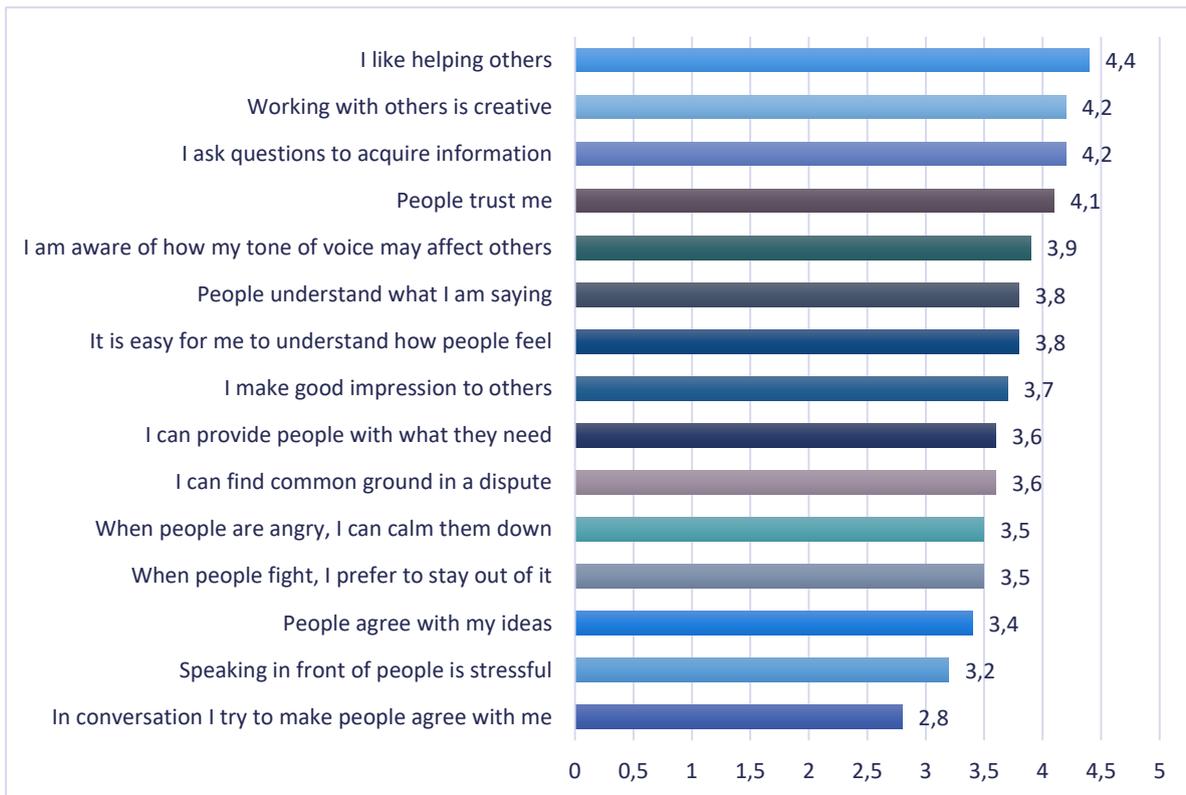
Tolerance to stress/ Endurance	3
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The above indicate that women consider themselves as continuously trying to develop themselves and their skills, being responsible and with professional ethics. However, lower values for items such as “positive attitude”, “continuous improvement”, “concentration” and “tolerance to stress” indicate that they face challenges. For example, low tolerance to stress can have negative impact on performance and on attitude, when working under pressure.

Social skills

As far as social skills are concerned, 4 skills scored a mean value over 4 with the most highly valued skill being service and attend (I like helping and attend 4,4). Working with others is creative scored 4,2 placing teamwork second in social skills. Being trusted is third with 4,1.

Figure 10: Social skills assessment: Greece



In contrast, participants scored lower in skills related to conflict management, emotions management and influence, which are interrelated and necessary when working with a group. Influencing and persuading others to accept their ideas are also evaluated as low in women participants. These indicate that women have developed social skills less and, in a team, they usually refrain from taking active roles.

Table 6: Social skills ranking for women: Greece

Social skills	Mean value
Customer/User orientation/ Service and attend	4,4
Teamwork	4,2

Communication/Conversation skills	4,2
Networking	4,1
Non-verbal communication	3,9
Emotional intelligence	3,8
Oral communication	3,8
Conflict management	3,5
Emotions management	3,5
Influence	3,4
Public speaking	3,2
Persuasion	2,8

Methodological skills

In contrast to personal skills where 9 items had a mean value higher than 4 and less than the 4 social skills with mean value over 4, only for two methodological skills the mean value was 4. The items “I can collect information on a topic easily”, connected to item “Gather and evaluate data” skill and “I rarely push back deadlines on things I have to do” corresponding to time management skill have mean value 4. Even though the organizational and analytic skills present high scores, skills such as leadership and multitasking recorded low mean values, a fact that can be connected to the previous skills as well.

Figure 11: Methodological skills assessment: Greece

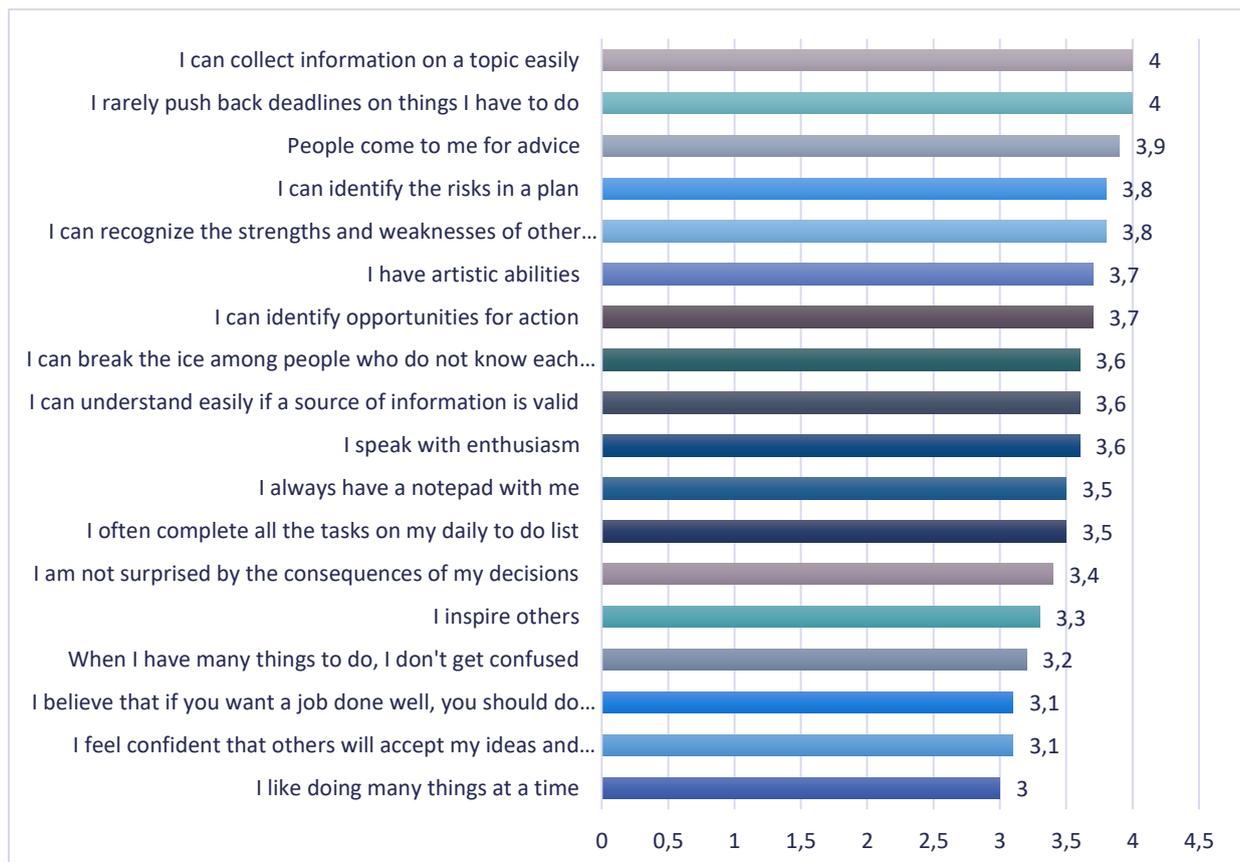


Table 7: Methodological skills ranking for women: Greece

Methodological skills	Mean value
Planning	4
Gather and evaluate data	4
Mentoring	3,9
Proactivity	3,8
Supervising others	3,8
Creativity/innovation	3,7
Developing objectives and strategies	3,7
Teambuilding	3,6
Motivate and inspire others	3,6
Time management	3,5
Organization	3,5
Decision-making	3,4
Leadership	3,3
Prioritization	3,2
Coordinate teams	3,1
Multitasking	3

Final remarks

Participants had the opportunity to indicate which skills they consider as most important in an open-ended field. Participants mentioned skills already explored through the questionnaire and covered all three categories. In addition, participants mention qualifications such as educational background and experience. In the following table, the soft skills mentioned by the participants are available.

Skills of high importance according to the participants	
Collaboration	Empathy
Organization	Continuous learning
Mentoring	Leadership
Communication	Diplomacy
Critical thinking	Problem-solving
Being open-minded	Responsibility
Creativity	Self-control
Flexibility	Helping
Adaptability	Positive attitude
Determination	Punctuality
Performing under pressure	

Most frequently mentioned were communication, collaboration, empathy and continuous learning. Leadership was also mentioned three times and it is a skill of interest for the women participants in Greece, since the outcomes indicate low level of leadership and of connected skills, such as persuasion and influence. This can be connected to the low development of tolerance to stress showed in the personal skills as well as to continuous improvement. Low level of the skill continuous improvement, evaluated through item “I accept feedback without getting defensive” can also be connected to stress but also to self-confidence, a skill imperative for someone to acquire a leading role in a team. It is then suggested that skills related to leadership should be more developed through training.

Soft skills supply: Italy

Fifty women participated in the quantitative survey conducted in Italy regarding soft skills. In the next pages, demographic information about the participants and the findings from the soft skills analysis are presented.

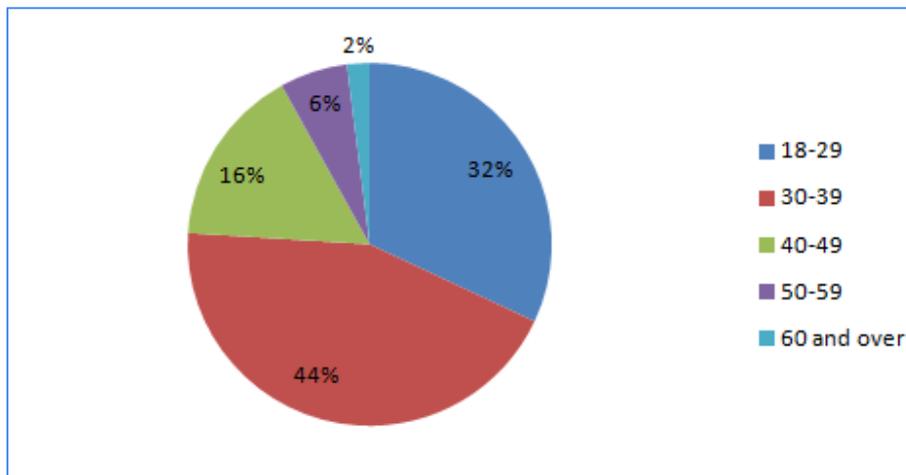
Demographics

All participants in the survey reported Italy as their *place of residence*, 98% were Italian in *nationality* and 2% were Spanish.

Age group

As far as age is concerned, almost half (44%) of the participants belonged in the age group of 30-39. 32% were 18-29 years old, 16% were 40-49 years-old, 6% were 50-59 years-old and only one person was over the age of 60.

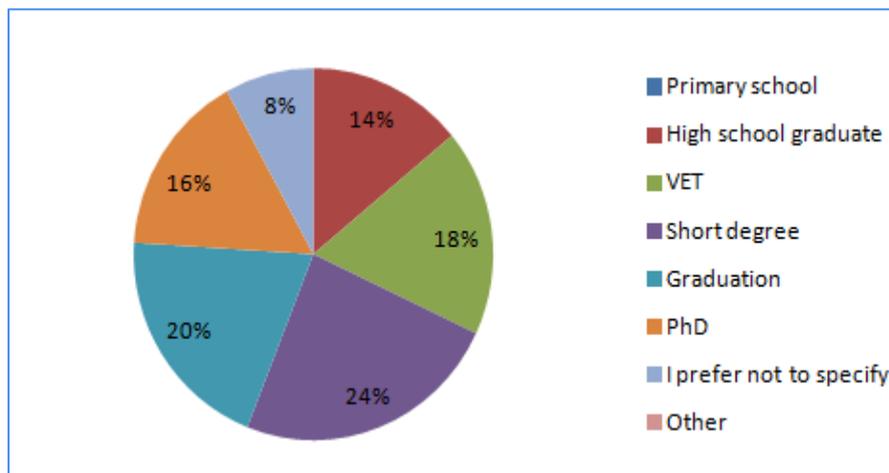
Figure 12: Age group



Educational level

As seen in Figure 13, participants are almost equally distributed in all educational levels, with 14% having a high school diploma, 18% having completed vocational training, 24% short degree, 20% having a bachelor and 16% holding a PhD. This distribution across the different forms and levels ensures gathering data on soft skills from different groups and increases the validity of outcomes.

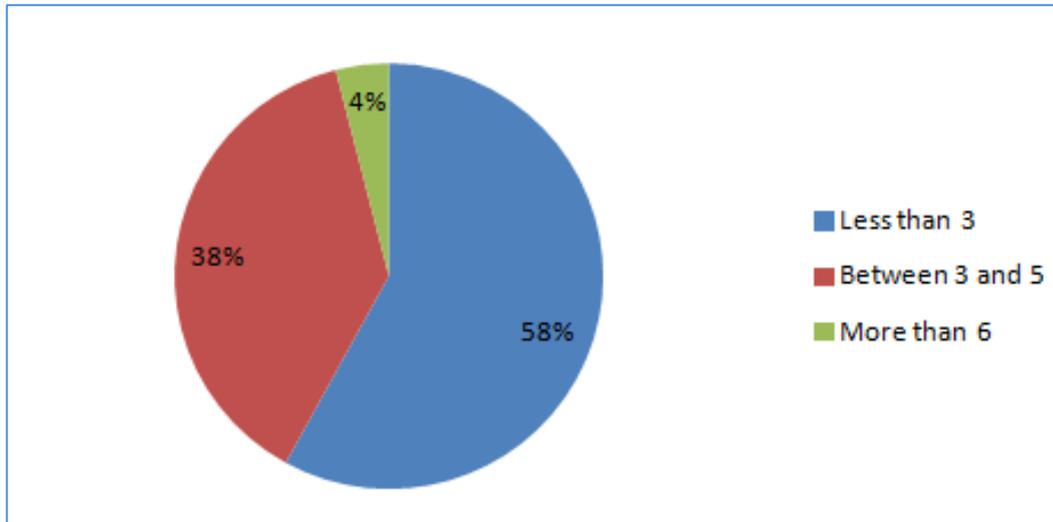
Figure 13: Educational level



Household size and average income

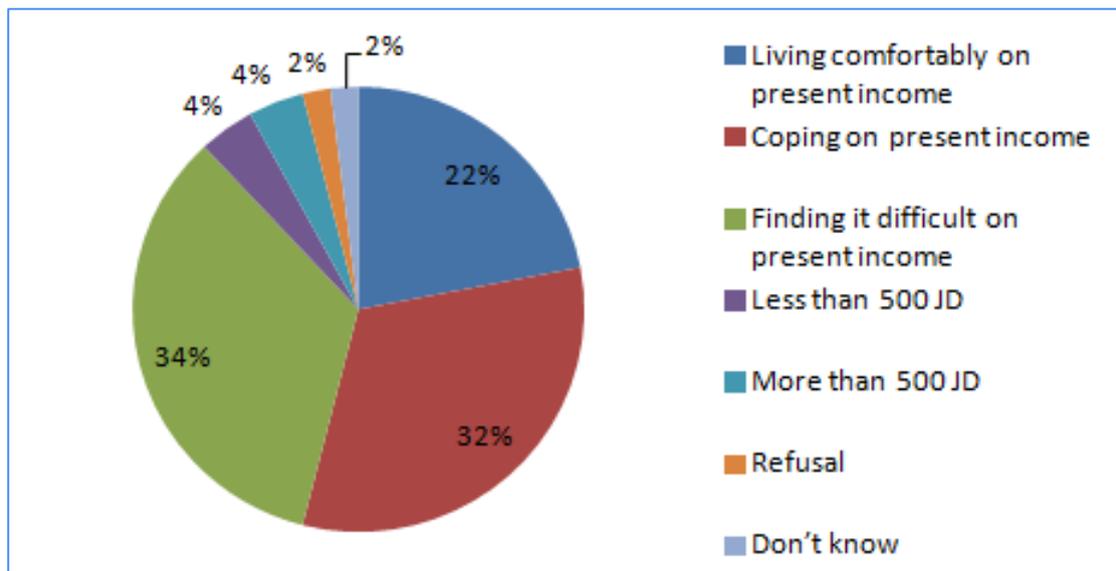
The majority of participants, 58%, stated they live in a household with less than 3 people, whereas 38% were between 3 and 5 and only 4% were in a household with more than 6 people.

Figure 14: Household size



Of those households, 34% stated that they find it difficult to survive on the present income, whereas 32% are coping with the present income. Only 22% were living comfortably on the present income. This shows that over half of participants are facing challenges with regard to their income and the needs of the household.

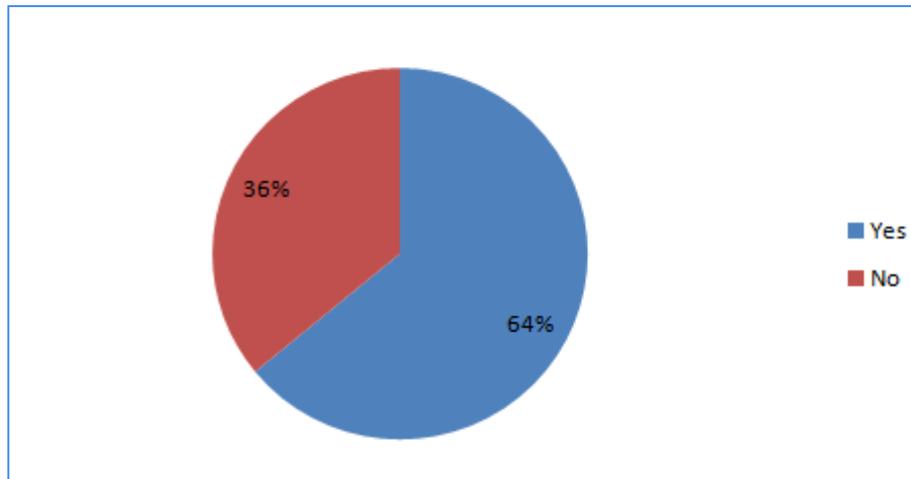
Figure 15: Average household income



Employment

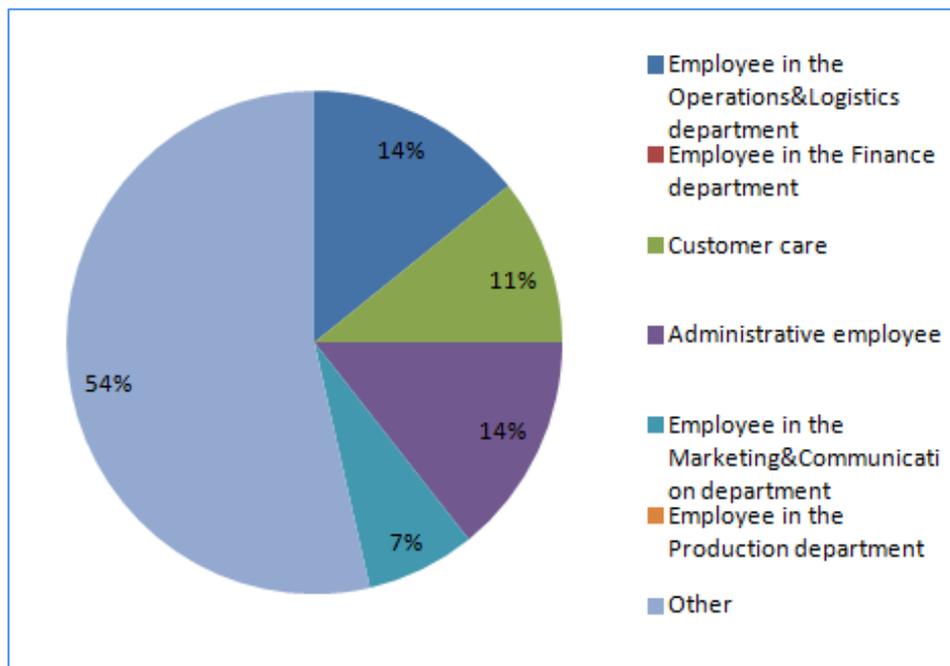
64% of the participants were employed at the time of the survey, whereas 36% declared being unemployed.

Figure 16: Employment status



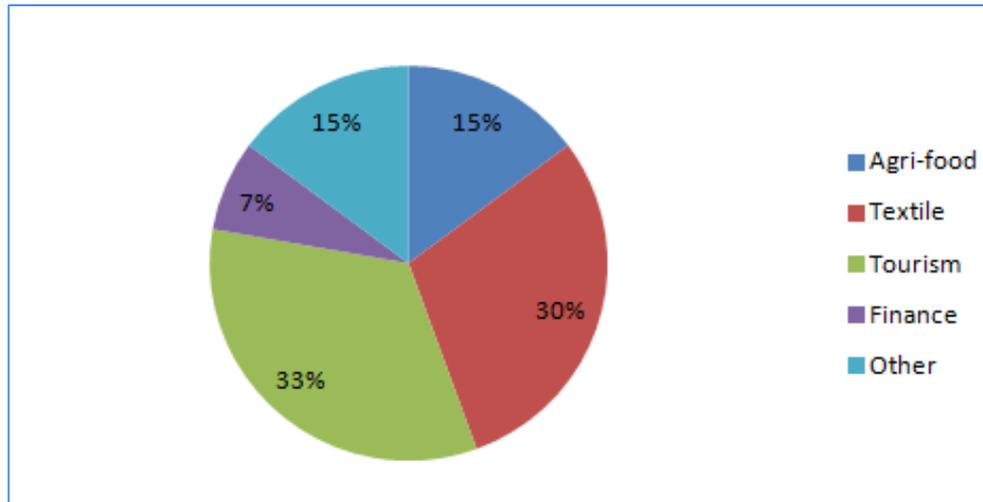
Of the employed participants, half (54%) were working in a position other than the ones provided by the questionnaire. However, the position is not specified. Of the remaining 36% of the participants, 15% were employed in the Operations and Logistics department, 14% were administrative employees, 11% were working in customer care and 7% in the marketing and communication department.

Figure 17: Position in the company



As far as the economic activity of the company is concerned, tourism and textiles cover the largest part of the sample, with 33% of the participants being employed in the sector of tourism and 30% in textiles. 15% were employed in the agri-food sector and 7% in finance.

Figure 18: Economic activity of the company



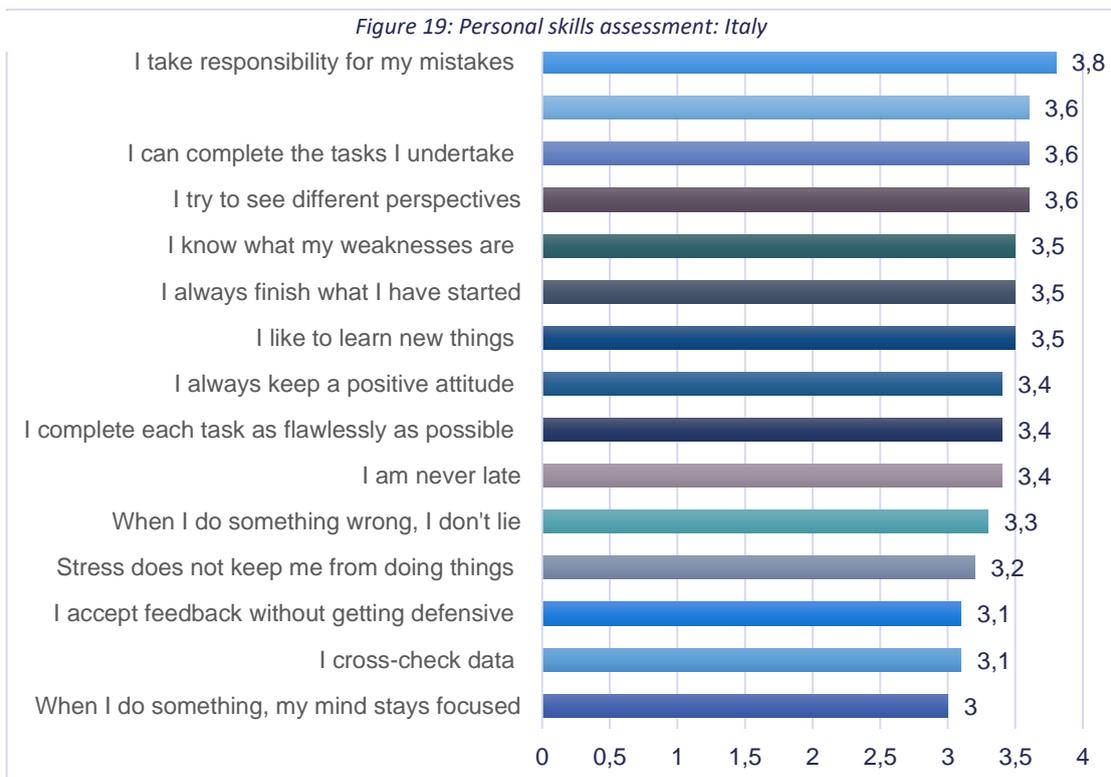
Soft skills

In this section, the findings regarding soft skills are presented, following the categorization adopted based on the desk research, namely Personal, Social and Methodological skills. More particularly, as mentioned before, the findings concern as self-assessment of the participants in terms of skills possession.

Personal skills

As it can be seen in Figure 19, all items have a mean value between 3 and 3,8, which shows that participants assess neutrally and positively themselves with regard to possessing these skills. Skills with a mean value below 3,5 as being closer to a neutral position, whereas skills with mean value over 3,5 are closer to a positive assessment. Highest in the hierarchization of the skills is the item "I take responsibility for my mistakes"

Figure 19: Personal skills assessment: Italy



which is connected to responsibility with mean value 3,8. Second in value is life balance skill as assessed through item “I spend time with my friends and family every week” with 3,6. The same mean value has been given also to items “I can complete the tasks I undertake” and “I try to see different perspectives” connected to self-confidence and critical thinking skills respectively. 3,5 is the mean value of three items “I know what my weaknesses are”, “I always finish what I have started” and “I like to learn new things”.

The items with mean value lower than 3,5 concern mainly shortcomings, such as being late or doing something wrong. This indicates that the participants responded honestly, revealing that there are skills they do not possess, at least not in a high level.

Table 8: Personal skills ranking for women: Italy

Personal skills	Mean value
Responsibility	3,8
Self-awareness	3,6
Life-balance	3,6
Critical thinking	3,6
Self-confidence	3,5
Commitment	3,5
Continuous learning	3,5
Punctuality	3,4
Positive attitude	3,4
Attention to detail	3,4
Professional ethics	3,3
Tolerance to stress/ Endurance	3,2
Continuous improvement	3,1
Concentration	3
Responsibility	3,8

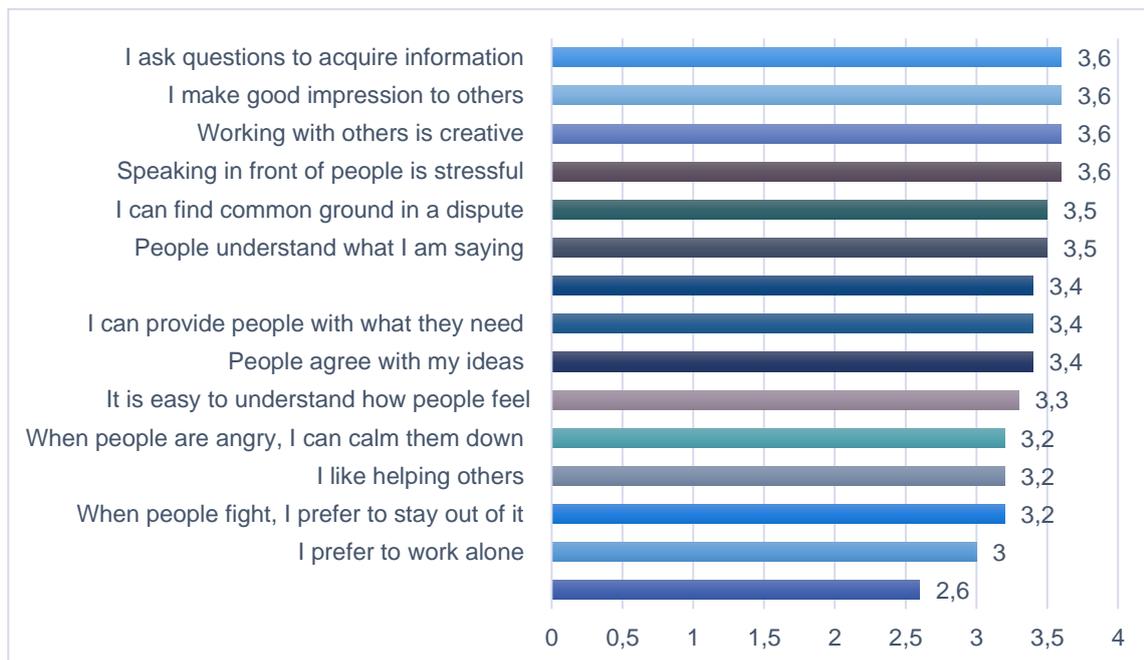
Social skills

As far as social skills are concerned, calculations did not produce mean values higher than

3.6. This indicates that women do possess these skills but not in high level. The lowest value 2,6 is found for item “In conversation I try to make people agree with me”, which is connected to persuasion.

As seen in Figure 20, four items have a mean value of 3,6 slightly over 3,5 and closer to 4 which indicates a positive assessment; “I ask questions to acquire information”, “I make good impressions to others”, “Working with others is creative” and “Speaking in front of people is stressful”. The last of the items indicates a lack of a skill, namely of public speaking and not its possession, therefore we will not include it in the final ranking. With a mean value of 3,5 participants have assessed slightly positively their skills in conflict management (“I can find common ground in a dispute”) and in conversation skills (“People understand what I am saying”). Lower mean values are recorded for skills related to emotions management and emotional intelligence as well as skills connected to influence

Figure 20: Social skills assessment: Italy



and persuasion.

Table 9: Social skills ranking for women: Italy

Social skills	Mean value
Public speaking	3,6
Networking	3,6
Teamwork	3,6
Conflict management	3,5
Communication/Conversation skills	3,5
Influence	3,4
Non-verbal communication	3,4
Customer/User orientation/ Service and attend	3,4
Emotional intelligence	3,3
Emotions management	3,2
Collaboration	3
Persuasion	2,6

Methodological skills

Methodological skills scored lower than personal skills and slightly lower than social skills. This indicates that participants do not believe they possess those skills at high level. More particularly, the range of the mean value is 2,8 to 3,5 which is around neutral. Two of the items assessing multitasking are in the bottom of the ranking, with item “I like doing many things at a time” having a 2,8 mean value and item “When I have many things to do, I don’t get confused” having a mean value of 2,9. Highest mean values (3,5) are given to items connected to motivating and inspiring others (“I speak with enthusiasm”) and mentoring (“People come to me for advice”) skills and planning (“I like planning my day”), followed by analytical skills and particularly, problem solving (“I weigh the pros and cons of different solutions when trying to solve a problem”), gathering and evaluating data (“I can collect information on a topic easily”) and developing objectives and strategies (“I can identify opportunities for action”) (see).

Figure 21: Methodological skills assessment: Italy

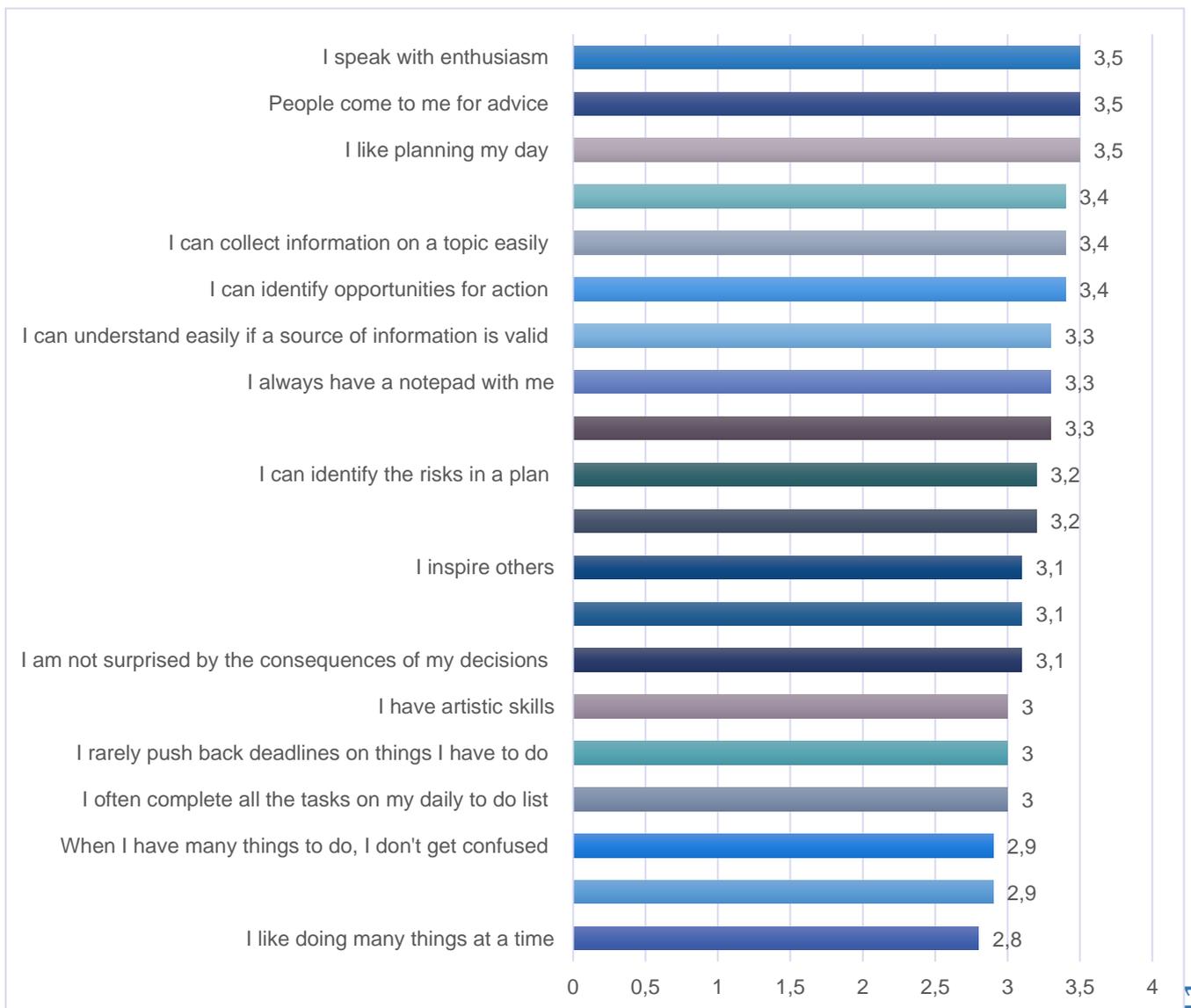


Table 10: Methodological skills ranking for women: Italy

Methodological skills	Mean value
Motivate and inspire others	3,5
Mentoring	3,5
Planning	3,5
Developing objectives and strategies	3,4
Problem-solving	3,4
Gather and evaluate data	3,4
Organization	3,3
Teambuilding	3,3
Proactivity	3,2
Supervising others	3,2
Decision-making	3,1
Leadership	3,1
Creativity/innovation	3
Time management	3
Coordinate teams	2,9
Prioritization	2,9
Multitasking	2,8

Participants recorded higher mean values for motivating and mentoring others compared to the rest of the skills. These skills are connected to leadership, which recorded a lower mean value. The same is true for teamwork/coordination of teams. Women seem to consider themselves able to support other but perhaps not from a leading position.

Final remarks

It is observed that women scored medium in all skills categories with highest mean value being recorded for responsibility. Generally, the level of development of skills, as perceived by the participants themselves, is closed to neutral. This means that further development is possible. Social and methodological skills appear weaker, especially with regard to managing and leading teams. As in the case of Greece it would be suggested to further develop skills related to these aspects.

Soft skills supply: Lebanon

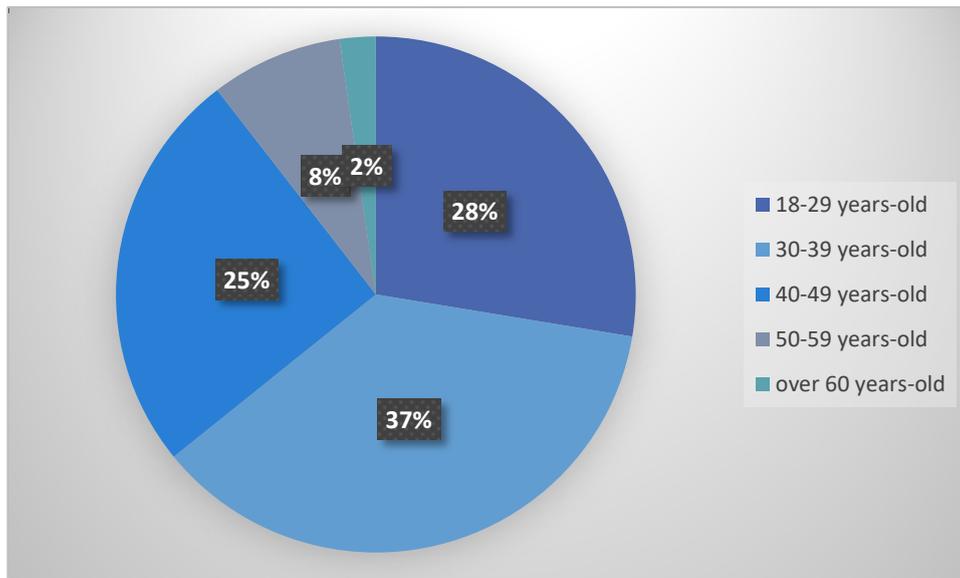
A total of 311 women participated in the survey conducted in Lebanon regarding soft skills. Participants were recruited randomly from the population of the Lebanese women society. In the next sections, the demographic information of the participants first presented and then the findings regarding soft skills assessment.

Demographics

Age group

74 of the women who participated in the survey belong in the age group of 18 to 29 (28%), 37% of the participants were between 30 and 39 years-old and 25% belonged to the age group 40-49. Only 8% were 50 to 59 and 6 women (2%) were over the age of 60.

Figure 22: Age group



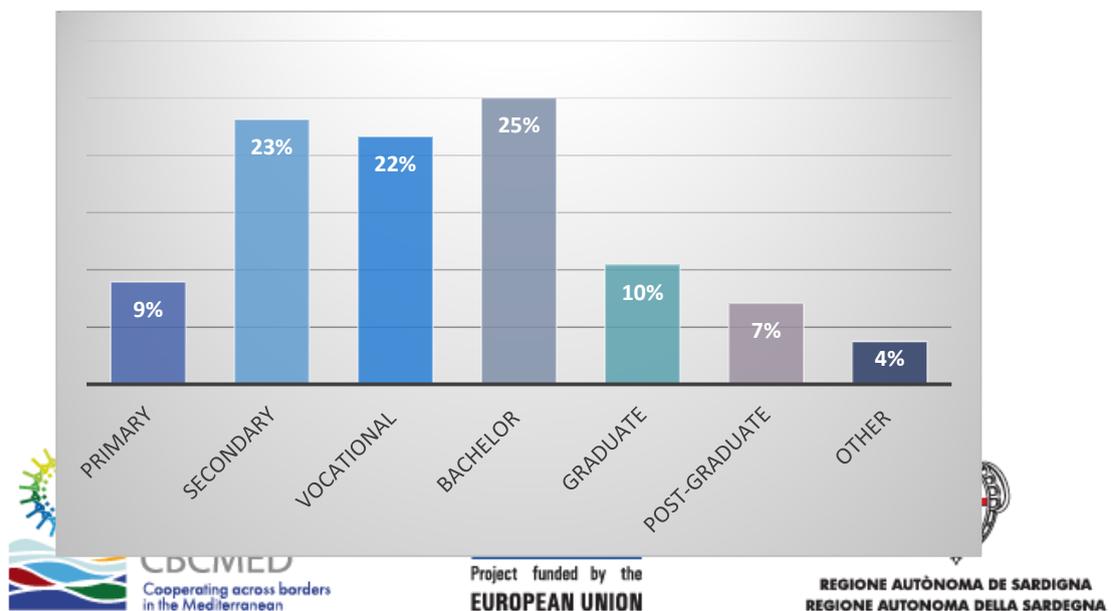
Nationality and place of residence

All women participating in the survey were Lebanese living in Lebanon.

Educational level

Concerning the educational level of participants, the analysis showed that 25% held a bachelor and 17% were graduates or postgraduates. As seen in Figure 23, 23% had completed vocational training and 22% secondary school. A minority of 9% had completed primary school, whereas 4% of the participants did not mention their educational level.

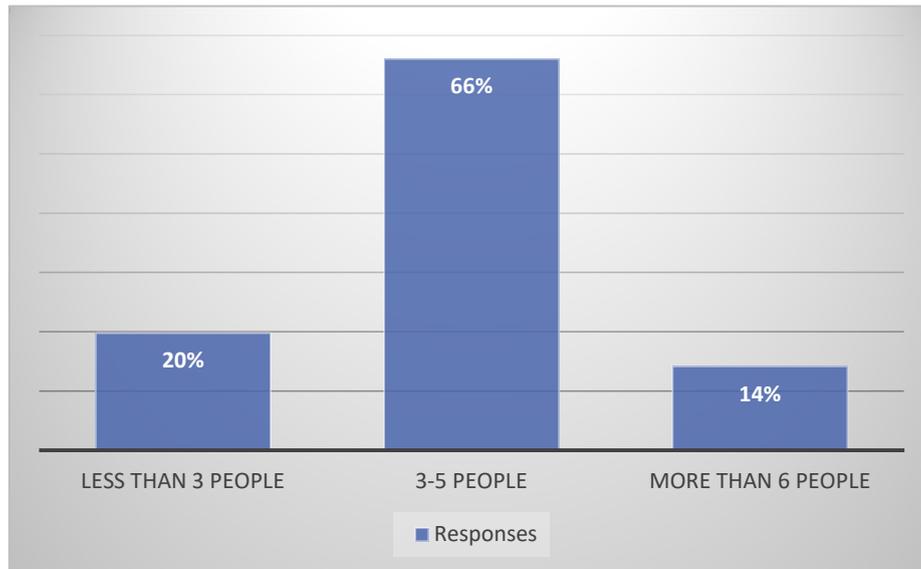
Figure 23: Educational level



Household size

The majority of participants (66%) stated that they live in a household with 3 to 5 people. 20% lived in a household of less than 3 people, whereas 14% said they lived in a household with more than 6 people.

Figure 24: Household size

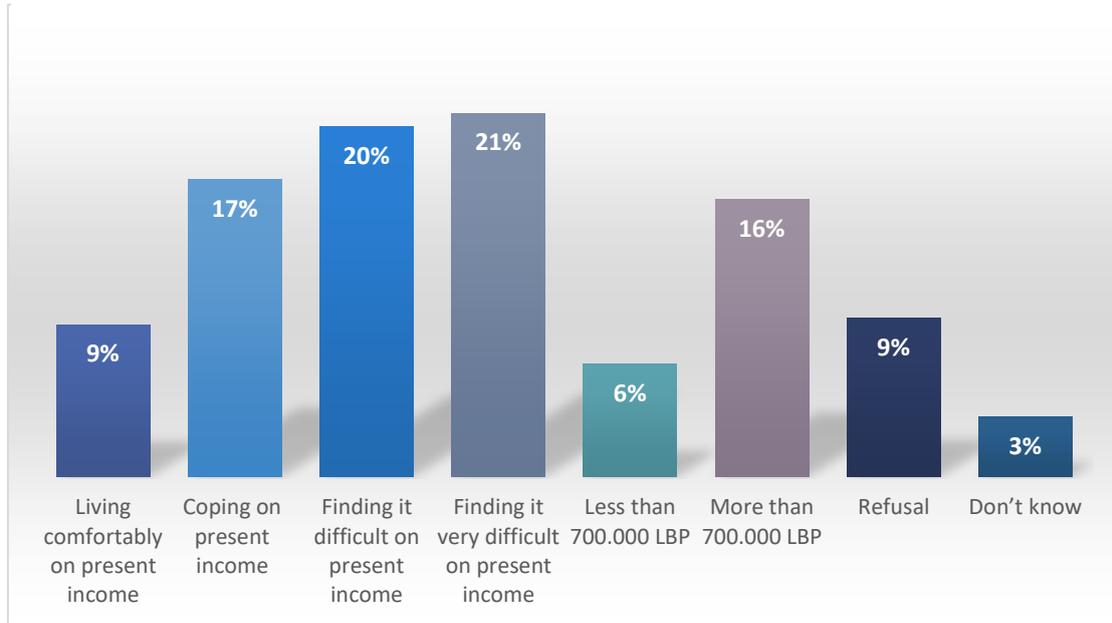


Average

household income

As far as the average household income is concerned, 41% of the participants said they find it very difficult (21%) or difficult to live (20%) of the present income. 17% were coping with the present income and only 9% of the participants were living comfortably with the present income.

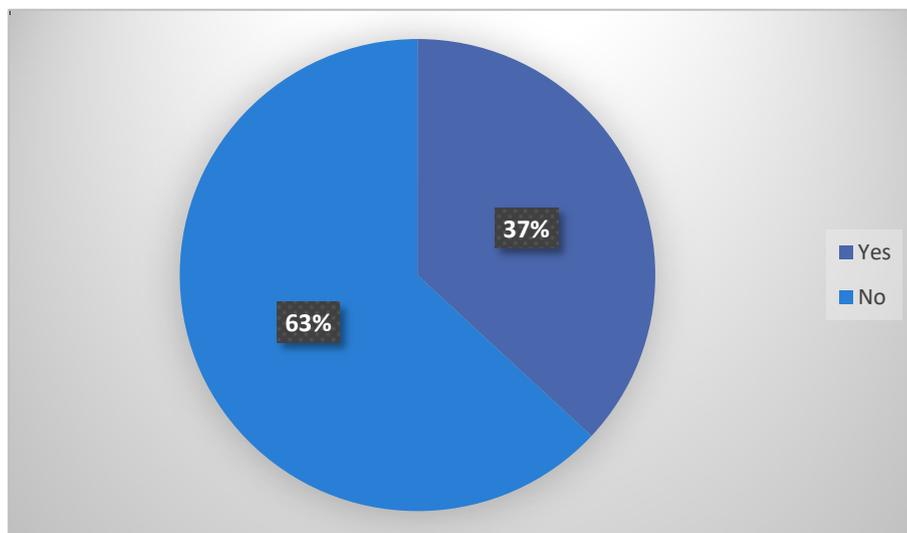
Figure 25: Household average income



Employment

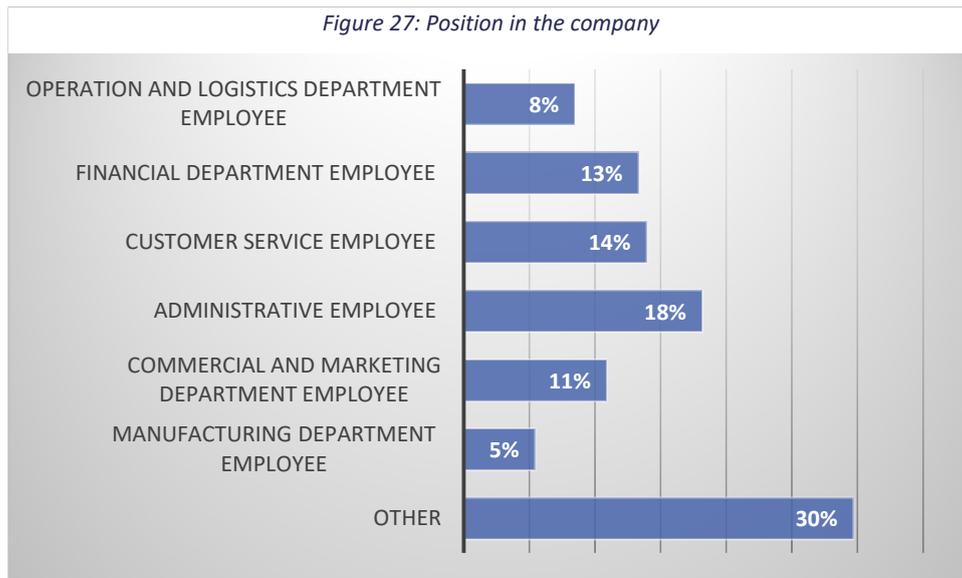
The majority of the women participating in the survey did not work at the time, whereas 37% were employed.

Figure 26: Employment status



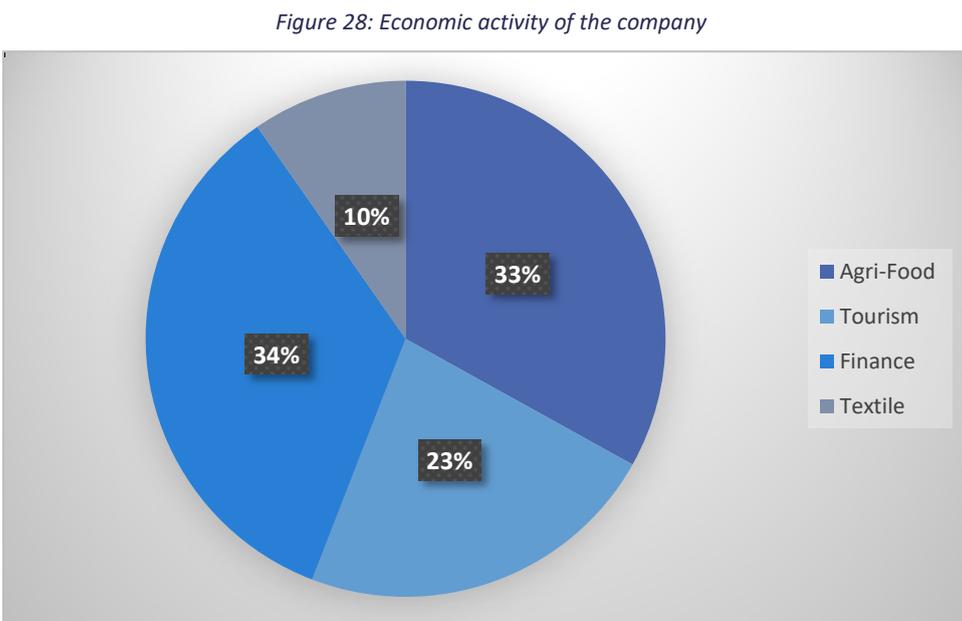
Position in the company

As seen in Figure 27, of the women who were employed, 18% were administrative employees, 14% were in customer service, 13% in finance, 8% in operation and logistics and 5% were employed in a manufacturing department.



Economic activity of the company

The representation of the four sectors of interest, agri-food, textiles, finance and tourism, is as follows: tourism 23%, finance 34%, textiles 10% and agri-food 15%.



Soft skills

Findings regarding the soft skills in Lebanon are presented in this section. The ranking of soft skills in each category -personal, social and methodological- is presented based on the self-assessment of the women who participated in the survey.

Personal skills

As seen in Figure 29, the mean values of the personal soft skills range from 2,8 to 3,8 indicating a neutral or slightly positive assessment of the particular skills. Lowest in the ranking are punctuality and concentration with 2,8 mean value for the items “I am never late” and “When I do something, my mind stays focused”. Close to these skills is working under pressure with mean value 2,9, a skill evaluated using the item “Stress does not keep me from doing things”. A little over 3 is responsibility and continuous improvement.

Figure 29: Personal skills assessment: Lebanon



Several items gather mean value of 3,5 to 3,8 indicating positive assessment of the women with regard to particular skills. 3,5 mean value is found for life balance, self-awareness and keeping positive attitude. The items “I try to see different perspectives and “I complete each task as flawlessly as possible” scored a mean value of 3,6, whereas cross-checking data and finishing what one has started scored 3,7. Finally, the highest mean values are found for two items “I can complete the tasks I undertake” and “I like to learn new things”.

Table 11: Personal skills ranking for women: Lebanon

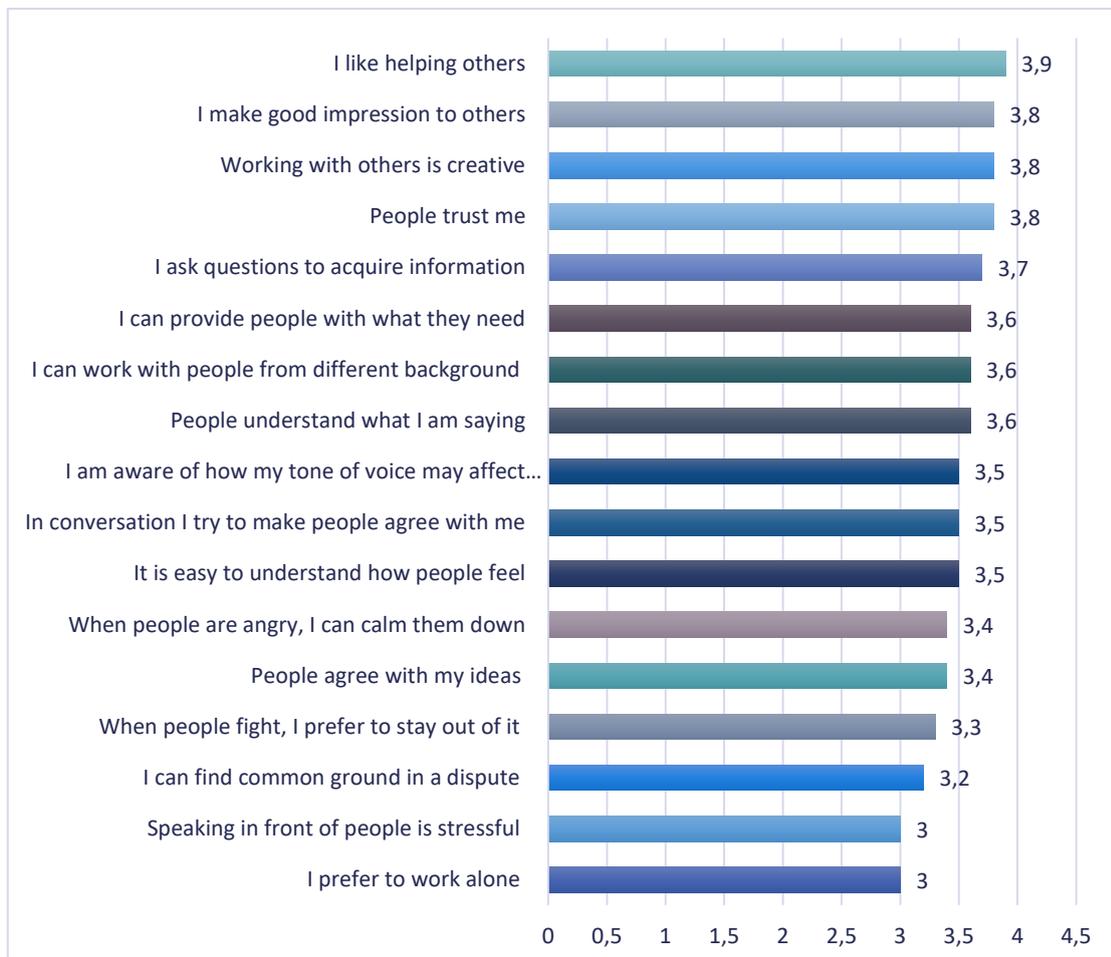
Personal skills	Mean value
Self-confidence	3,8
Continuous learning	3,8
Commitment	3,7

Attention to detail	3,6
Critical thinking	3,6
Positive attitude	3,5
Self-awareness	3,5
Life-balance	3,5
Responsibility	3,4
Continuous improvement	3,2
Professional ethics	3,2
Tolerance to stress/ Endurance	2,9
Concentration	2,8
Punctuality	2,8

Social skills

Mean values for social skills are slightly higher compared to personal skills, since none of the items' mean value is under 3 in the 5 scale. However, again the mean values do not exceed 3,9 indicating medium level for most of the skills.

Figure 30: Social skills assessment: Lebanon



11 items have a mean value equal or higher than 3,5 and indicate positive assessment and higher development of those skills. Highest mean value of 3,9 is found for item “I like helping others” which corresponds to service and attend skills. Three items follow with

mean value 3,8, two of them related to networking and one to teamwork. Critical thinking has a high mean value of 3,7 and is followed by skills related to working with people from different backgrounds and communication, both oral and non-verbal. Lower means are found for skills related to conflict management and emotions management.

Table 12: Social skills ranking for women: Lebanon

Social skills	Mean value
Customer/User orientation/ Service and attend	3,9
Networking	3,8
Teamwork	3,8
Oral communication	3,7
Communication/Conversation skills	3,6
Cultural adaptability	3,6
Persuasion	3,5
Emotional intelligence	3,5
Non-verbal communication	3,5
Influence	3,4
Emotions management	3,4
Conflict management	3,3
Collaboration	3
Public speaking	3

Methodological skills

Mean values for skills included in the Methodological category do not exceed 3,7 with the lowest mean 2,9 being recorded for three items related to time management, planning and decision-making. Multitasking and organization recording mean value of 3 indicating medium level of mastering of the particular skills.

It is interesting that the highest mean value (3,7) is recorded for the item “I believe that if you want a job done well, you should do it yourself” which translates to 2,2 mean value for coordination of teams, thus repositioning the item to the bottom of the ranking. Only three items record a mean value of 3,5; “I always monitor the progress of a task”, “I can collect information on a topic easily” and “I like planning my day”.

At the same time, it is observed that participants have a developed skills regarding supervising others (“I can monitor the progress of a task”) and teambuilding (“I can break the ice among people who do not know each other”). This indicates that women have developed skills related to coordination of teams, whereas leadership is very close to these skills, with mean value 3,3 (“I inspire others”).

Figure 31: Methodological skills assessment: Lebanon

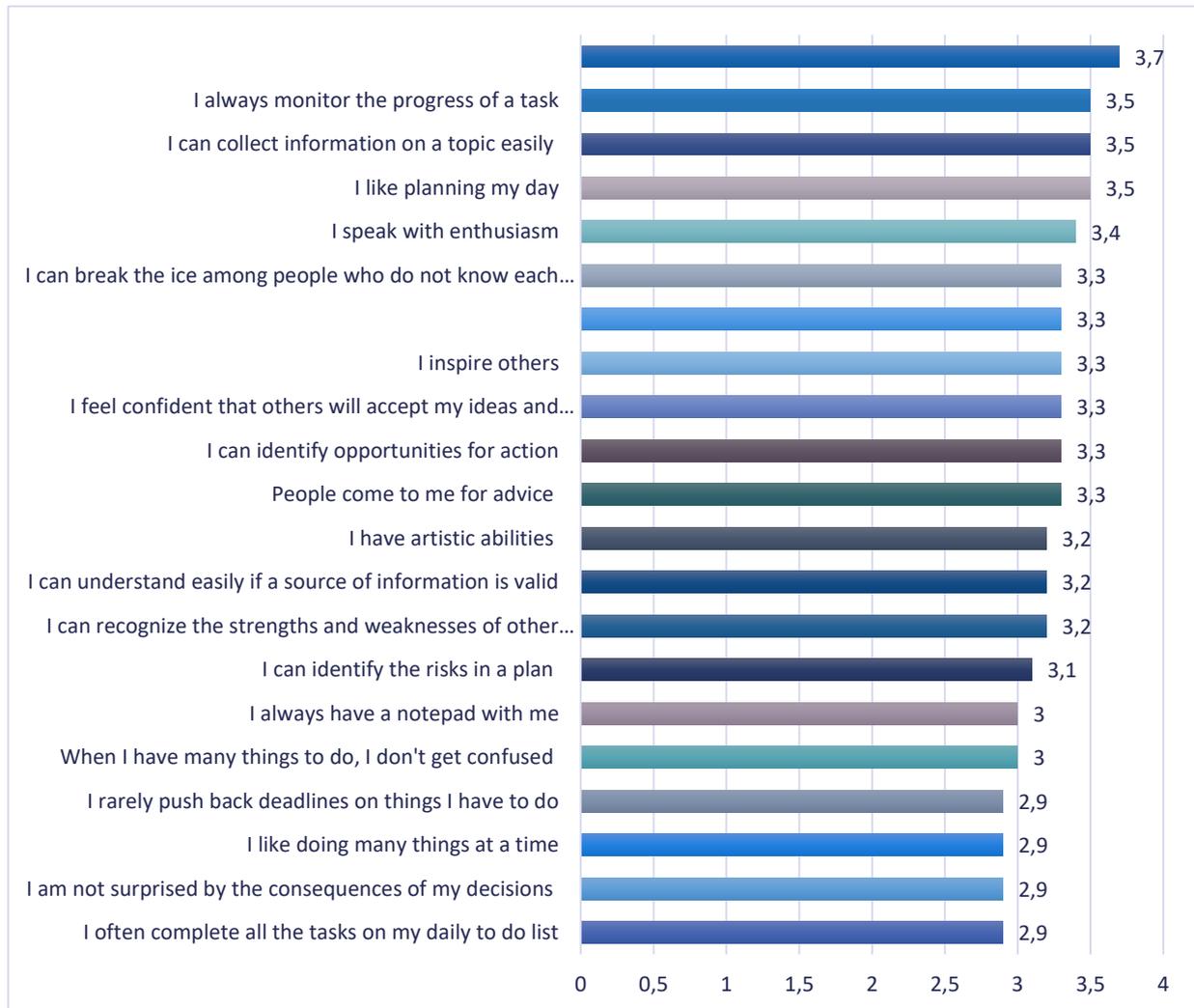


Table 13: Methodological skills ranking for women: Lebanon

Methodological skills	Mean value
Supervising others	3,5
Planning	3,5
Gather and evaluate data	3,5
Motivate and inspire others	3,4
Leadership	3,3
Teambuilding	3,3
Developing objectives and strategies	3,3
Mentoring	3,3
Problem-solving	3,3
Creativity/innovation	3,2
Proactivity	3,1
Multitasking	3

Prioritization	3
Organization	3
Decision-making	2,9
Time management	2,9
Coordinate teams	2,2

Final remarks

The outcomes of the analysis show that women have most of the skills developed at medium level. Methodological skills present the lowest mean values with coordinating teams recording the lowest value. However, skills related to leadership, evaluated through other items, such as supervising and inspiring others, seem to be well-developed. Tolerance to stress, collaboration, public speaking, time management and decision-making are some of the skills that could be further developed.

Soft skills supply: Spain

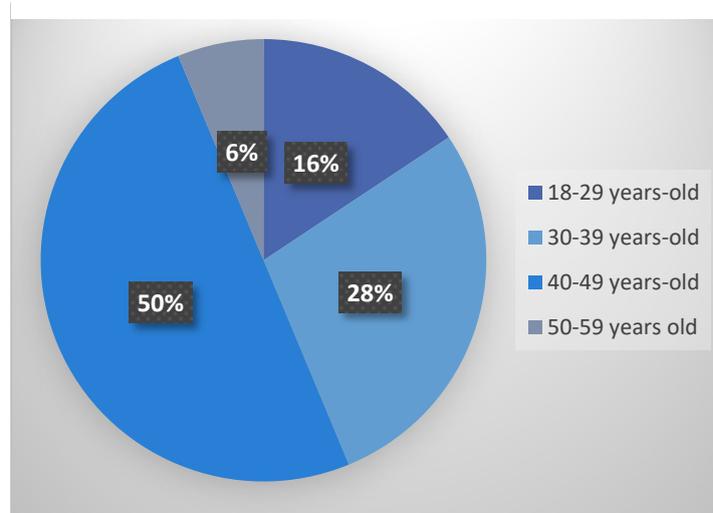
In this section, the results from the survey conducted in Spain are presented. As in the previous chapters, the first part includes some demographic information. The second part includes the results from the soft skills analysis.

Demographics

The demographic section includes information on the number of participants, the age, nationality and educational level of the participants. The professional status of the women is presented together with the economic activity of the company and their position in the company. Finally, information about the size of the household and the average income are not provided.

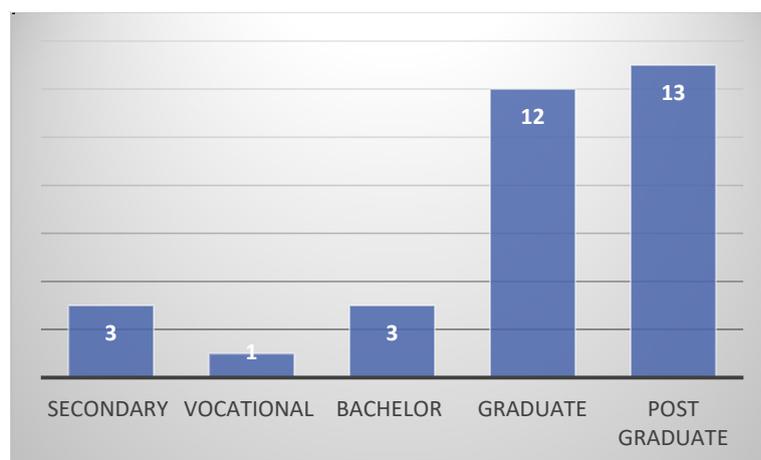
Thirty-two women participated in the survey conducted in Spain. As far as the age is concerned, half of the participants belonged in the age group of 40 to 49 years old. 28% were 30 to 39 years old, 16% were 18 to 29 and 6% were 50 to 59 years old.

Figure 32: Age



In their majority, participants were highly educated, with 13 holding a post graduate degree, 12 a graduate degree, 3 a bachelor, 3 had completed secondary education and 1 vocational training.

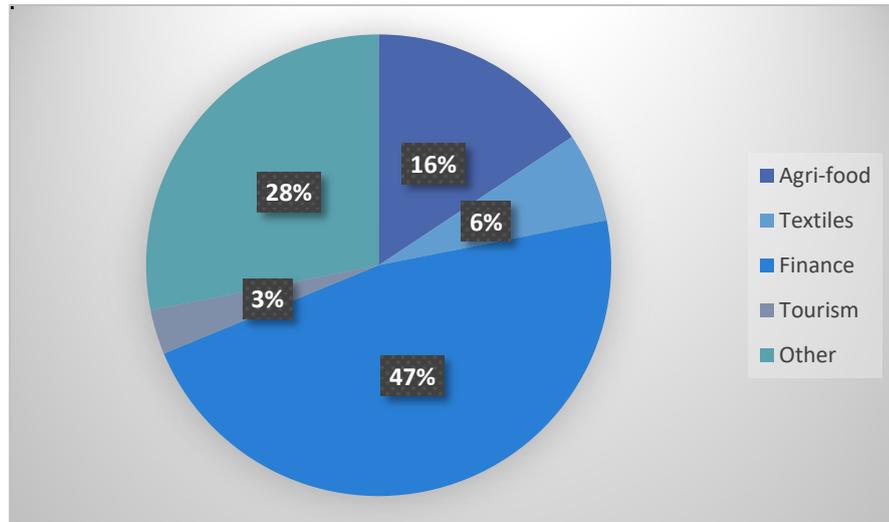
Figure 33: Educational level



Of the participants, one was unemployed, whereas 31 were employed and only one was

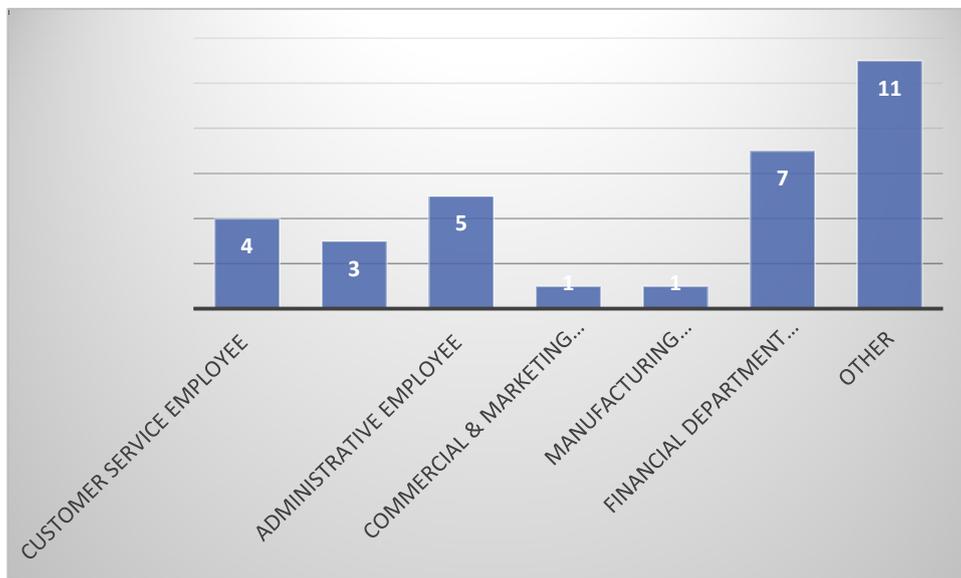
unemployed at the time of the survey.

Figure 34: Economic activity of the company



Almost half of the participants worked in finance (47%), 16% in agri-food, 6% in textiles, 3% in tourism and 28% in other, not specified, economic sectors. Concerning the participants' position in the company, 7 were employed in the financial department, 5 were administrative employees, 4 worked in customer service, 3 in operations and logistics, 1 in commerce, and 1 in manufacturing. 11 worked in other positions, not specified by the participants.

Figure 35: Position in the company



Soft skills

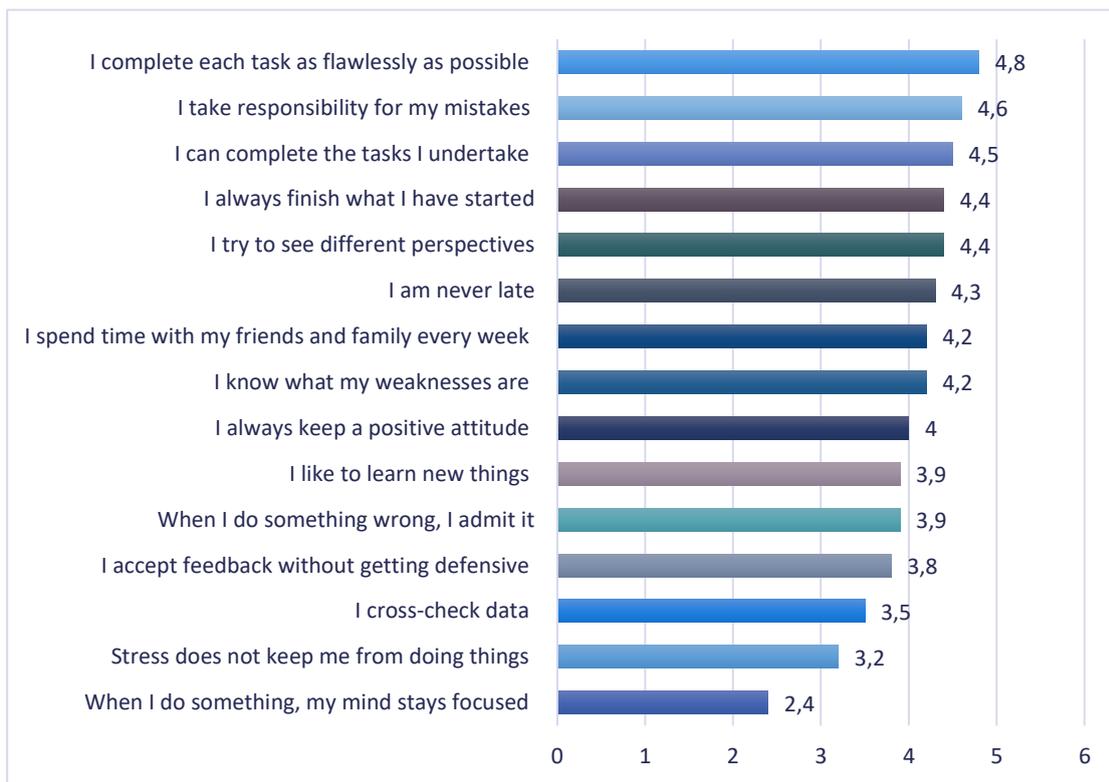
The outcomes of the data analysis concerning soft skills is organized in three sub-sections. As in the previous chapters, first the personal skills are presented, then the social and finally the methodological. It should be reminded that the participants responded on a scale 1-5

declaring their agreement with the items in the questionnaire. The answers indicate personal ability as assessed by the participants themselves.

Personal skills

Women responses regarding personal skills produced a wide range of mean values from 2,4 to 4,8. The only item scoring a mean value lower than three, indicating a negative assessment is “When I do something, my mind stays focused”⁴. This indicates that the ability of women to concentrate when doing something is assessed as low. Women participants are neutral regarding their ability to work under pressure with item “Stress does not keep me from doing things” scoring 3,2 mean value. The rest of the items had a mean value of 3,5 and higher, indicating positive self-assessment.

Figure 36: Personal skills assessment: Spain



As seen in the Figure 36, attention to detail skill has the highest mean value of 4,8 whereas 4,6 mean value is found for item “I take responsibility for my mistakes”. Self-confidence has a mean value of 4,5 (“I can complete the tasks I undertake”) ranking in third place and fourth place is shared by commitment (“I always finish what I have started”) and critical thinking (“I try to see different perspectives”). Being punctual (“I am never late”) has a mean value of 4,3 and life-balance and self-awareness 4,2. Finally, keeping a positive attitude a mean value of 4 was recorded.

Table 14: Personal skills ranking for women: Spain

Personal skills	Mean value
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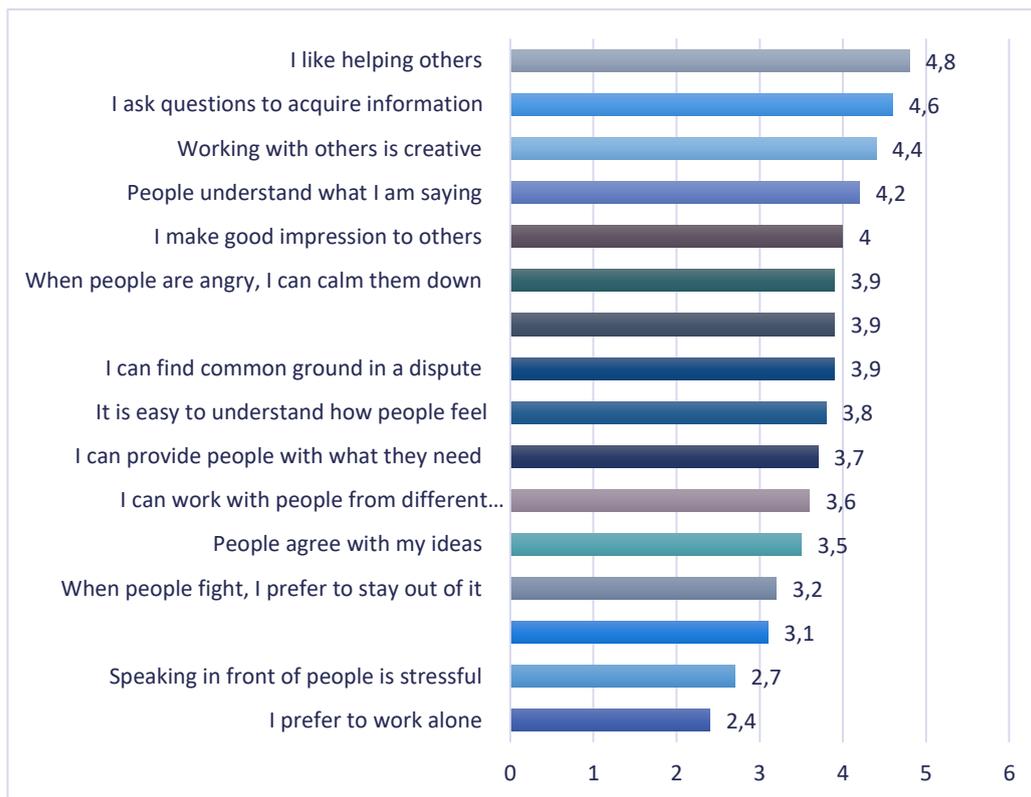
⁴ Item reversed for analysis.

Attention to detail	4,8
Responsibility	4,6
Self-confidence	4,5
Commitment	4,4
Critical thinking	4,4
Punctuality	4,3
Self-awareness	4,2
Life-balance	4,2
Positive attitude	4
Professional ethics	3,9
Continuous learning	3,9
Continuous improvement	3,8
Tolerance to stress/ Endurance	3,2
Concentration	2,4

Social skills

As in the case of personal skills, social skills present a wide range of mean values with items being assessed from 2,4 to 4,8. However, only five items recorded a mean value higher than 4, thus indicating clear positive assessment.

Figure 37: Social skills assessment: Spain



Those items are “I like helping others” with the highest mean value of 4,8, “I ask questions to acquire information” with 4,6, “Working with others” with mean value 4,4, “People understand what I am saying” 4,2 and “I make a good impression to others” with 4. Between 3,5 and 3,9, skills related to emotional intelligence, non-verbal communication and

cultural adaptability are found. Conflict management and persuasion recorded the lowest mean values indicating that women assess as possessing these skills at a low level.

Table 15: Social skills ranking for women: Spain

Social skills	Mean value
Service and attend	4,8
Oral communication	4,6
Teamwork	4,4
Conversation skills	4,2
Networking	4
Conflict management	3,9
Emotions management	3,9
Non-verbal communication	3,9
Emotional intelligence	3,8
Cultural adaptability	3,6
Influence	3,5
Persuasion	3,1
Public speaking	2,7
Collaboration	2,4

Methodological skills

Methodological skills record lower mean values compared to the previous categories, since only four items scoring over 4. Most of the items range from 3,1 to 3,9, indicating a neutral or somewhat positive assessment of the skills corresponding to those items.

Highest (4,4) mean value is recorded for item “I like planning my day” followed by “I weigh the pros and cons of different solutions when trying to solve a problem” with mean value 4,2. Mean value of 4,1 is recorded for “I can collect information on a topic easily”. Finally,

speaking with enthusiasm has a mean value of 4.

Figure 38: Methodological skills assessment: Spain

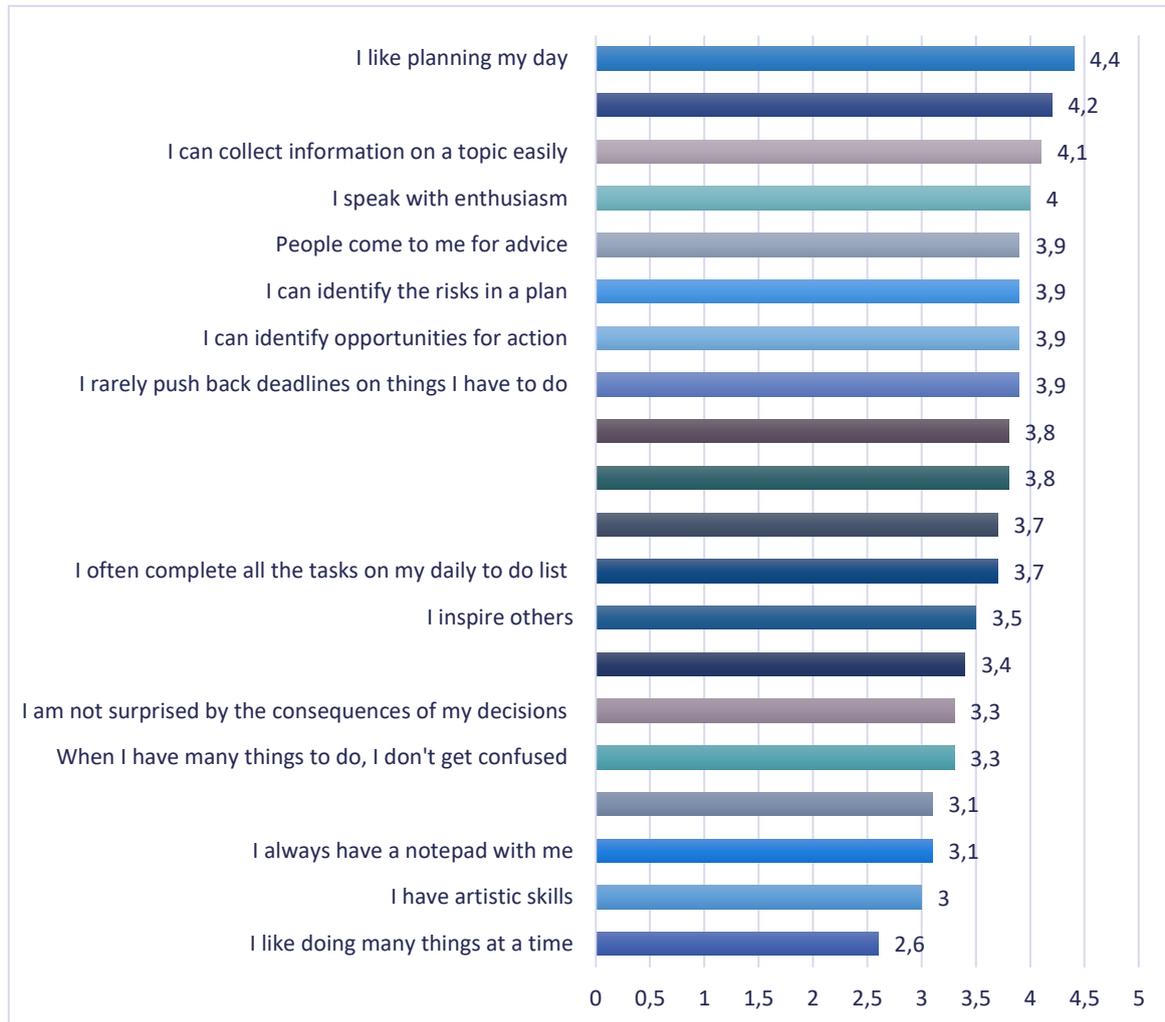


Table 16: Methodological skills ranking for women: Spain

Methodological skills	Mean value
Planning	4,4
Problem-solving	4,2
Gather and evaluate data	4,1
Motivate and inspire others	4
Proactivity	3,9
Developing objectives and strategies	3,9
Mentoring	3,9
Teambuilding	3,8
Supervising others	3,8
Time management	3,7
Leadership	3,5
Prioritization	3,3
Decision-making	3,3

Coordinate teams	3,1
Organization	3,1
Creativity/innovation	3
Multitasking	2,6

Even though mean values are not very high for any of the skills, only 5 are less than 3,5. These skills are less developed, according to the assessment of women who presented a neutral position towards these skills. Prioritization and decision-making, two skills that are highly related, both scored a mean value of 3,3, indicating a difficulty with making decisions and assessing situations and tasks. Coordinating a team and organization, again very much connected, were evaluated with 3,1. Creativity scored a mean value of 3 and the lowest mean value was recorded for multitasking (2,6).

Final remarks

Participants from Spain scored very high in several of the items in all three skills categories with attention to detail, service and attend and planning scoring the highest mean values. Tolerance to stress, public speaking and multitasking recorded the lowest mean values. It is interesting that both public speaking and multitasking are situations of high stress and the low evaluation of participants for these skills can be connected to the low ability to tolerate stress, as depicted by the responses. Since planning was one of the skills assessed as highest, then it could be assumed that stress is created by issues not planned, but unexpected. Perhaps, training in endurance and stress tolerance could increase the levels of the rest of the other skills.

Soft skills supply: Palestine

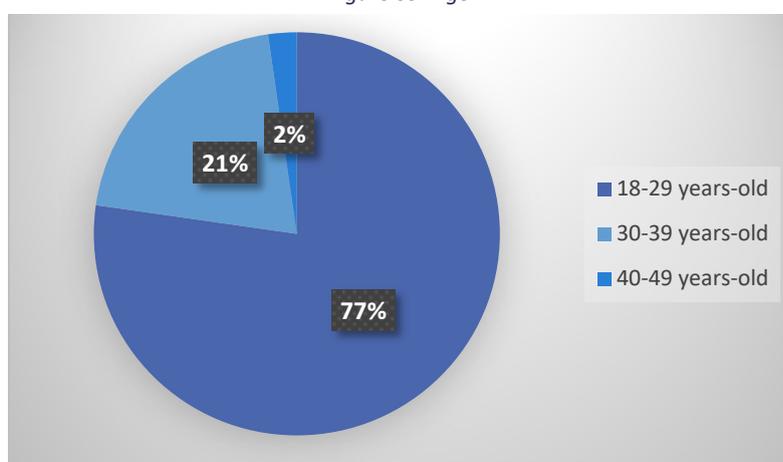
132 women participated in the survey conducted in Palestine regarding soft skills supply. The participants' demographic information are presented in the first part whereas the second part focuses on the results of the soft skills analysis. More specifically, outcomes of the analysis of the self-assessment of the participants concerning their possession of soft skills are presented. As in the previous sections, the results are organized in three sub-sections, personal, social and methodological skills.

Demographics

In this sub-section, information about the age, educational level are presented. In addition, data on the employment status of the women and of the economic activity in which they are active are outlined. Information about the household size and average income is not provided by participants.

As far as the age category in which participants belonged, the 77% of the women were 18 to 29 years-old, 21% belonged in the age group of 30 to 39 and 2 % in the age group of 40 to 49. No women over the age of 50 participated in the survey.

Figure 39: Age



Most of the participants were university graduates, holding a bachelor (73), 14 held a post-graduate degree, 14 a graduate degree, 17 had completed vocational education and 6 secondary school. 6 has a different background, which was not specified.

Figure 40: Educational level

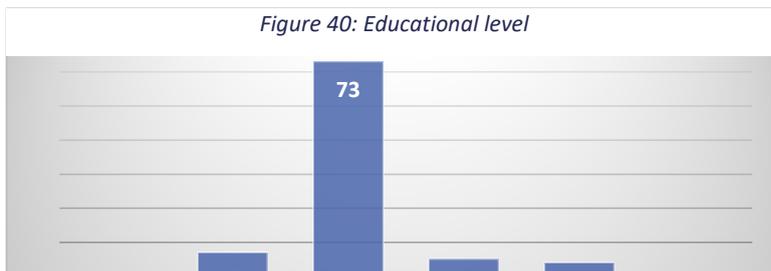
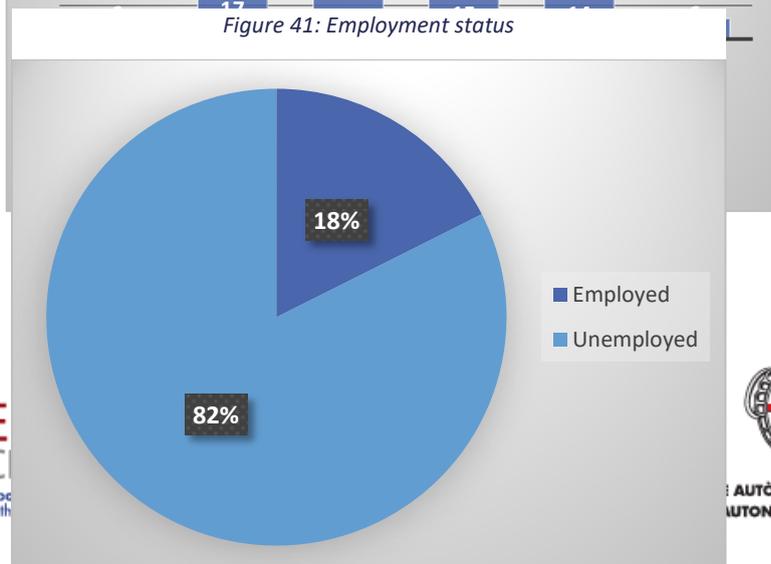


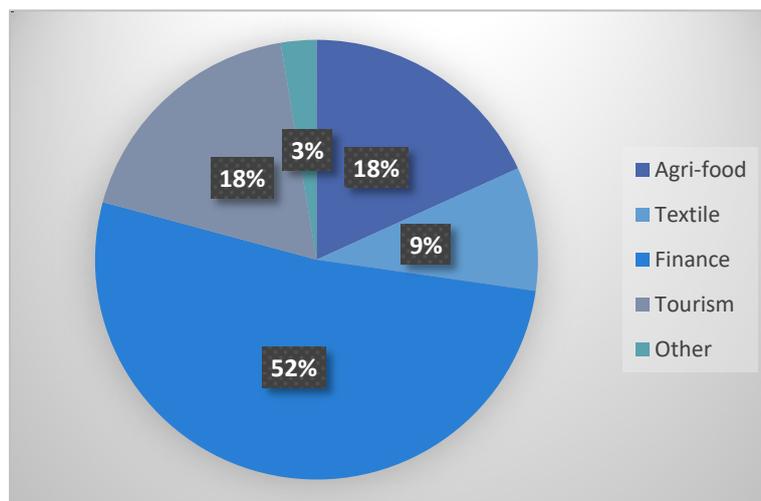
Figure 41: Employment status



The majority of the participants were unemployed (82%). Of the 102 unemployed participants, 88 were between 18 to 29 years old.

Of the 23 participants who were employed, 52% worked in finance, 18% in tourism and 18% in agri-food as well. 9% worked in textiles whereas 3% worked in a different yet unspecified sector.

Figure 42: Economic activity of the company



Soft skills

Personal skills

Most items in the personal skills category scored a mean value over 3,5 indicating positive self-assessment in relation to possessing the skills corresponding to the items. Being able to work under pressure (“Stress does not keep me from doing things”) has a mean value of 4,5 and ranks highest in this category. Very close, with mean value of 4,4, is continuous learning (“I like to learn new things”). The item “I always finish what I have started” scored a mean value of 4,2, whereas three items recorded 4,1 mean value. Those are “I try to see different perspectives”, “I complete each task as flawlessly as possible” and “I take responsibility for my mistakes”. Life-balance with item “I spend time with my friends and family every week”, critical thinking assessed through item “I cross check data” and positive attitude skill assessed through item “I always keep a positive attitude” record a mean value of 4. Self-awareness (3,9), self-confidence (3,8), professional ethics (3,7) and punctuality (3,7) recorded a slightly lower values, indicating positive assessment of those skills.

Lowest mean values are recorded with regard to being able to concentrate (3,4) and continuous improvement (3,2).

Figure 43: Personal skills assessment: Palestine

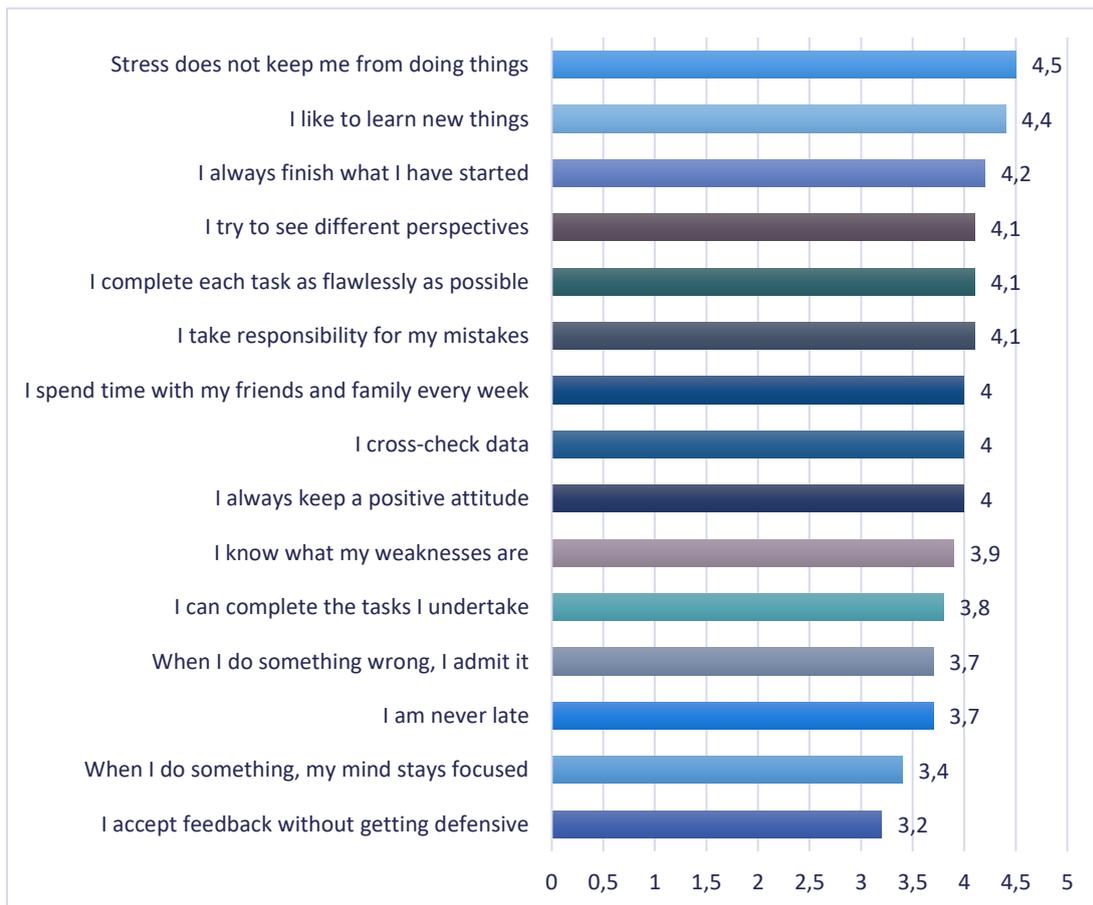


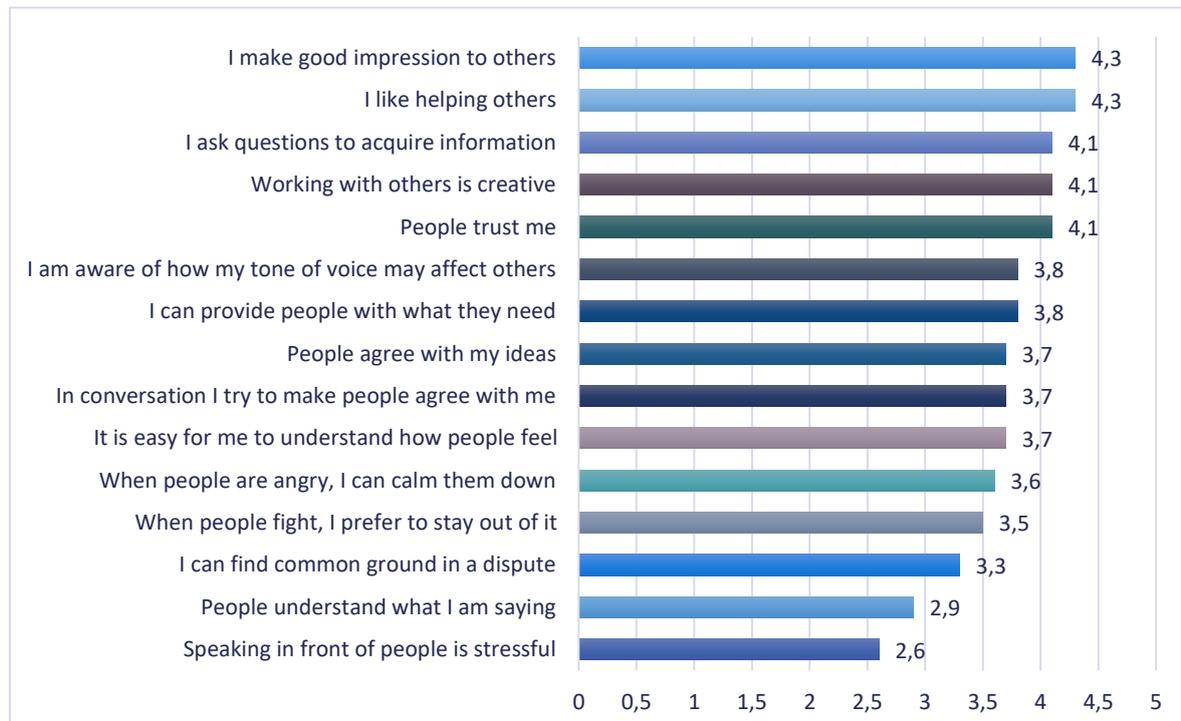
Table 17: Personal skills ranking for women: Palestine

Personal skills	Mean value
Tolerance to stress/ Endurance	4,5
Continuous learning	4,4
Commitment	4,2
Attention to detail	4,1
Critical thinking	4,1
Responsibility	4,1
Positive attitude	4
Life-balance	4
Self-awareness	3,9
Self-confidence	3,8
Professional ethics	3,7
Punctuality	3,7
Concentration	3,4
Continuous improvement	3,2

Social skills

Social skills mean values range from 2,6 to 4,3 differentiating significantly among some of the skills included in this category. For example, as seen in Figure 44, communication and public speaking are low in ranking. The item “Speaking in front of people is stressful” has a value of 2,6. When reversed, the item scores a mean value of 3,3 which is still in the lowest ranks compared to the rest of the social skills. The highest mean value 4,3 is recorded for item “I make good impression to others”, an imperative skill for growing a company’s network and “I like helping others” which is related to service and attend skill.

Figure 44: Social skills assessment: Palestine



Conversation and communication skills and teamwork score a mean value of 4,1, whereas

non-verbal communication, persuasion, and emotional intelligence score between 3,5 and 3,8 mean value.

Table 18: Social skills ranking for women: Palestine

Social skills	Mean value
Networking	4,3
Service and attend	4,3
Oral communication	4,1
Teamwork	4,1
Non-verbal communication	3,8
Persuasion	3,7
Influence	3,7
Emotional intelligence	3,7
Conflict management	3,6
Emotions management	3,6
Communication/Conversation skills	2,9
Public speaking	2,6

Methodological skills

Women participating in the survey scored over 3 in all methodological skills, with highest mean value being recorded for data collection and evaluation (“I can collect information on a topic easily”, 4,8). However, this is the only item for which mean value is over 4. The rest of the items score from 3,1 to 3,9. 10 items have a mean value >3,5. Leadership, mentoring and motivating others scored 3,5 whereas analytical skills such as problem solving and gathering and evaluating data are higher in the ranking (see Table 19). It should be noted that the item “I believe that if you want a job done well, you should do it yourself” which assesses teamwork has a high score of 3,9 which means that coordinating a team skill is low. More specifically, when reversed and analysed the item gives a mean value of only 2, which is the lowest of all items. This means that even though participants assessed positively their skills in teamwork in the previous category and seem able to monitor and supervise others, it seems that they have developed the ability to coordinate a team only partially.

Figure 45: Methodological skills assessment: Palestine

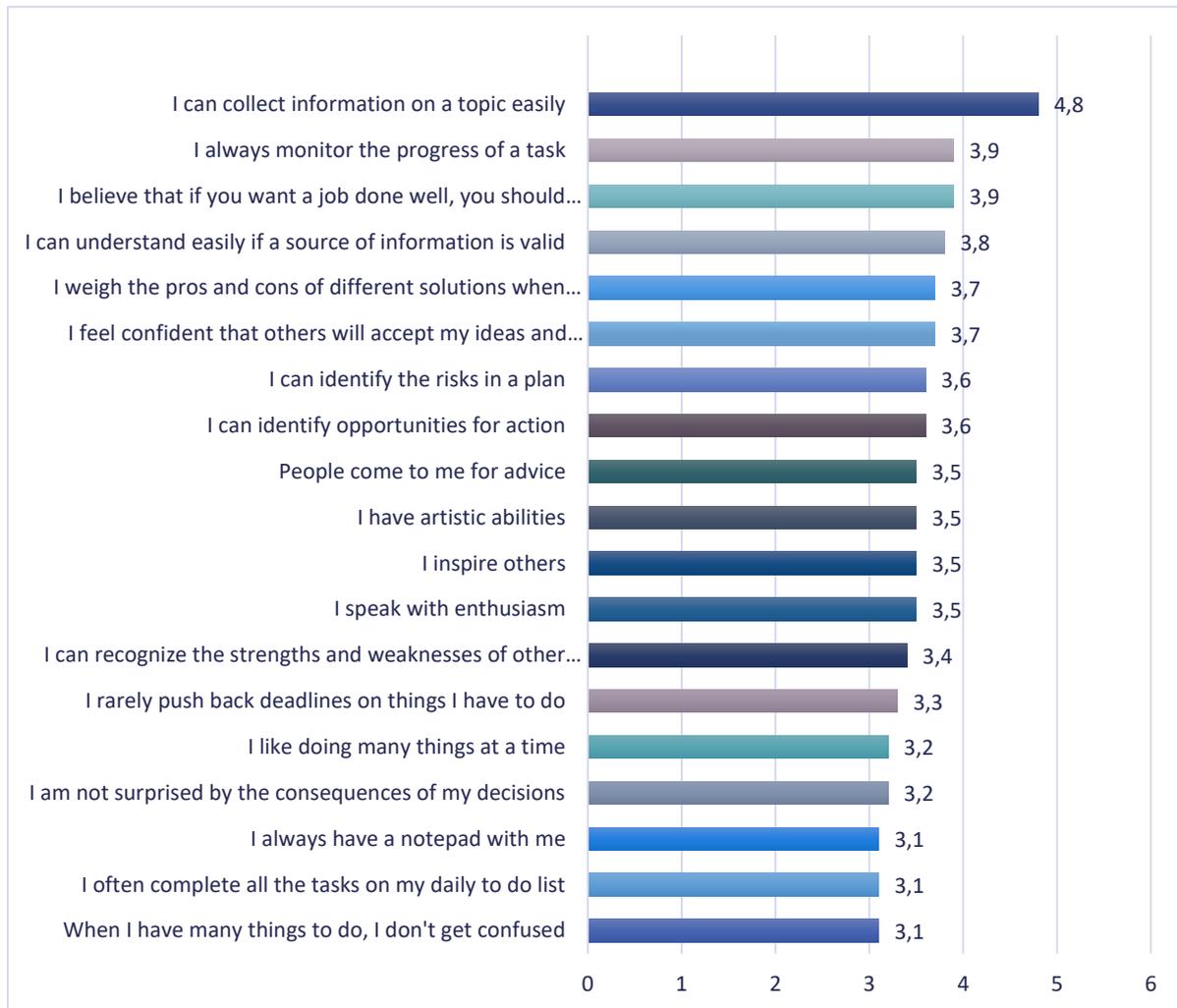


Table 19: Top ranking methodological skills for women: Palestine

Methodological skills	Mean value
Gather and evaluate data	4,8
Coordinate teams	3,9
Problem-solving	3,7
Proactivity	3,6
Developing objectives and strategies	3,6
Creativity/innovation	3,5
Leadership	3,5
Motivate and inspire others	3,5
Mentoring	3,5
Supervising others	3,4
Multitasking	3,2
Decision-making	3,2
Prioritization	3,1
Organization	3,1

Time management	3,1
Planning	3,1

Final remarks

In the particular survey, the age of the participants did not exceed the age of 49. This is the only case when comparing to the rest of the participating countries. This could be connected to the ability to use the internet to fill the questionnaire. However, it could be connected to the employment of women of older women in the previous years and connected to the role of women in the particular society or to the political situation. More information should be acquired to interpret this. In addition, most of the young people participating in the survey were unemployed.

Important finding, again possibly connected to the particular circumstances of the area, is the high resilience to difficult situations indicated by the high mean value recorded for tolerance to stress/endurance. This point should be further explored. In addition, participants evaluated highly their analytical and communication skills as well as their organizational and leadership skills.

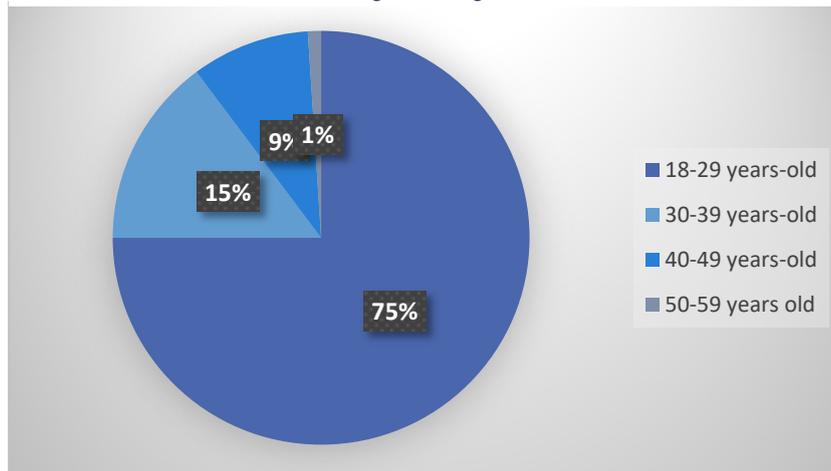
Soft skills supply: Jordan

In the survey conducted in Jordan, 196 women participated and completed the online questionnaire. The data concerning their demographics and the soft skills analysis results are presented in this section. The results are organized, as in the previous chapters, according to soft skills categorization; personal skills, social skills and methodological skills.

Demographics

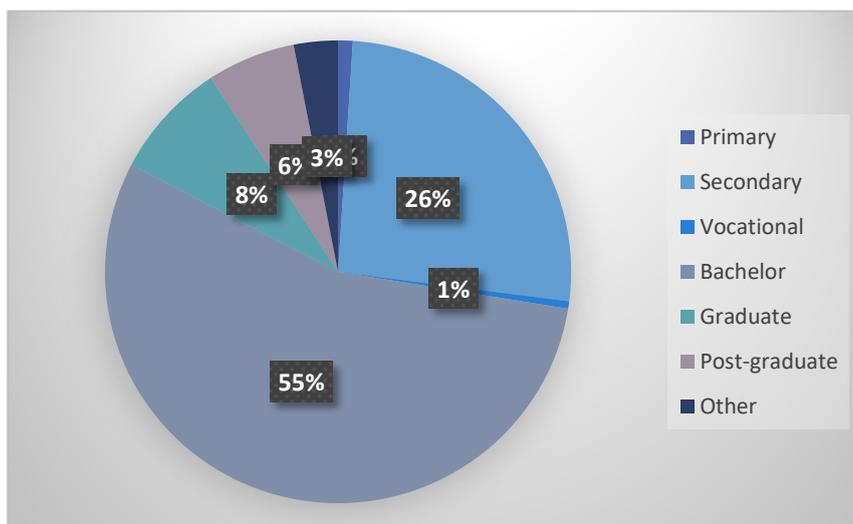
The majority of the participants in the survey in Jordan belonged in the age group of 18-29. Between the age of 30 and 39 was 15% of the participants, whereas 9% of the women represented the age group of 40 to 49 and only 1% were over 50 years-old.

Figure 46: Age



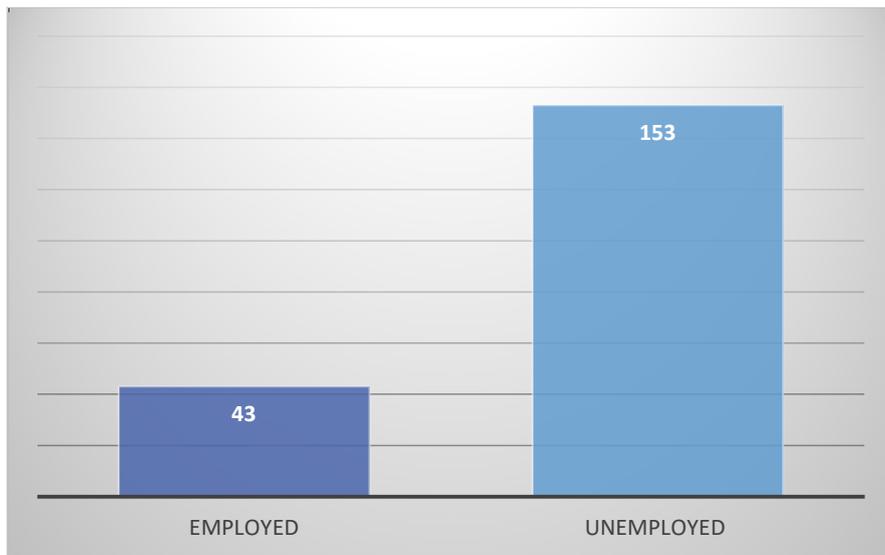
55% of the participants were university graduates, 26% had completed secondary education, 8% held a graduate diploma and 6% a postgraduate diploma. Only 1% had completed vocational education and 1% primary school. Finally, 3% stated they had completed a different level of education, however, without specifying it.

Figure 47: Educational level



As far as the participants employment status is concerned, 153 were unemployed at the time of the survey, of whom 124 belonged in the age group of 18-29.

Figure 48: Employment status



Of the 43 participants who were employed, only 13 responded to the question about the economic activity of the company. Of them, 2 stated that they were occupied in agri-food sector, 4 in textiles, 6 in finance and 1 in tourism. As far as their position is concerned, 2 were working in customer service, 5 as administrative employees, 1 in commercial and & marketing department, 2 in operations and logistics department and 2 in manufacturing.

Soft skills

Personal skills

The analysis of the responses given by women in Jordan showed that participants assess from neutrally to very positively their personal skills. Only three items have a mean value lower than 3,5. “Stress does not keep me from doing things”, a reversed item, which corresponds to Endurance or Tolerance to stress skill scored a mean value of 3,1. Concentration was evaluated with 3,2 using the item “When I do something, my mind stays focused”. Self-confidence assessed through the item “I can complete the tasks I undertake” scored 3,4 on the 5 points scale. The rest of the items scored a mean value over 3,5, thus indicating positive self-assessment with regard to the corresponding skills. Continuous learning scored the highest mean value of 4,6 and is followed by two items with mean value 4,4, “I always finish what I have started” and “I take responsibility for my mistakes”. Most of the participants keep a positive attitude with the specific skills scoring a mean value of 4,3. Four items scored a mean value of 4,2 and are related to life-balance, critical thinking, and attention to detail. A mean value of 4 is scored for self-awareness assessed through the item “I know what my weaknesses are”.

Figure 49: Personal skills assessment: Jordan

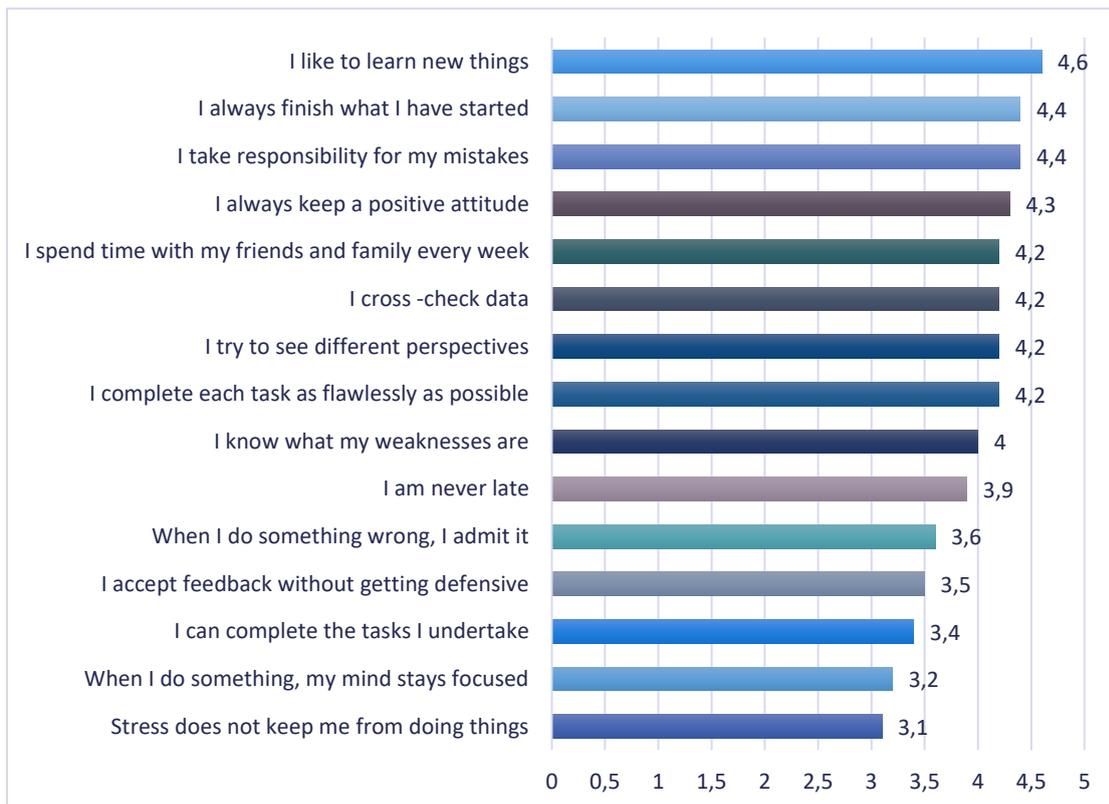


Table 20: Personal skills ranking for women: Jordan

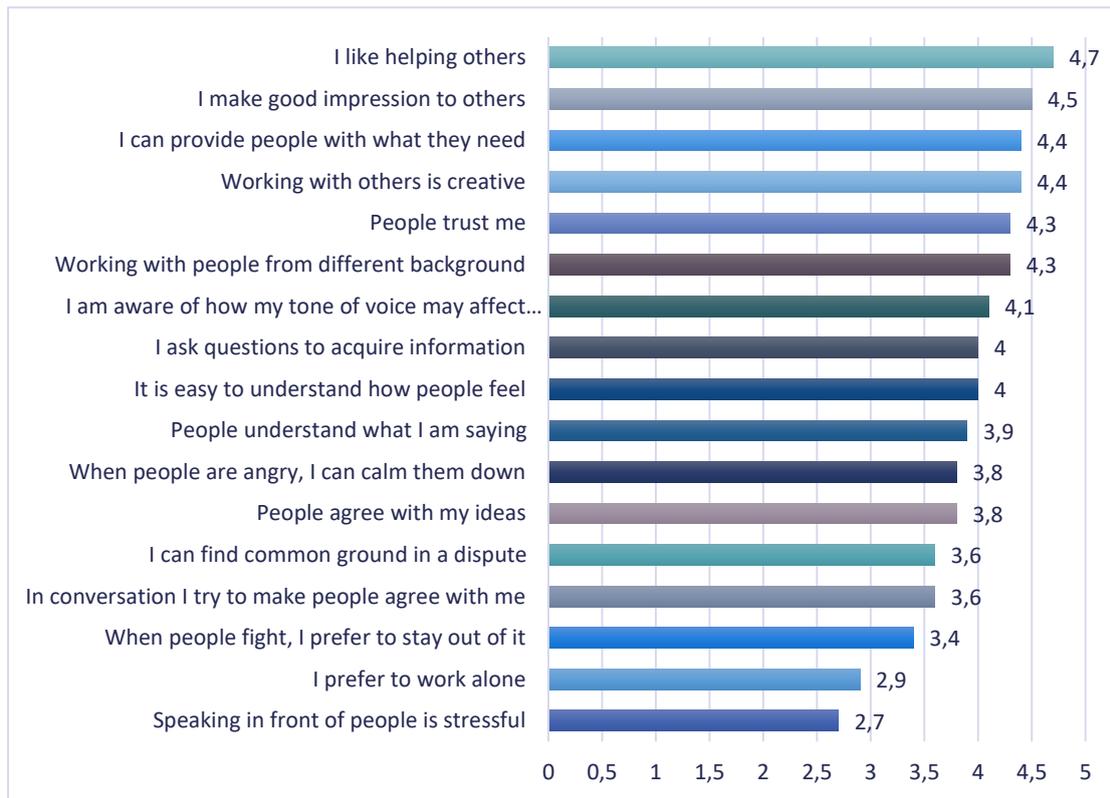
Personal skills	Mean value
Continuous learning	4,6
Commitment	4,4
Responsibility	4,4

Positive attitude	4,3
Life-balance	4,2
Attention to detail	4,2
Critical thinking	4,2
Self-awareness	4
Punctuality	3,9
Professional ethics	3,6
Continuous improvement	3,5
Self-confidence	3,4
Concentration	3,2
Tolerance to stress/ Endurance	3,1

Social skills

As in most of the participating countries, the item “I like helping others”, which corresponds to Service and attend skill, scores a high mean value of 4,7, reaching almost total agreement with this item. With mean value 4,5, participants are able to grow the network of a company by making a good impression, a skill probably connected to the next skill, namely service and attend. With mean value of 4,4 for “I can provide people with what they need”, participants consider themselves as highly able in attending others/customers and their needs. Teamwork is also highly valued and positively assessed through the item “Working with others is creative”. Cultural adaptability is also high with the item “I can work with people from different background” scoring a mean value of 4,3. Non-verbal communication and emotional intelligence have mean values of 4,1 and 4 respectively, indicating high level of empathy. Lower in ranking based on the mean values are items related to conflict management and negotiation.

Figure 50: Social skills assessment: Jordan



Even though working with others is considered as a skill participants have advanced, they also scored high in the item “I prefer to work alone” which when analysed produced a 2,9 mean value for collaboration, which is second from the bottom leaving public speaking last with 2,7 mean value. The low value of public speaking can be connected to the low ability to tolerate stress, as seen in the previous section. Not being able to control or function under pressure may have a negative impact on this particular skill.

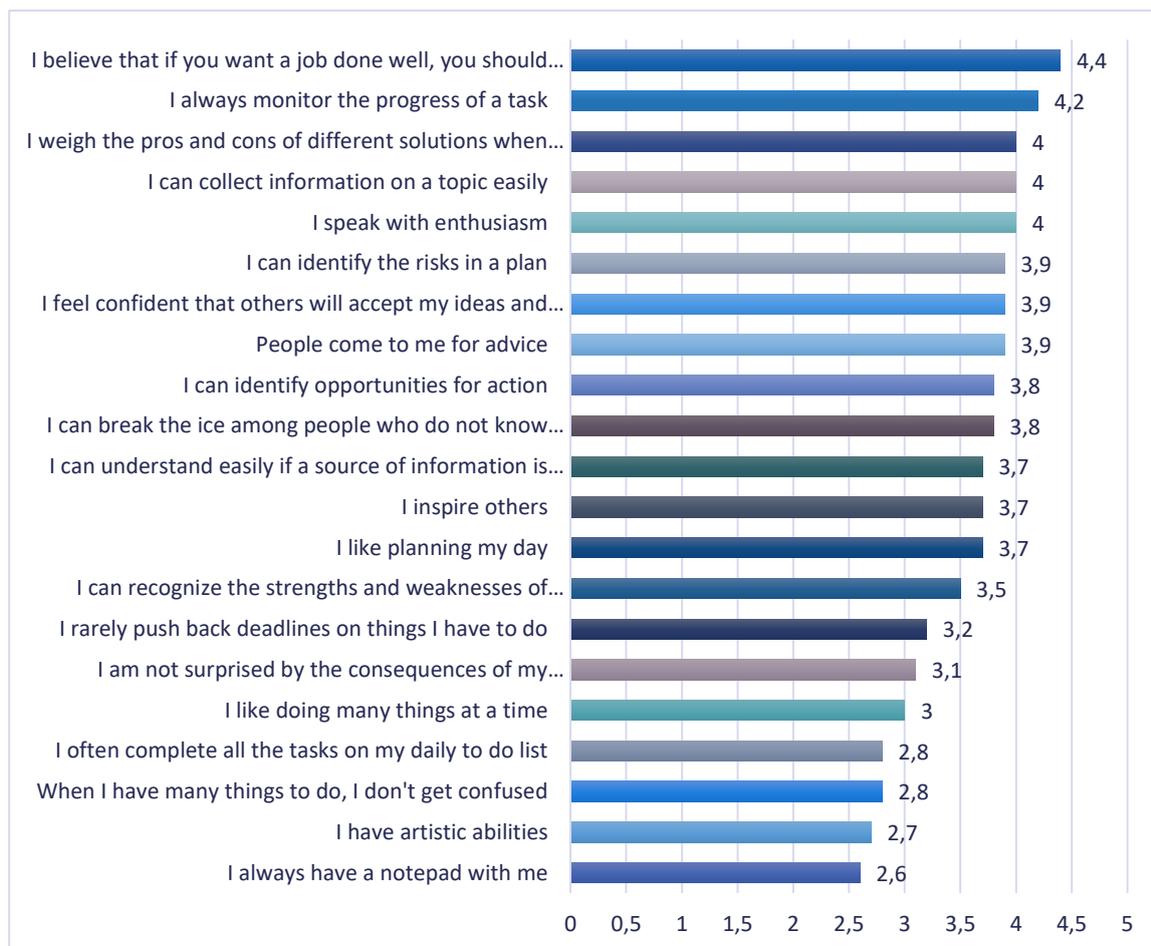
Table 21: Social skills ranking for women: Jordan

Social skills	Mean value
Service and attend	4,7
Networking	4,5
Teamwork	4,4
Cultural adaptability	4,3
Non-verbal communication	4,1
Emotional intelligence	4
Oral communication	4
Communication/Conversation skills	3,9
Influence	3,8
Emotions management	3,8
Persuasion	3,6
Conflict management	3,6
Collaboration	2,9
Public speaking	2,7

Methodological skills

Even though participants assessed their ability to work in a team with a mean value of 4,4 in the previous category, coordinating teams is not a skill they have mastered. Participants scored the highest mean value for item “I believe that if you want a job done well, you should do it yourself” compared to all countries. When analysed in reverse to acquire actual information on the corresponding skill, which is coordinating teams, the mean value is as low as 2,5. A bit higher, with mean value 2,6, is item “I always have a notepad with me” which is connected to organization skills. Multitasking and time management scored also a

Figure 51: Methodological skills assessment: Jordan



low 2,8 mean value.

Five items scored mean value of 4 or higher. More particularly, “I weigh the pros and cons of different solutions when trying to solve a problem”, “I can collect information on a topic easily” and “I speak with enthusiasm” recorded mean value 4. “I always monitor the progress of a task” connected to supervising the work of others recorded a 4,2 mean value.

Table 22: Methodological skills ranking for women: Jordan

Methodological skills	Mean value
Supervising others	4,2
Motivate and inspire others	4
Problem-solving	4
Gather and evaluate data	4

Leadership	3,9
Proactivity	3,9
Mentoring	3,9
Teambuilding	3,8
Developing objectives and strategies	3,8
Planning	3,7
Decision-making	3,1
Multitasking	3
Prioritization	2,8
Organization	2,8
Time management	2,8
Creativity/innovation	2,7
Coordinate teams	2,5

Final remarks

It is indicated that participants from Jordan are very skilled in personal skills were the mean values were significantly higher than the rest of the categories. Continuous learning, commitment and responsibility are three of the highest personal skills showing that women are focused and determined to develop their skills and perform well in their work. Providing people with what they want is at the top of their skills together with growing a company's network due to their communication skills. Supervising and mentoring others are also skills well developed.

However, low tolerance to stress and, therefore, low resiliency has been identified as one of the skills needed to be more developed. Managing stress could also benefit public speaking, a skill also less advanced compared to the rest. Finally, skills related to organization, coordination and time management could be more developed through training.

Soft skills women in total

This section includes the ranking of soft skills for countries in total. The ranking formed by calculating the mean values of soft skills for the 6 six countries. As seen in Table 23, the first 10 highest in ranking skills concern social and personal abilities. Attending to the needs of others ranks first with the 4,2 being the highest mean value. Women participants assessed themselves as learning and developing continuously and being responsible in their work. Third place is shared by six skills, 3 personal and 3 social. With a mean value of 4, women participants assessed their skills to pay attention to detail, be committed in what they are doing and critically thinking as very advanced. The same is true for oral communication, networking and teamwork. Life-balance, a skills that ranked 7th and 8th in most countries, but was ranked in 5th place in Jordan and 3rd place in Italy, raising the mean value of the particular skill. The same mean value is recorded for gathering and evaluating data, which is the first methodological skill to appear in the table with mean value of 3,9. Gather and evaluate data as a skills scored medium to all countries, indicating that is a skills women have but could be more developed.

Table 23: Soft skills supply ranking in total

Skills category	Skill	Mean	Rank
Social	Customer/User orientation/ Service and attend	4,2	1 st
Personal	Continuous learning	4,1	2 nd
Personal	Responsibility	4,1	2 nd
Personal	Attention to detail	4	3 rd
Personal	Commitment	4	3 rd
Personal	Critical thinking	4	3 rd
Social	Oral communication	4	3 rd
Social	Networking	4	3 rd
Social	Teamwork	4	3 rd
Personal	Life-balance	3,9	4 th
Methodological	Gather and evaluate data	3,9	4 th
Personal	Self-awareness	3,8	5 th
Personal	Self-confidence	3,8	5 th
Social	Cultural adaptability	3,8	5 th
Personal	Punctuality	3,7	6 th
Personal	Positive attitude	3,7	6 th
Social	Non-verbal communication	3,7	6 th
Social	Communication/Conversation skills	3,7	6 th
Methodological	Planning	3,7	6 th
Methodological	Problem-solving	3,7	6 th
Personal	Professional ethics	3,6	7 th
Social	Emotional intelligence	3,6	7 th
Methodological	Motivate and inspire others	3,6	7 th
Methodological	Developing objectives and strategies	3,6	7 th
Methodological	Supervising others	3,6	7 th

Methodological	Mentoring	3,6	7 th
Social	Influence	3,5	8 th
Social	Conflict management	3,5	8 th
Social	Emotions management	3,5	8 th
Methodological	Proactivity	3,5	8 th
Methodological	Teambuilding	3,5	8 th
Methodological	Leadership	3,4	9 th
Personal	Continuous improvement	3,3	10 th
Personal	Tolerance to stress/ Endurance	3,3	10 th
Social	Persuasion	3,2	11 th
Methodological	Time management	3,2	11 th
Methodological	Decision-making	3,1	12 th
Methodological	Organization	3,1	12 th
Methodological	Creativity/innovation	3,1	12 th
Personal	Concentration	3	13 th
Methodological	Prioritization	3	13 th
Social	Public speaking	2,9	14 th
Methodological	Multitasking	2,9	14 th
Methodological	Coordinate teams	2,9	14 th
Social	Collaboration	2,8	15 th

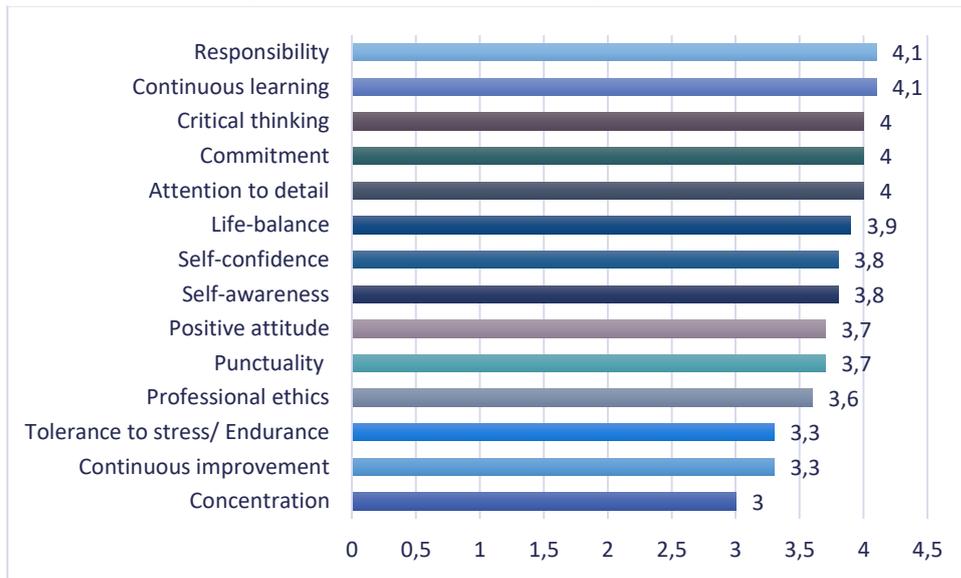
The two skills related to the self and the ability of women to understand themselves, their strengths and weaknesses and to assess their ability to undertake tasks in their work come hand in hand in 5th place together with the ability to work with people from different backgrounds. Six skills are recorded with 3,7 mean value, two of each category. As the mean value of the skills drop, methodological skills increase in number which shows that methodological skills are more in need of development. For example, time management, decision-making, organization, prioritization, multitasking and coordinating teams are all in the last places. All these skills are related to management and leadership and could be seen in relation to contextual factors.

In the next section, the overview of skills supply by women is seen with regard to the three skills category.

Personal skills: *All countries*

Women participants scored overall higher in personal skills compared to social methodological ranging from 3 to 4,1 mean values. Responsibility and continuous learning are the top two skills for women, since both recorded high mean values in all countries. Even though women like to learn new things, they are not very comfortable with receiving feedback. This should be taken into consideration together with self-awareness and self-confidence, two skills that record higher mean values than continuous improvement. Being aware of one's strengths and weaknesses and the self-confidence stemming from that knowledge should produce more positive outcomes for continuous improvement. With the available data, it is not possible to explain this divergency but should be taken into consideration and further explored.

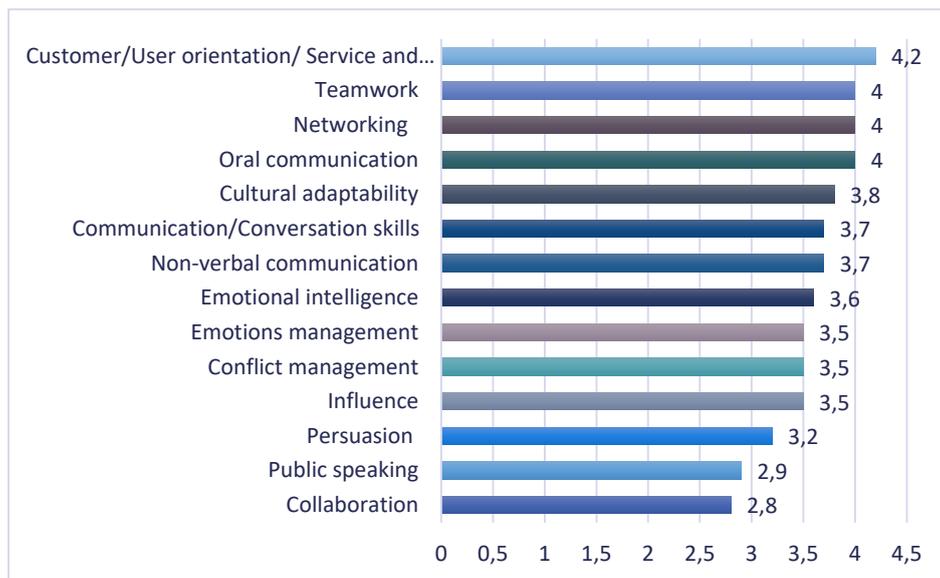
Figure 52: Personal skills mean value for all countries



Social skills: All countries

Service and attending to the needs of the customers was the highest-ranking skill in the final evaluation and it is further explored with the data collected from the focus groups. Teamwork, networking outside the company and oral communication are three of the highest ranked skills in all countries, indicating that women are very capable in communicating, working with others and forming alliances. However, influencing others and public speaking are not the strongest skills women consider as having mastered. Collaboration was evaluated based on the item “I prefer to work alone” which produced a mean value of 2,8. When reversed this item produced a 3,1 mean value for collaboration which is second from the bottom of the ranking. This shows that even though teamwork is considered creative and one of the highest valued skills, collaborating to complete tasks is rather a challenge. This should be further examined.

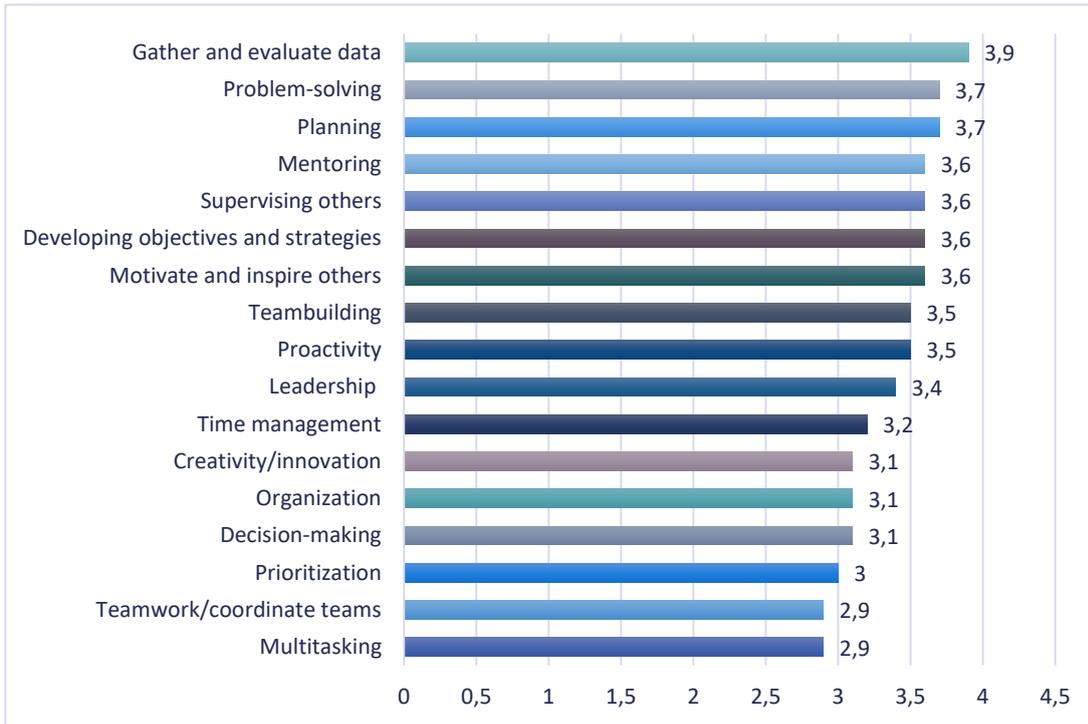
Figure 53: Social skills mean value for all countries



Methodological skills: All countries

Methodological skills rank lower than personal and social skills with mean values not reaching 4 which indicates the need to focus on developing those skills. As it has already been mentioned and seen in Figure 54, women assess themselves as being able to gather and evaluate data at high level with 3,9 mean value. Problem -solving and planning follow with 3,7. Supervising, mentoring, motivating others to achieve objectives record 3,6 mean value.

Figure 54: Methodological skills mean value for all countries



Lowest in ranking are coordinating teams

and multitasking with 2,9 mean value. The fact that women are able to mentor and supervise other with mean value 3,6 but assess their ability to coordinate teams as less developed should be further considered in relation to perceptions about women taking leading roles in teams.



Quantitative research: *Soft skills demand*



Quantitative Research: Soft skills demand

The second part of the quantitative research involved, as presented in the methodology, a survey with the participation of managers coming from the four economic sectors of interest: agri-food, textiles, finance and tourism. In this research activity, as in the previous one, six countries, Greece, Italy, Lebanon, Spain, Palestine, and Jordan participated in data collection, whereas the partner from Tunisia designed the online platform and was responsible for gathering the data from all partners. The findings are first presented separately for each country and then a total ranking of skills in demand by businesses is provided. The soft skills are evaluated by representatives of companies based on a 5-point Likert scale indicating the importance of each item. Therefore, the results here indicate the importance managers place in each soft skill.

Soft skills demand: Greece

Soft skills demand by companies in Greece is based on data collected by 122 companies. 17 of the companies completed only a small part of the questionnaire and their responses are not included. As a result, the total number of individual entries taken into consideration is 105. The findings are organized in three sub-sections corresponding to the categorization of soft skills used in this study, namely personal, social and methodological.

Demographics

Males and females are almost equally represented in the sample, with 46% of the participants being male, 51% female. Two people were identified as non-binary and one as transexual. As far as age is concerned, 41 people belonged in the age group of 40-49, 26 participants were 30-39 years-old and 24 participants were 50 to 59 years old. Fewer people participated from the youngest and oldest age groups with only 9 people aged 18-29 and 5 people over the age of 60.

Figure 55: Gender

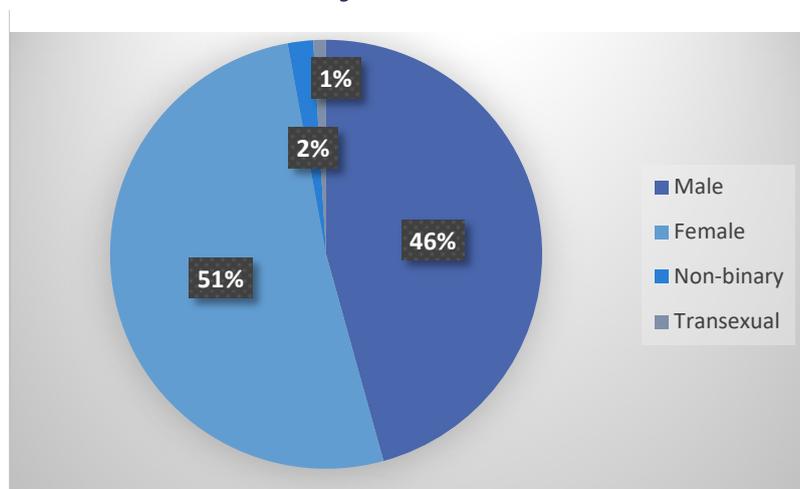
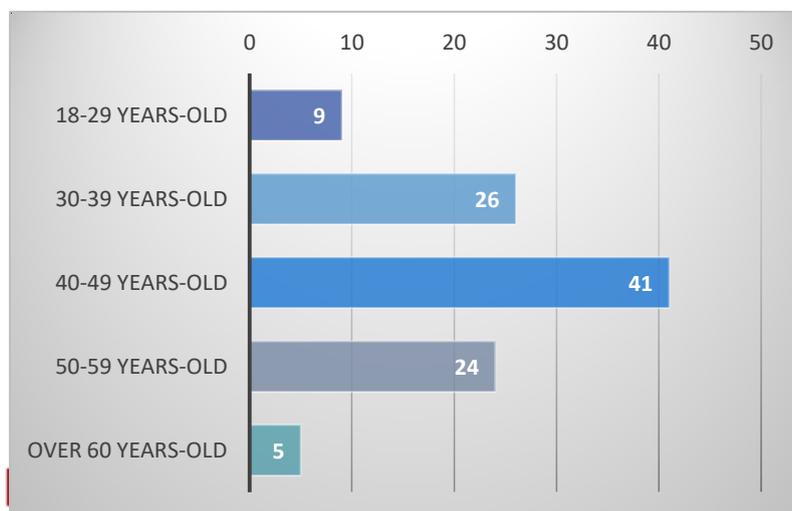
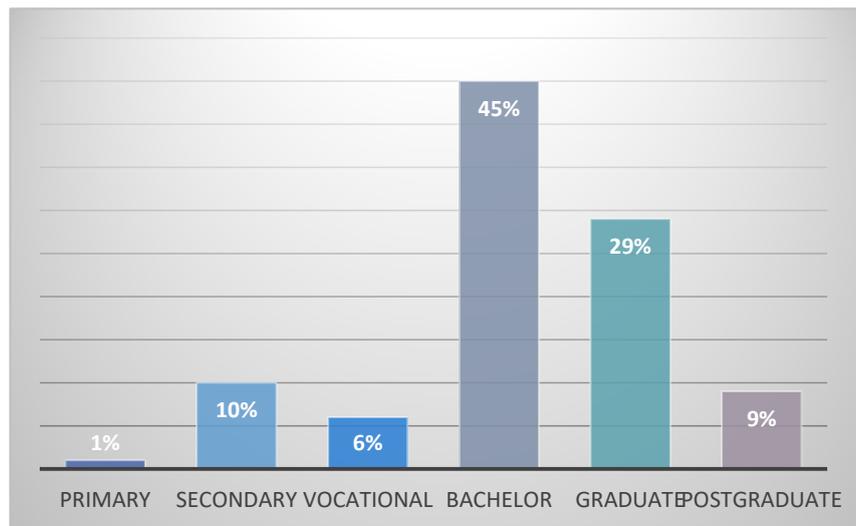


Figure 56: Age



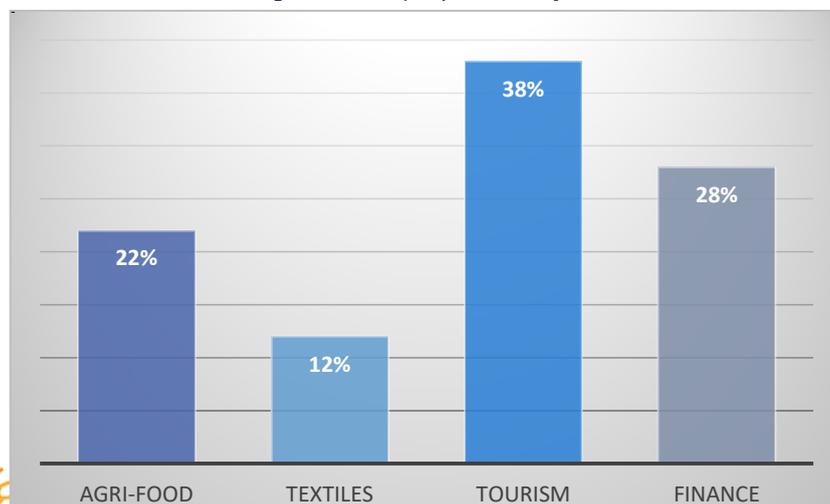
All participants were Greek and the country of residence was Greece. Concerning their educational level, almost half (45%) of the participants had a Bachelor degree. 29% had also a Graduate and 9% a postgraduate degree. Only 6% had vocational educational background, 10% had completed secondary school and one person had completed primary education.

Figure 57: Educational level



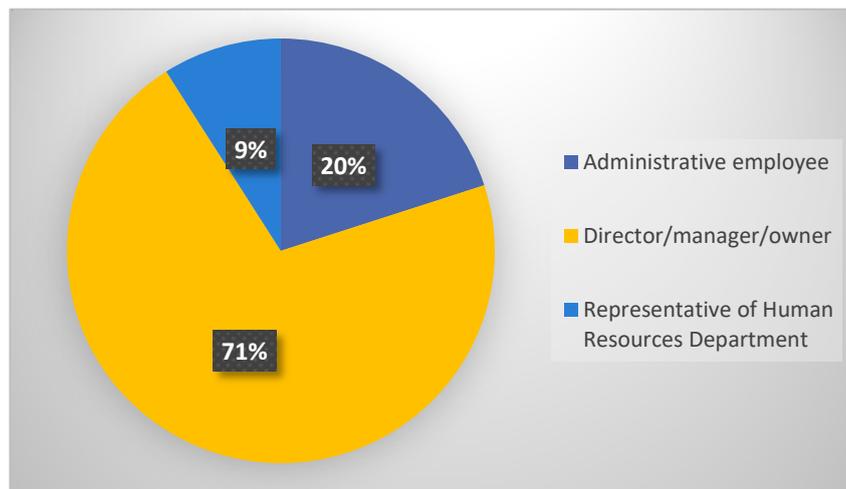
As far as the economic field of the companies is concerned, 38% were categorized in tourism, 28% in finance, 22% in agri-food and only 12% in textiles.

Figure 58: Company economic field



Most of the participants (71%) were directors, managers or owners of the companies. 20% were administrative employees and only 9% were representatives of Human Resources departments.

Figure 59: Position in the company



In terms of the companies size, the majority was characterized as micro, since less than 10 people were employed. 30 companies were characterized as small, 10 as medium and, finally, 11 as large.

Personal skills

Personal skills are evaluated as highly important by managers in Greece, since, as it is seen in Figure 60, apart from public speaking, all other items record mean values over 4. Highest in ranking with mean value 4,7 is responsibility which is evaluated in importance through the item “Taking responsibility for mistakes”. Basic skills of writing and reading are second with 4,6 mean value, whereas “Keep positive attitude” and “Adaptability to new conditions” scored a mean value of 4,5 indicating the importance of these skills for managers. Continuous learning but also working under pressure are also high in importance with mean value 4,3. Self-awareness (4,2), Life balance (4,1) and Autonomy (4,1) score lower in ranking.

Figure 60: Personal skills mean value for Managers: Greece

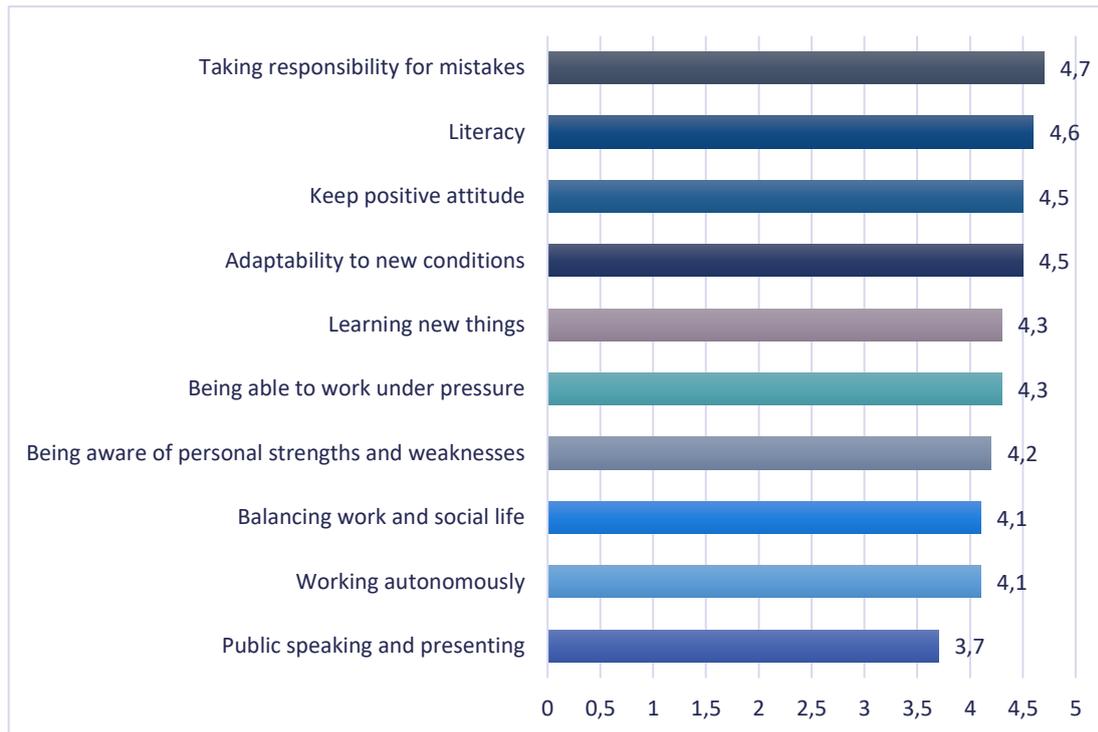


Table 24: Personal skills ranking for managers: Greece

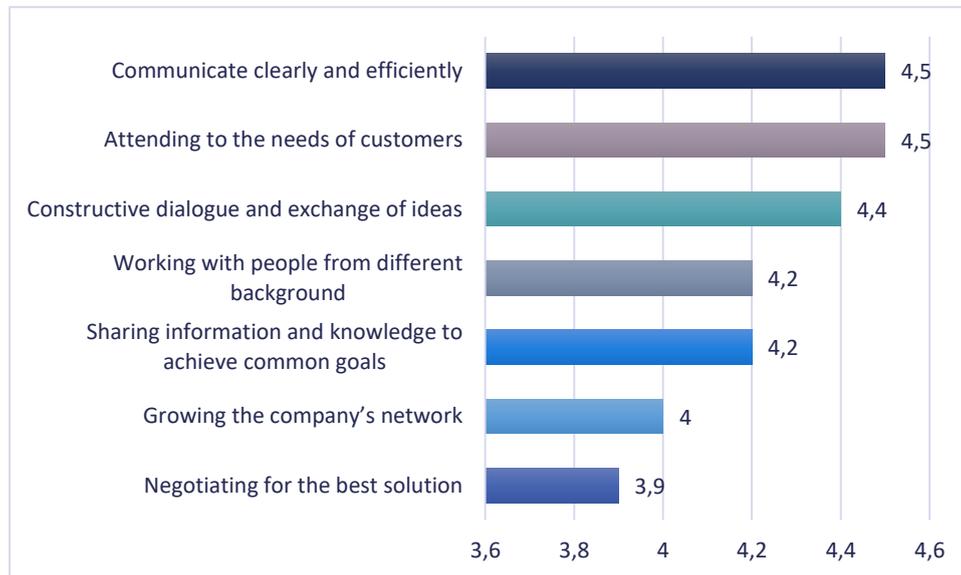
Personal skills	Mean
Responsibility	4,7
Literacy	4,6
Positive attitude	4,5
Adaptability	4,5
Continuous learning	4,3
Tolerance to stress/ Endurance	4,3
Self-awareness	4,2
Autonomy	4,1
Balancing work and social life	4,1
Public speaking	3,7

Social skills

Social skills of high importance for managers in Greece are Communication and Service and attend. As seen in Figure 61, both of these skills, recorded a mean value of 4,5

evaluated through items “Communicate clearly and efficiently” and “Attending to the needs of customers”. Slight lower with mean value 4,4 is the item “constructive dialogue and exchange of ideas” which corresponds to Conversation skills.

Figure 61: Social skills mean value for Managers: Greece



“Working with people from different background” and “Sharing information and knowledge to achieve common goals” recorded a mean value of 4,2, whereas networking skills was evaluated as important with a mean value of 4. Finally, last in the ranking of soft skills by managers come negotiation skills with mean value 3,9.

Table 25: Social skills ranking for managers: Greece

Social skills	Mean value
Communication	4,5
Customer/User orientation/ Service and attend	4,5
Conversation skills	4,4
Cultural adaptability	4,2
Collaboration	4,2
Networking	4
Negotiation	3,9

Methodological skills

As far as methodological skills are concerned, managers participating in the survey evaluated as highly important problem solving and time management with mean value for both 4,5. Teambuilding and prioritization of tasks under pressure recorded mean value of 4,4. The items “Able to work on multiple projects and tasks” and “Imparting knowledge to new employees” were evaluated with 4,3. Slightly lower with 4,2 are evaluated goals setting as well as “Collecting and evaluating data”. Planning, coordinating activities and leading others are skills lower with mean value of 4, whereas lowest value is recorded for item “Monitoring the performance of others”.

Figure 62: Methodological skills mean value for Managers: Greece



This indicates that managers search firstly for employees who can provide with solutions, work under pressure and contribute to several projects and secondarily for employees who can supervise or plan and coordinate the activities of the team.

Table 26: Methodological skills ranking for managers: Greece

Methodological skills	Mean value
Problem solving	4,5
Time management	4,5
Teambuilding	4,4
Prioritization	4,4
Multitasking	4,3
Mentoring	4,3
Vision setting	4,2
Gather and evaluate information	4,2
Leadership	4,1
Motivate and inspiring others	4
Assign tasks	4
Proactivity	4
Planning	4
Supervising others	3,9

Final remarks

The analysis of the responses shows that managers in Greece appreciate and consider as important all of the soft skills. Apart from 3 skills with mean value a little under 4, all other skills recorded mean values over 4. The three skills with mean value 3,7 Public speaking, 3,9 Negotiation and 3,9 Supervising others are, of course still evaluate as important, since the score is very close to 4. Highest in rank skill is responsibility for one's work which could be seen together with the much lower mean value of 4,1 recorded for balancing work and social life. Even though this issue should be further explored, it could be taken into consideration as a divergency between the skills -and the goals- women and managers have. In addition, managers place great importance on skills directly connected with completing a task but less importance on skills related to leadership. Assigning tasks and supervising others are not highly demanded by managers.

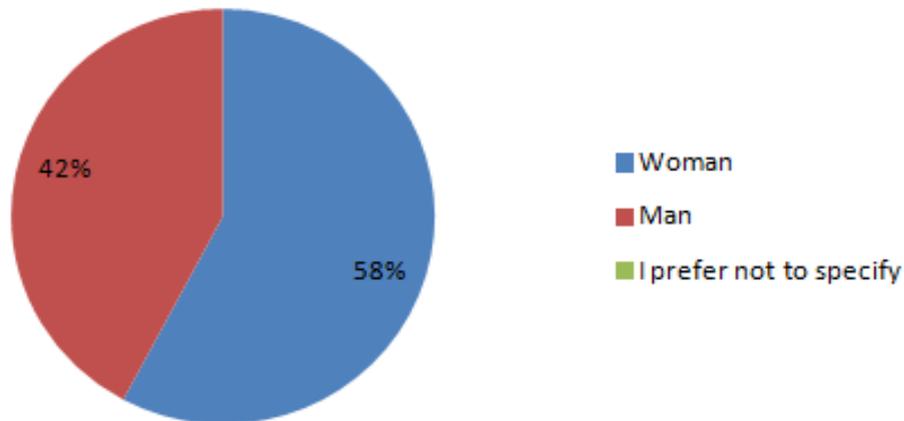
Soft skills demand: Italy

258 managers participated in the survey conducted in Italy. In the following sections the demographic information and the skills in demand are presented.

Demographics

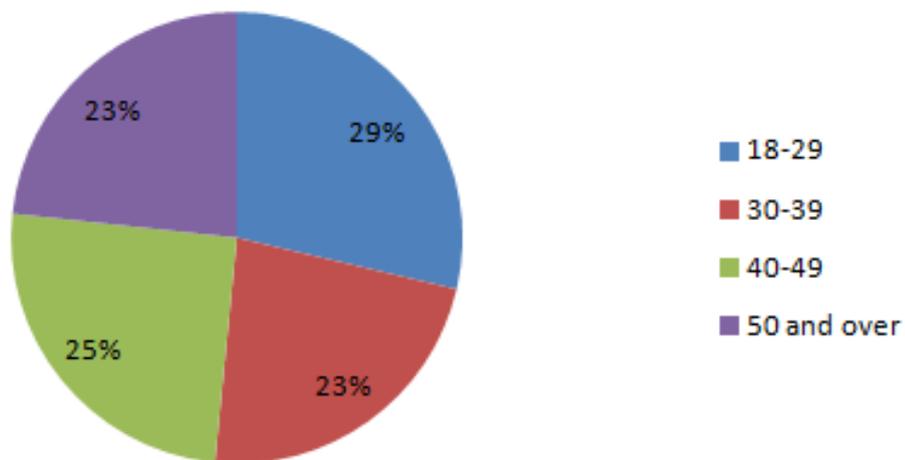
Of the 258 managers who participated in the survey 42% were men and 58% were women.

Figure 63: Gender



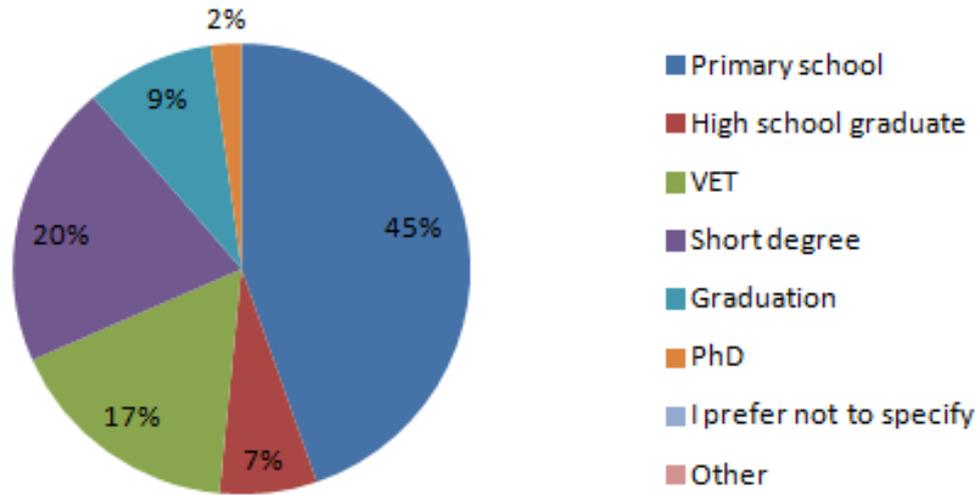
As far as their age is concerned, participants were distributed to all age categories, with 29% belonging in the 18-29 age category, 25% to 40-49, 23% were between 30-39 years old and 23% over 50 years old.

Figure 64: Age category



All participants were Italian living in Italy. Their educational level is depicted in the next graph.

Figure 65: Educational level



The majority of the participants had completed primary school (45%), whereas 20% had short degree and 17% had completed vocational training. 9% were university graduates and 7% high school graduates.

As far as the economic activity of the company is concerned, 40% were active in textile, 38% in finance, 15% in agri-food and 6% in tourism. The rest of the participants were active in various other economic activities.

Figure 66: Economic activity of the company

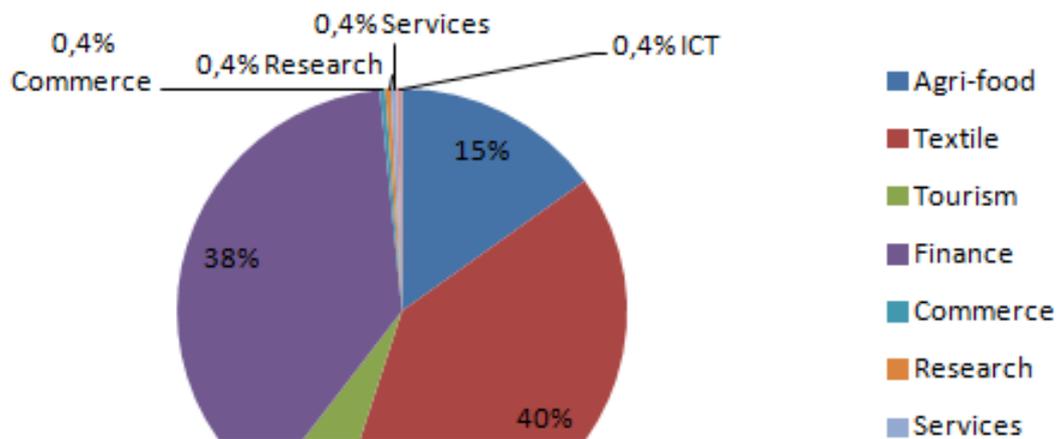
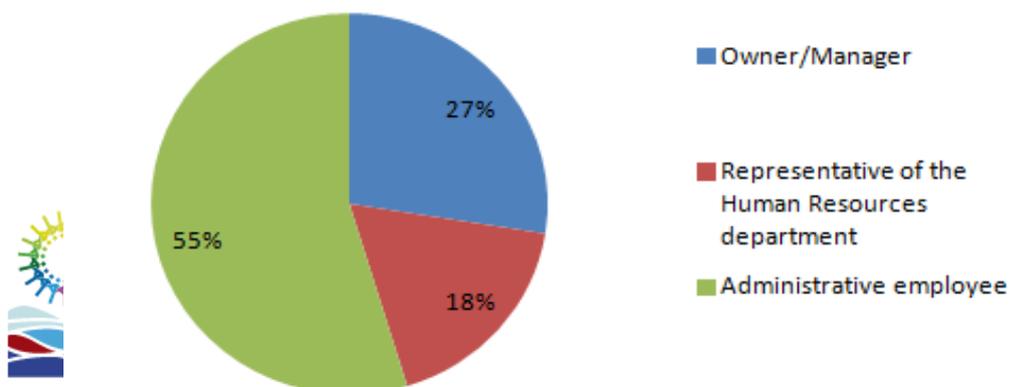


Figure 67: Position in the company

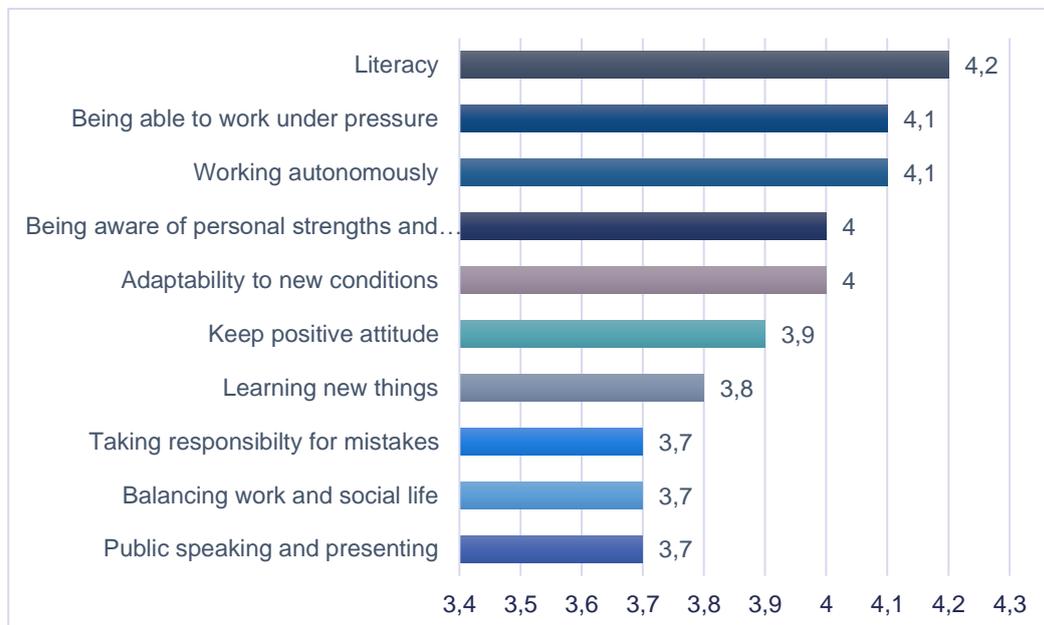


55% of the participants were administrative employees, 27% own the company or were managers and 18% were working in human resources department.

Personal skills

The analysis of data regarding personal skills showed that all skills in this category are close in importance, since the range is 0,5 with the item evaluated lowest in importance recording a mean value of 3,7 and the item evaluated highest recording a value of 4,2. Literacy is the first skill in demand by managers with a mean value of 4,2. Being able to work under pressure and working with low supervision share the second place with 4,1 mean value. Self-awareness and adaptability have a mean value of 4, indicating that managers consider important that their employees know their strengths and weaknesses and at the same time are flexible and able to adapt in different conditions.

Figure 68: Personal skills mean value for Managers: Italy



Lowest in importance compared to the rest of the skills is public speaking. Public speaking and presenting in front of people can be low in importance due to lack of need for such a

skill. However, taking responsibility is interesting and should be further examined. Finally, it is indicated by the data that managers are less concerned with their employees being able to balance their work and social life compared to other skills.

Table 27: Personal skills ranking for managers: Italy

Personal skills	Mean
Literacy	4,2
Tolerance to stress/ Endurance	4,1
Autonomy	4,1
Self-awareness	4
Adaptability	4
Positive attitude	3,9
Continuous learning	3,8
Responsibility	3,7
Balancing work and social life	3,7
Public speaking	3,7

Social skills

All social skills ranged from 3,7-3,9 which means that there are of the almost the same importance to managers. However, as seen in Figure 69, attending the needs of customers ranks first with a 3,9 mean value. Negotiating for the best solution ranks last with 3,7 and the rest of social skills have a mean value of 3,8

Figure 69: Social skills mean value for Managers: Italy

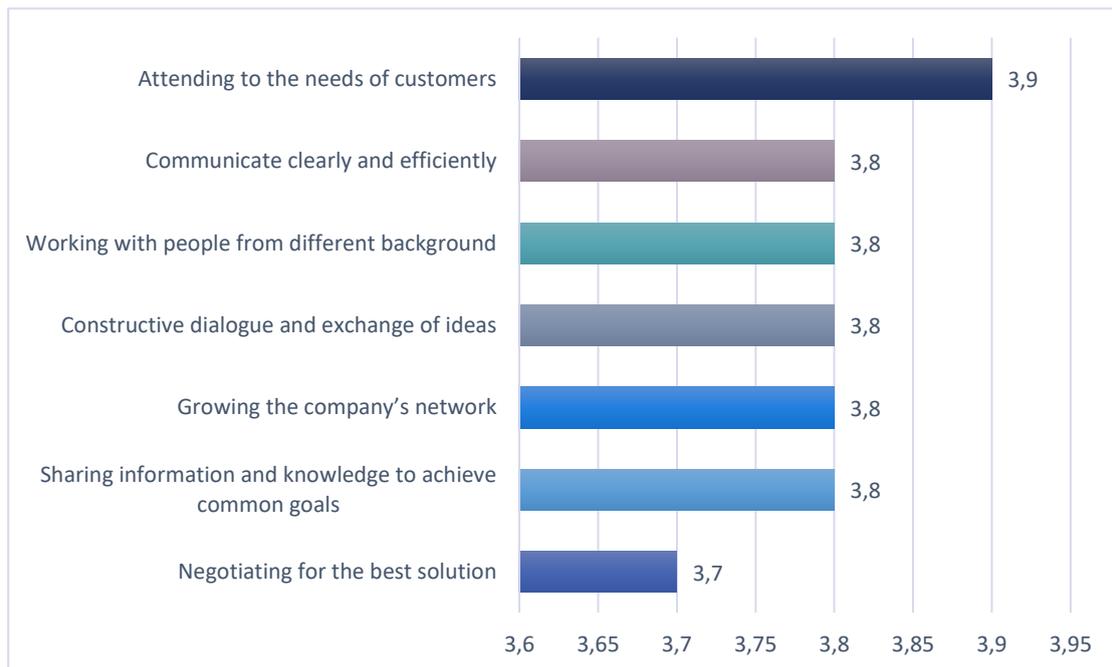


Table 28: Social skills ranking for managers: Italy

Social skills	Mean value
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Service and attend	3,9
Communication	3,8
Conversation skills	3,8
Cultural adaptability	3,8
Collaboration	3,8
Networking	3,8
Negotiation	3,7

Methodological skills

As in the previous skills category, methodological skills value range is 3,7 to 3,9, indicating the skills included here are of similar importance to managers. With 3,9 mean value, at the top of the methodological skills are imparting knowledge to new employees as well as setting goals and plan their attainment. This mean that managers place high importance on mentoring and vision setting skills both of which entail the growth and development, whether this is a result of employees' progress through mentoring or through new projects and development that comes with vision and goals attainment.

Figure 70: Methodological skills mean value for Managers: Italy



However, assigning tasks to others, coordinating their implementation and monitoring the progress are lower Than problem solving, time management, prioritization, working under pressure, teambuilding, proactivity and planning all recorded a mean value of 3,8.

Table 29: Methodological skills ranking for managers: Italy

Methodological skills	Mean value
Mentoring	3,9

Vision setting	3,9
Problem solving	3,8
Time management	3,8
Motivate and inspiring others	3,8
Teambuilding	3,8
Prioritization	3,8
Multitasking	3,8
Proactivity	3,8
Planning	3,8
Supervising others	3,7
Leadership	3,7
Assign tasks	3,7

Final remarks

The outcomes of the analysis show that managers from Italy value higher personal skills, since only items from that category managed to record values over 4. Literacy, a basic personal skill, ranks highest, whereas 4,1 was the mean value for both tolerance to stress and autonomy. This indicates that ideally employees have high level of tolerance to stress and can work with minimum supervision. As in the case of Greece, balancing work and social life is again lower together with public speaking. All social skills are almost of the same importance ranging from 3,7 to 3,9. The same is true for methodological skills as well. It should be noted though, that the last methodological skills in ranking are supervising other, assigning tasks and leadership, skills connected to leading and managing a team. This is again common with the case of Greece.

Soft skills demand: Lebanon

This section presents the results of the survey conducted with managers in Lebanon. The section includes demographic information and the analysis of the different categories of soft skills.

Demographics

Participants distribution according to gender was 55% male and 45% female, whereas 32% of the participants belonged to the age group of 18-29. 26% belonged to 30-39 age category, 21% to 40-49 age category and, finally 20% belong to the age category over 50.

Figure 71: Gender

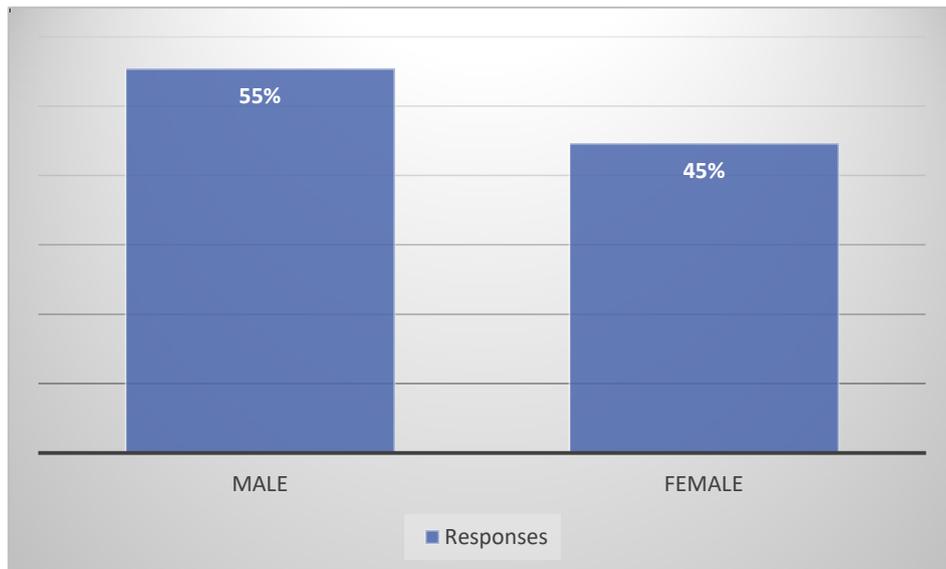
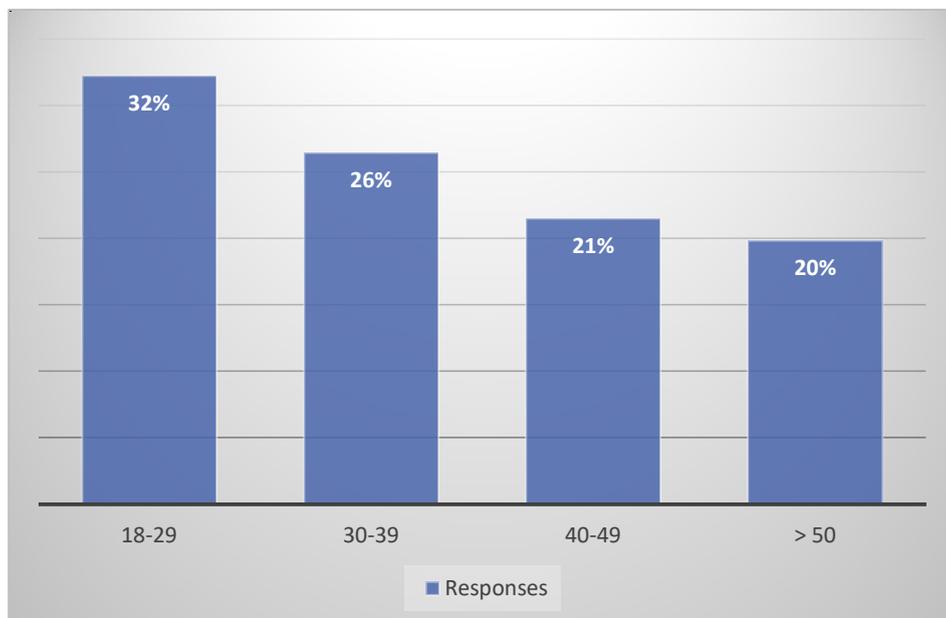
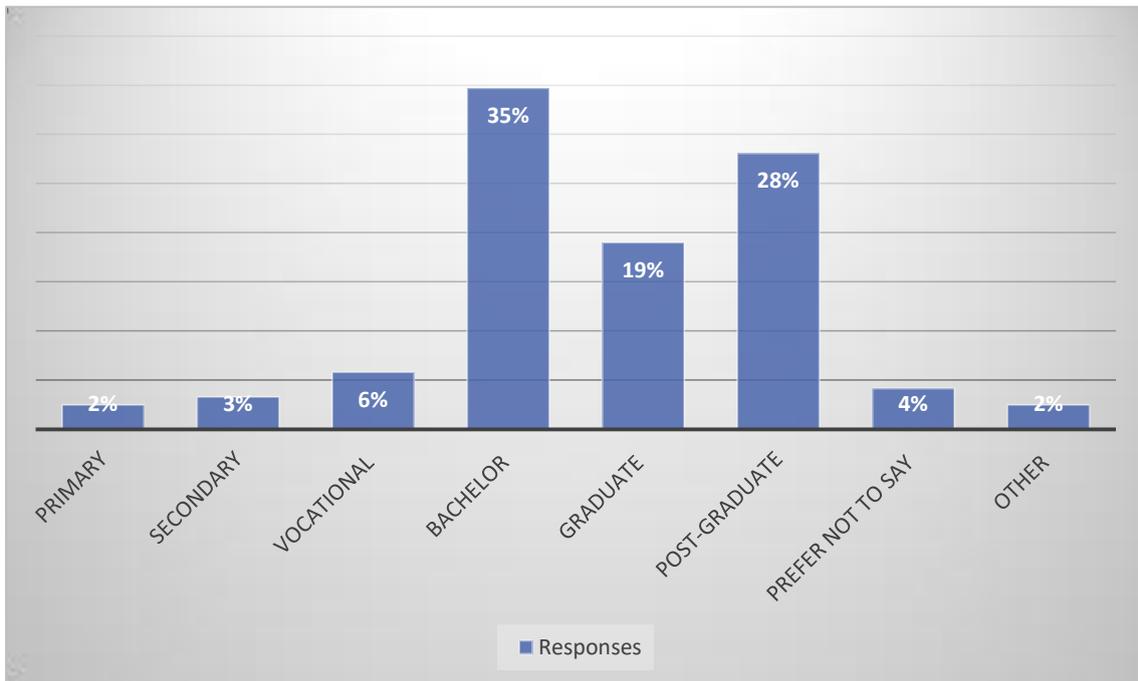


Figure 72: Age category



As far as the educational background is concerned most of the participants (35%) held a bachelor degree, whereas 28% had a graduate degree. Only 2% had completed only primary school and 3% secondary school, and 6% vocational school. Therefore, the majority had completed high educational level.



Apart from the textiles sector, all other sectors were almost equally represented with 35% coming from agri-food, 32% from finance and 24% from tourism.

Figure 73: Economic activity of the company

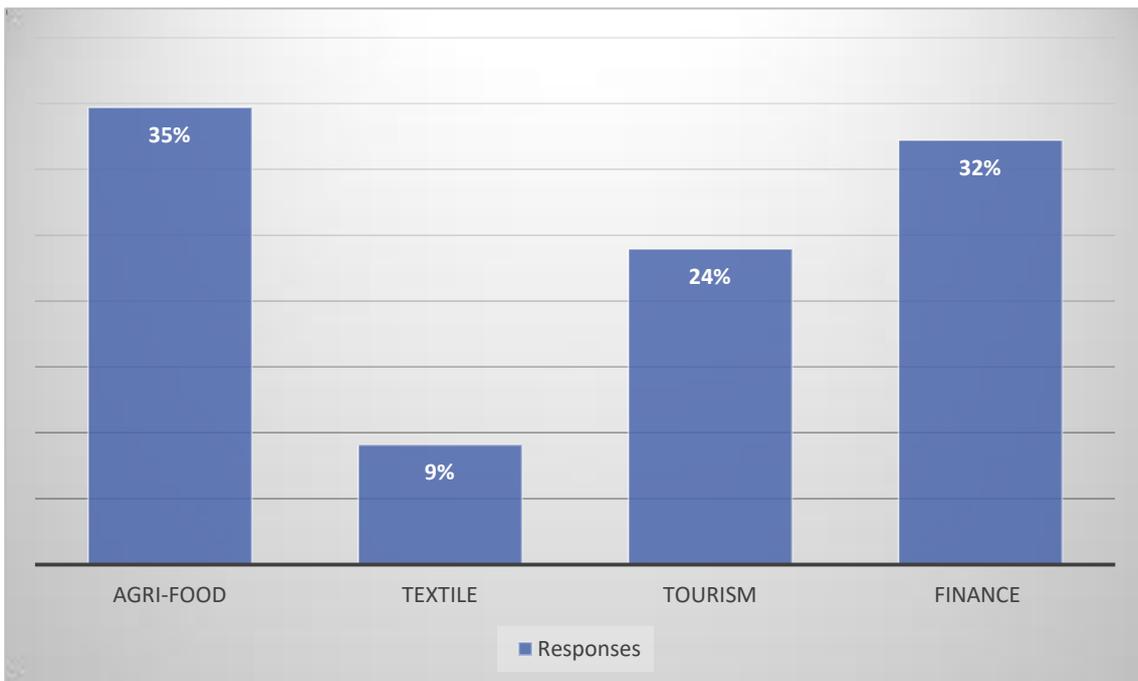
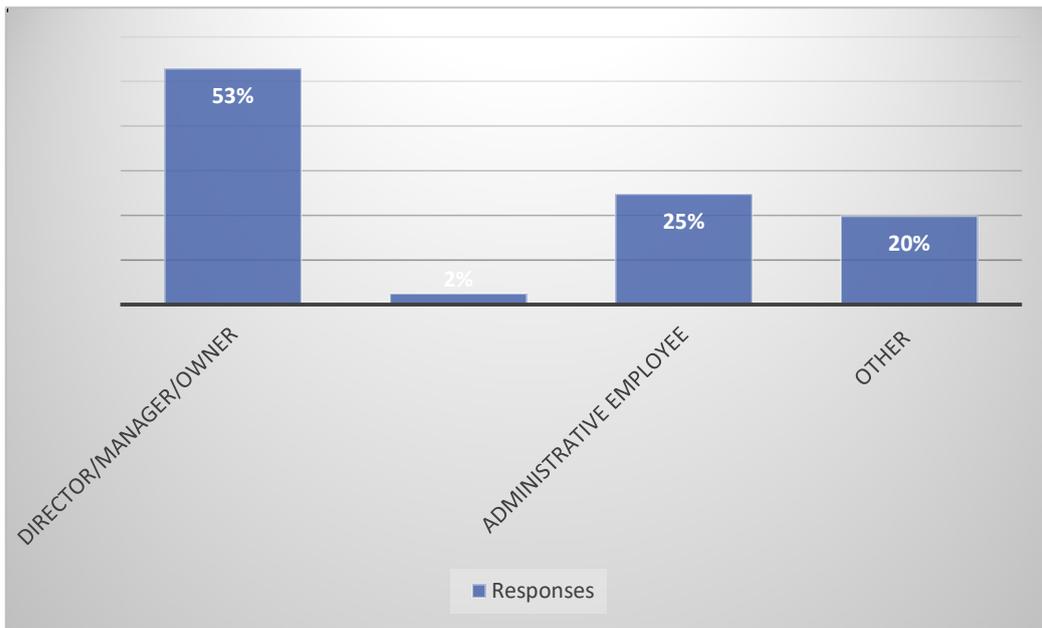


Figure 74: Position in the company



Half of the participants were managers/directors or owners in the companies they represented, 26% were administrative employees, 2% were working in human resources, whereas 20% had different positions in the companies.

In the next section, the findings regarding soft skills are presented.

Personal skills

All personal skills recorded mean values over 4, indicating that personal skills are of great importance for managers in Lebanon. Literacy scored the highest mean value (4,4) and responsibility second with only a slight difference (4,3). Four skills record the same value of 4,2. More particularly, learning new things, balancing work and social life, keeping positive attitude and working under pressure are all of equal importance for managers.

Figure 75: Personal skills mean value for Managers: Lebanon



Self-awareness and adaptability to new conditions recorded a mean value of 4,1 and, finally, public speaking together with working with minimum supervision scored a mean value of 4.

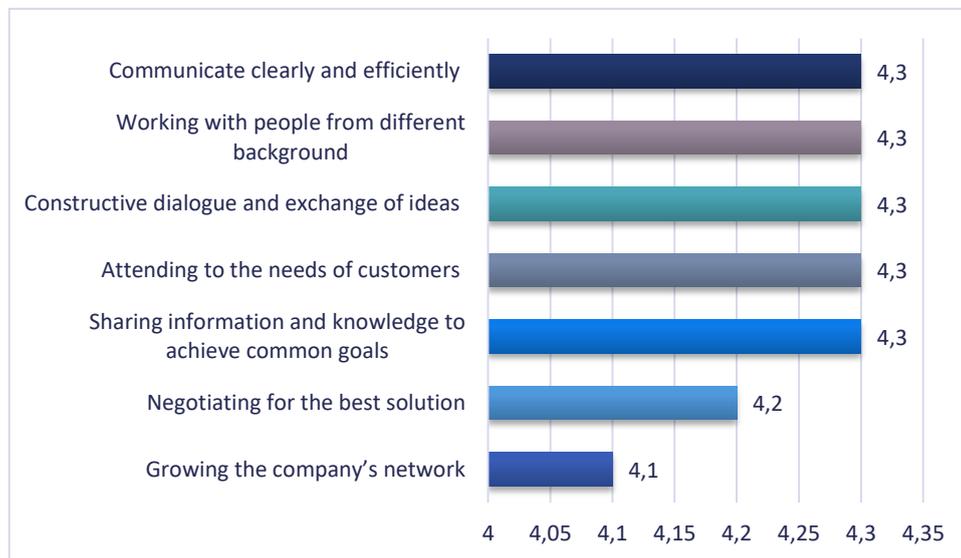
Table 30: Personal skills ranking for managers: Lebanon

Personal skills	Mean value
Literacy	4,4
Responsibility	4,3
Balancing work and social life	4,2
Continuous learning	4,2
Positive attitude	4,2
Tolerance to stress/ Endurance	4,2
Self-awareness	4,1
Adaptability	4,1
Public speaking	4
Autonomy	4

Social skills

As in the previous category, social skills scored over 4 and in a very narrow range (4,1 – 4,3) which shows that all social skills are of importance to the managers.

Figure 76: Social skills mean value for Managers: Lebanon



Four items were valued with 4,3 including communication, working with people from different background, constructive dialogue, attending the needs of customers and sharing information. A little lower (4,2) scored negotiation skills and last is networking with a mean value of 4,1.

Table 31: Social skills ranking for managers: Lebanon

Social skill	Mean value
Collaboration	4,3
Cultural adaptability	4,3
Conversation skills	4,3
Service and attend	4,3
Communication	4,3
Negotiation	4,2
Networking	4,1

Methodological skills

Finally, methodological skills for managers in Lebanon present almost the exact image as in the case of social skills. The value range is 4,1 to 4,3, showing that methodological skills are also very important for managers. Five items scored a mean value of 4,3, including time management, mentoring, vision setting, working under pressure and proactivity.

As seen in Figure 77, almost half of the skills recorded a value of 4,2, whereas 3 skills recorded a value of 4,1. The items gathering the lowest value were prioritization under circumstances of pressure, monitoring the performance of others and coordinating activities. As in the case of Italy, here too, leadership skills are not of importance.

Figure 77: Ranking of items evaluating importance of methodological skills for Managers: Lebanon



Table

32:

Methodological skills ranking for managers: Lebanon

Methodological skill	Mean value
Time management	4,3
Multitasking	4,3

Mentoring	4,3
Vision setting	4,3
Proactivity	4,3
Planning	4,2
Problem solving	4,2
Teambuilding	4,2
Gather and evaluate information	4,2
Motivate and inspiring others	4,2
Assign tasks	4,2
Supervising others	4,1
Prioritization	4,1
Leadership	4,1

Final remarks

All skills recorded mean values over 4, with a small range from 4 to 4,4. This indicates that managers consider all soft skills as important. However, it is the first of the six countries where life balance is recorded over 4 and, specifically 4,2, showing that managers in Lebanon consider this skill important. Autonomy was a personal skill less important for managers whereas collaboration is on the top of social skills. This indicates that working with others is more important than managing work alone and completing tasks alone.

Soft skills demand: Spain

The survey in Spain was conducted with the participation of 39 managers. The results of their responses regarding soft skills is presented after a short presentation of demographic information.

Demographics

Almost half (46%) of the managers participating in the survey belonged in the age group of 40 to 49 years old. 27% were over 50 years old, 16% belonged to the age group of 30 to 39, and the minority of the participants represented the age group 18 to 29 (6%) and over 60 (5%).

Of them, 74% were women and 26% were men.

Figure 78: Age group

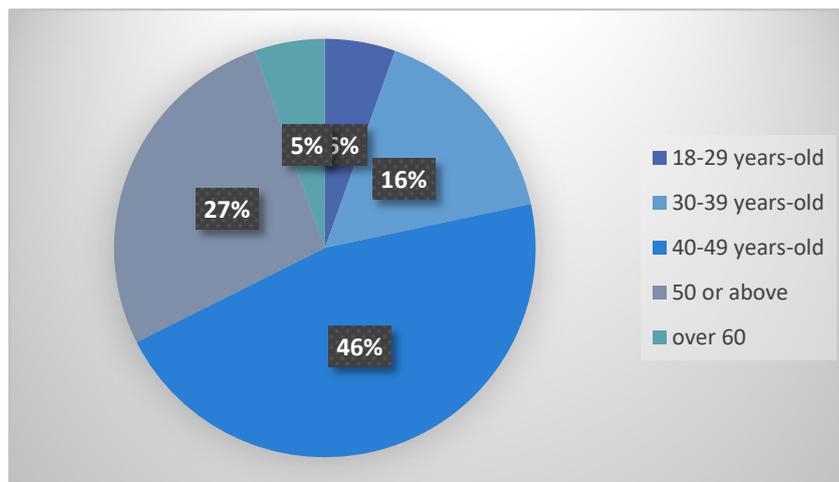
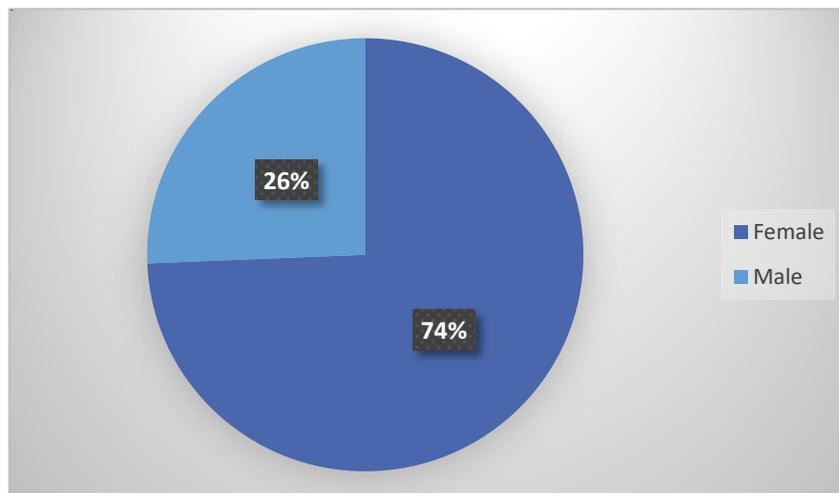
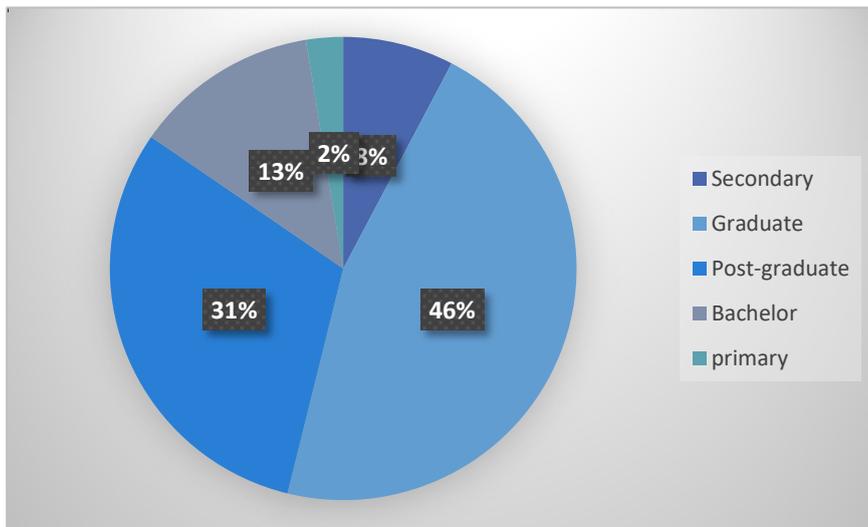


Figure 79: Gender



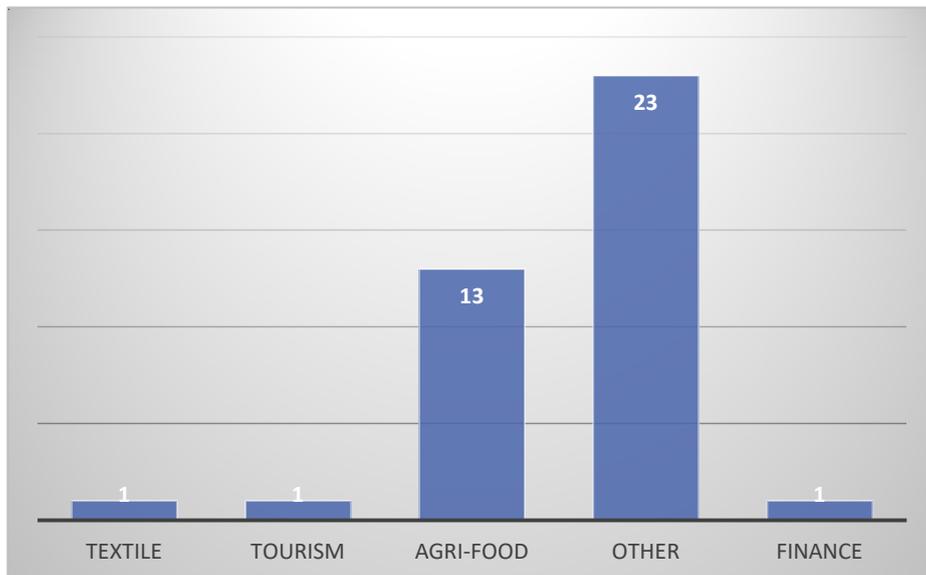
As far as their educational level is concerned, 46% had a graduate degree, 31% held a post-graduate diploma, 13% were university graduates, 8% had completed secondary school and 2% primary education.

Figure 80: Educational level



16 of the participants were working in a company active in one of the four economic sectors of interest, whereas 23 were active in a different, yet not specified, sector. Of the 16, 13 represented agri-food, and tourism, textiles and finance were represented by one participant each as seen in

Figure 81: Economic activity of the company



Personal skills

The value range of personal skills as evaluated by managers in Spain is 1 point in the 5-point scale with the lowest value being 3,5 and the highest 4,5. Being able to work with minimum supervision is the highest in importance skill with mean value 4,5, whereas adaptability to new conditions is second highest in importance with 4,4. These two first skills show that it is desired for an employee to be able to handle work and different situations without constant guidance by the manager. In addition, keeping positive attitude is important since a mean value of 4,3 is recorded for the specific skill. Learning new things and developing is highly desired (mean value 4,2) as is being able to work under pressure (mean value 4). All skills over the value of 4 describe an employee who develops in knowledge and skills, which can help in being flexible and working autonomously even under conditions of pressure.

Figure 82: Ranking of items evaluating importance of personal skills for Managers: Spain



Taking responsibility for mistakes come later with a mean value of 3,9 together with literacy. The importance of balancing life and work (mean value 3,8) and public speaking and presenting (mean value 3,7), whereas last in ranking with mean value of 3,5 is self-awareness.

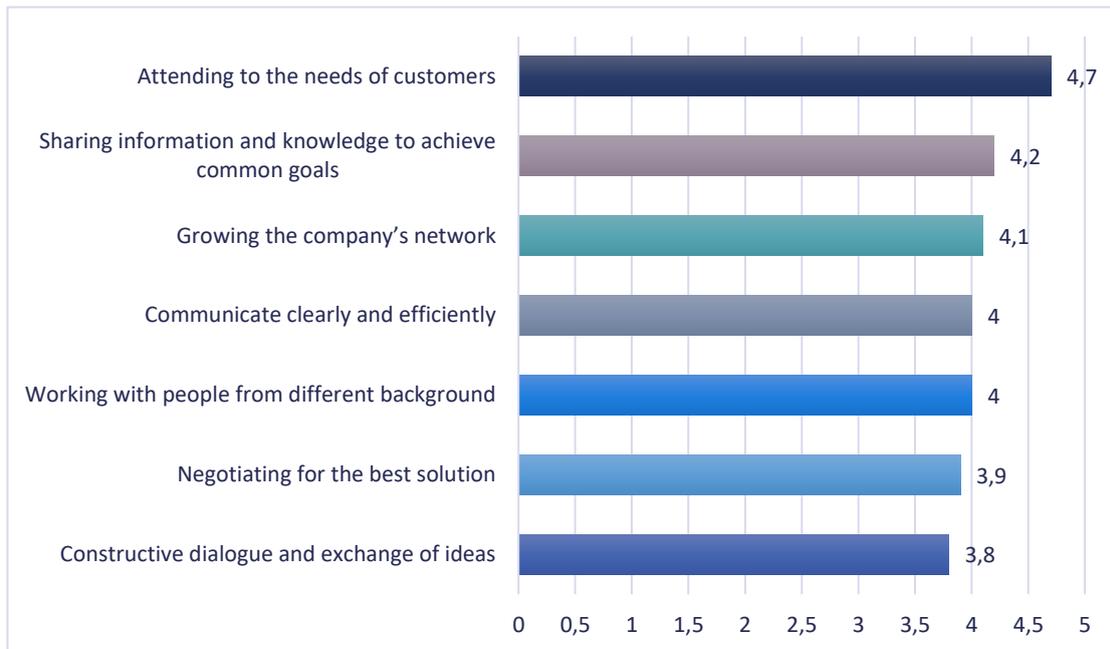
Table 33: Personal skills ranking for managers: Spain

Personal skill	Mean value
Autonomy	4,5
Adaptability	4,4
Positive attitude	4,3
Continuous learning	4,2
Tolerance to stress/ Endurance	4
Responsibility	3,9
Literacy	3,9
Balancing work and social life	3,8
Public speaking	3,7
Self-awareness	3,5

Social skills

As in the case of personal skills, social skills present a wide range of values but higher compared to personal skills. This indicates that social skills are more important than personal for managers in Spain.

Figure 83: Ranking of items evaluating importance of social skills for managers: Spain



Attending the needs of customers is the skill with the highest importance for managers scoring a mean value of 4,7. After service and attend skill, the mean value falls to 4,2 for sharing information and knowledge within the team to achieve the goals of the company, whereas being able to grow the network of the company is close in importance with mean value 4,1. Communication and working with people from different background record a mean value of 4. Lower than 4 scored negotiation and constructive dialogue.

Table 34: Social skills ranking for managers: Spain

Social skills	Mean value
Service and attend	4,7
Collaboration	4,2
Networking	4,1
Cultural adaptability	4
Communication	4
Negotiation	3,9
Conversation skills	3,8

Methodological skills

The last section concerns methodological skills scoring mean values less than the social skills with the highest mean value being 4,4 and the lowest 3,6. Multitasking is evaluated as very important with a mean score of 4,4, followed by prioritization under pressure and problem solving with mean values 4,3 and 4,2 respectively. Planning and identifying risks are also high in importance with mean value 4,1 and 4. As it is seen by now, most of the methodological skills that are of high importance (mean value >4) are connected to handling difficult situations and pressure. It is indicated that managers prefer employees who can handle challenges and finding solutions and overcoming obstacles.

Figure 84: Ranking of items evaluating importance of Methodological skills for Managers: Spain



Lower in the ranking are skills related to coordinating activities, supervising and mentoring

other employees. Leadership, vision setting and organization of the workload are not of highly demanded by managers, possibly due to the managerial character of those skills.

Table 35: Methodological skills ranking for managers: Spain

Methodological skills	Mean value
Multitasking	4,4
Prioritization	4,3
Problem solving	4,2
Planning	4,1
Proactivity	4
Leadership	3,9
Assign tasks	3,9
Mentoring	3,8
Vision setting	3,8
Supervising others	3,7
Time management	3,7
Motivate and inspiring others	3,7
Teambuilding	3,6
Gather and evaluate information	3,6

Final remarks

All soft skills categories recorded mean values of almost the same range, with social skills being evaluated slightly as more important. Skills related to communicating with the customers and serving their needs, collaborating for the completion of tasks and growing the network through establishing and maintaining relations recorded high mean values. High in the demand of managers in Spain are autonomy, adaptability to change and positive attitude combined with multitasking, prioritization and problem solving, to name some of the many skills evaluated as important by managers.

Soft skills demand: Palestine

The results included in this section were gathered from 170 managers in Palestine. The number of managers who started the questionnaire were 194, however, due to many incomplete questions of 24 of the managers, their responses are not included here. What follows is a short presentation of demographic information and then an analysis of their responses regarding the importance of soft skills.

Demographics

The distribution of participants according to gender showed that 74% were male and 26% were female. As seen in Figure 86, 37% of the participants belonged in the age group of 40 to 49 years-old, 27% in the 30 to 39 years-old, 21% were between 50 to 59, 9% were 18 to 29 and, finally, 6% were over the age of 60.

Figure 85: Gender

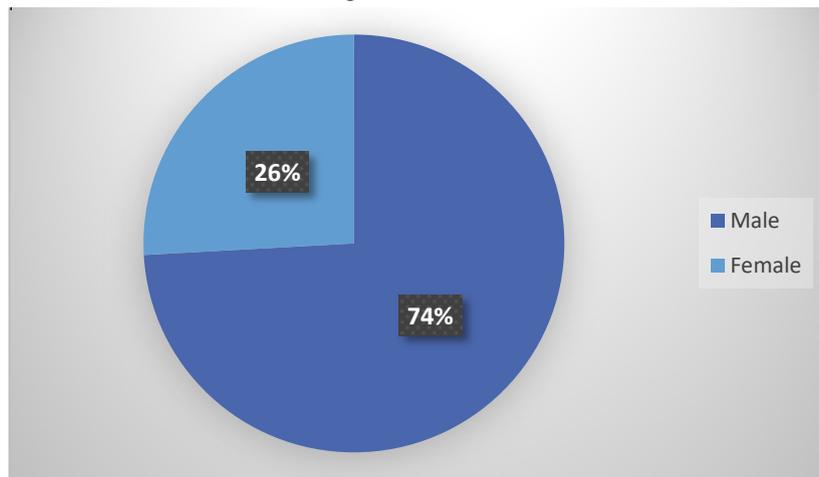


Figure 86: Age category

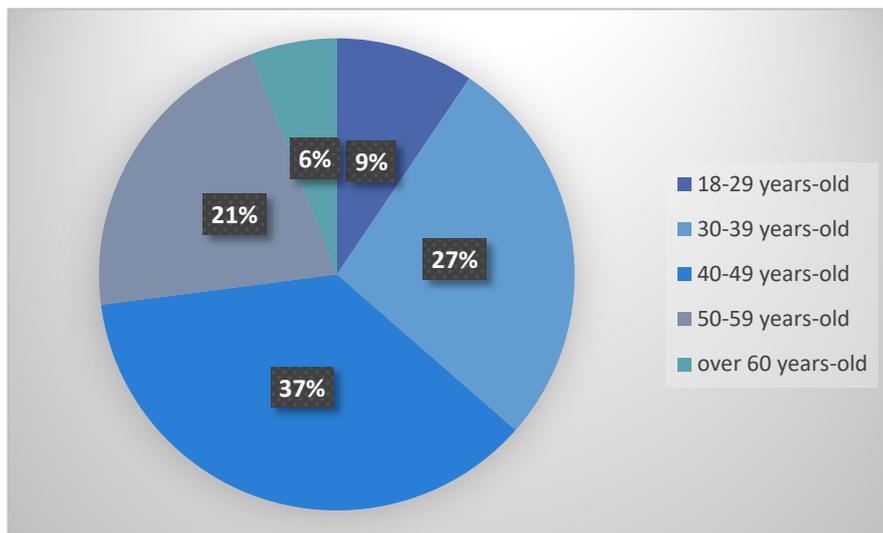
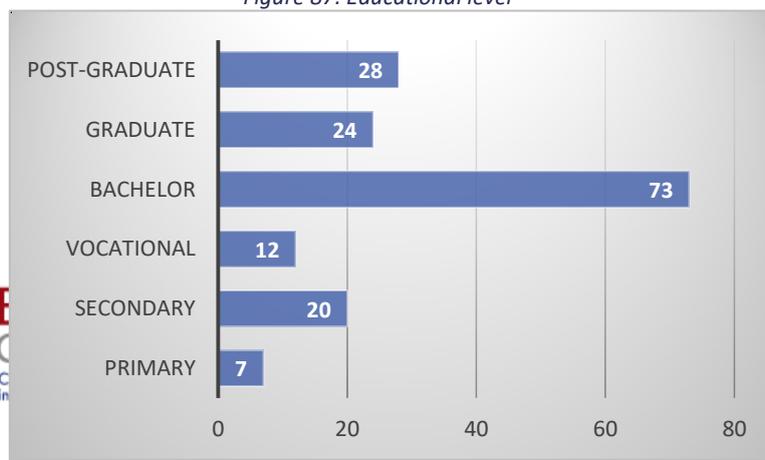
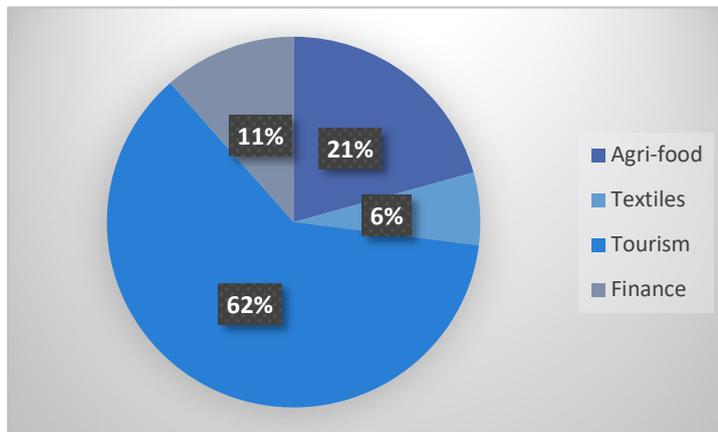


Figure 87: Educational level



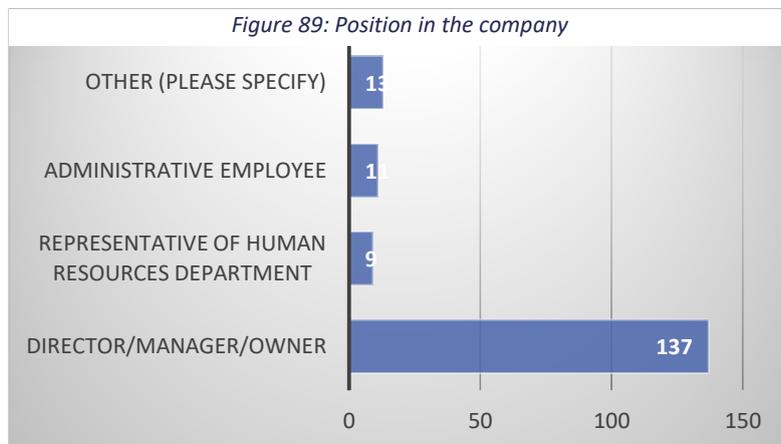
The majority of the participants held a Bachelor degree, 24 had a Masters degree, 28 a post-graduate degree, 20 had completed secondary school, 7 primary school, and 12 people had completed vocational education.

Figure 88: Economic activity of the company



The majority (62%) of the participants were employed in a company active in the field of tourism, 21% represented the field of agri-food, 11% the field of finance and 6% textiles. Most of the participants were managers or owners of the companies they represented, whereas 11 were administrative employees, 9 were employees in a human resources department and 13 were employed in a different, yet not specified, position

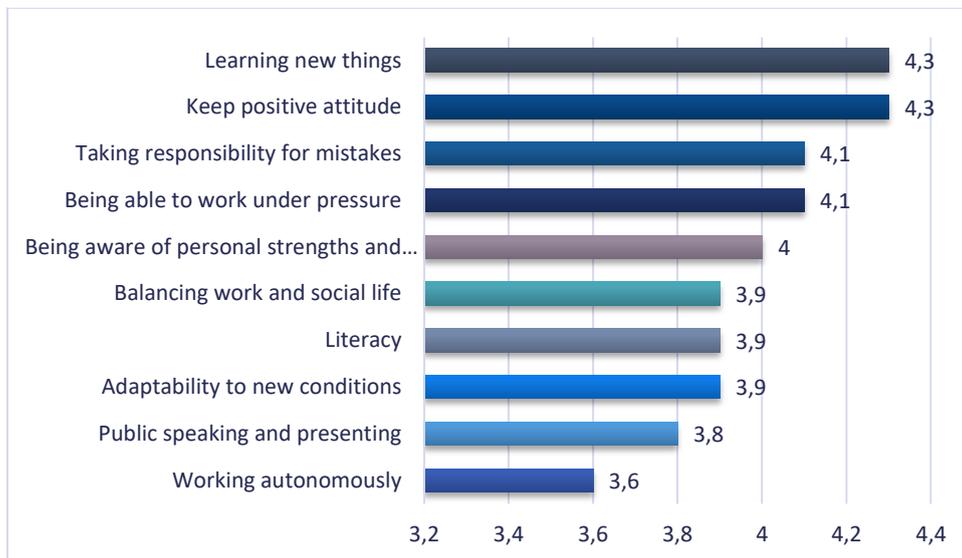
Figure 89: Position in the company



Personal skills

Personal skills are evaluated from 3,6 to 4,3, with highest skills in demand being continuous learning and keeping positive attitude. With a mean value of 4,1, taking responsibility for mistakes and working under pressure share second place in skills ranking, whereas third is self-awareness with a mean value of 4.

Figure 90: Ranking of items evaluating importance of Personal skills for Managers: Palestine



As seen in Figure 90, three skills record value slightly lower than 4, balancing work and social life, literacy and adaptability to new conditions. Public speaking is a little lower with mean value 3,8 and last is working autonomously with 3,6.

Table 36: Personal skills ranking for managers: Palestine

Personal Skills	Mean value
Continuous learning	4,3
Positive attitude	4,3
Responsibility	4,1
Tolerance to stress/ Endurance	4,1
Self-awareness	4
Balancing work and social life	3,9
Literacy	3,9
Adaptability	3,9
Public speaking	3,8
Autonomy	3,6

Social skills

As in other countries, in Palestine as well, on the top of the social skills is attending the needs of the customer. With a mean value of 4,7 is by far the most important skills according to managers. With a mean value of 4,2 growing the company's network is the second social skill. It is interesting that clear and efficient communication, a skills

connected to both attending the needs of the customers and networking come fourth with mean value of 4,1 after sharing information and knowledge. A mean value of 4 is given to both conversation skills and negotiation. Lowest in importance and the only with mean value under 4 is evaluated working with people from different background.

Figure 91: Ranking of items evaluating importance of Social skills for Managers: Palestine



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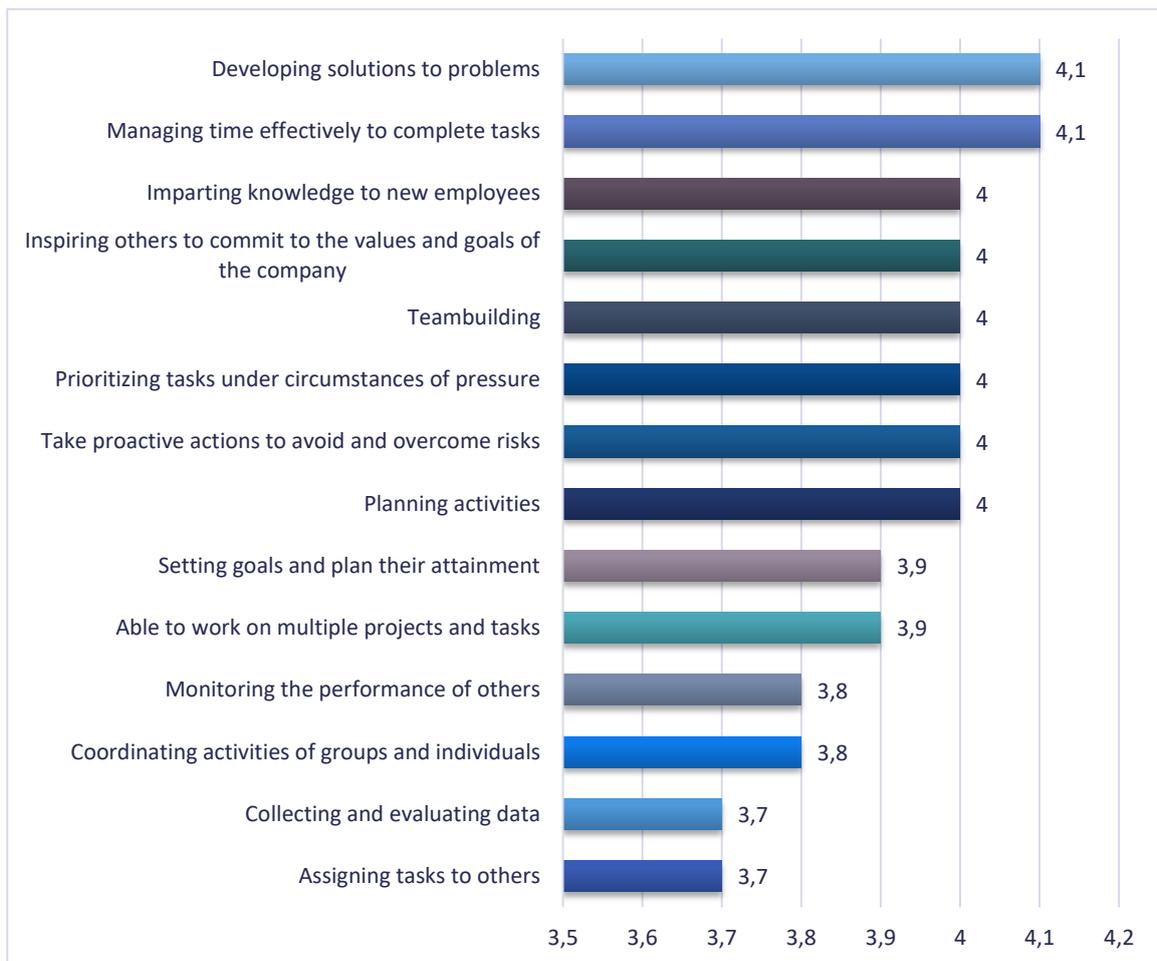
Table 37: Social skills ranking for managers: Palestine

Social skills	Mean value
Service and attend	4,7
Networking	4,2
Collaboration	4,2
Communication	4,1
Negotiation	4
Conversation skills	4
Cultural adaptability	3,8

Methodological skills

Methodological skills evaluation based on the criterion of importance by managers show a similar pattern as in the previous counties. More specifically, again here methodological skills score overall lower compared to social and personal skills, with the range of mean value being 3,7 to 4,1. In addition, lowest mean values are recorded for skills concerning leading and managing a team. As mentioned previously, this could be explained by the fact that managers participating in the survey already handle such issues and, therefore, the importance of those skills in employees is not as high as other skills, such as problem solving. Developing solutions for unexpected or matters occurring during work records the highest mean value of 4,1. Same mean value is recorded for time management ensuring the timely completion of tasks.

Figure 92: Ranking of items evaluating importance of Methodological skills for Managers: Palestine



Six of the skills score a mean value of 4, including mentoring, inspiring the members of the team to share the company’s vision and plan activities and prioritize tasks under pressure.

Table 38: Methodological skills ranking for managers: Palestine

Methodological skills	Mean value
Problem solving	4,1
Time management	4,1
Planning	4
Teambuilding	4
Prioritization	4
Multitasking	4
Mentoring	4
Motivate and inspiring others	4
Proactivity	4
Vision setting	3,9
Supervising others	3,8
Leadership	3,8
Gather and evaluate information	3,7
Assign tasks	3,7

Soft skills demand: Jordan

399 managers participated in the survey in Jordan, the results of which are presented in this section. Apart from the demographics, the analysis and results on the importance of soft skills according to the Jordanian managers are presented in three sub-sections following the categorization of skills in personal, social and methodological.

Demographics

The majority (67%) of the participating managers in the survey were women and 31% were men.

Figure 93: Gender

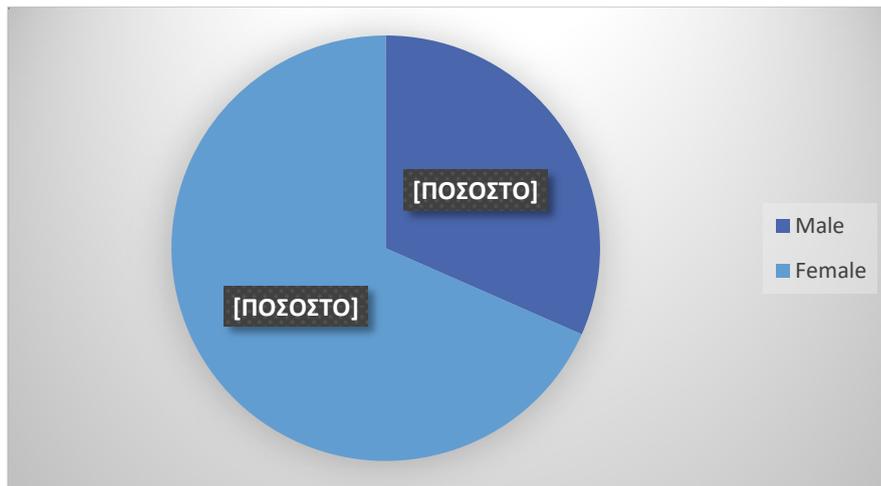
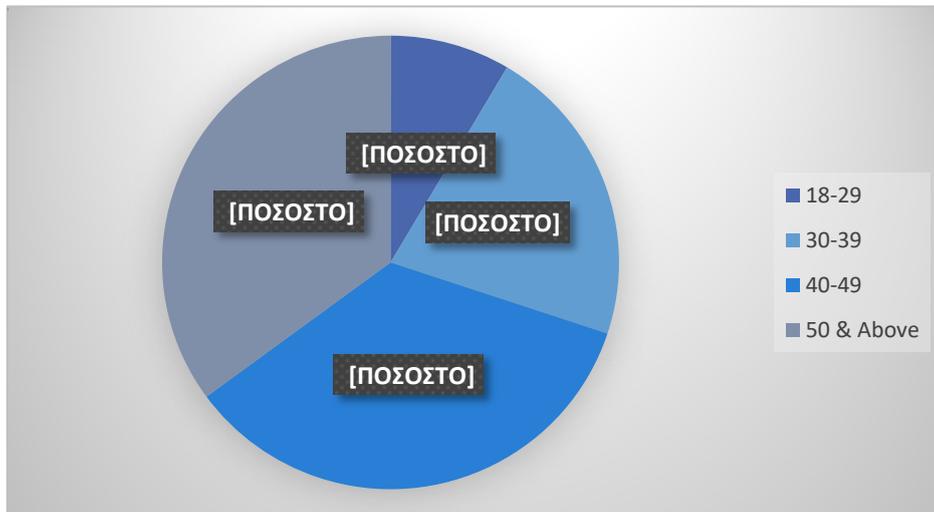
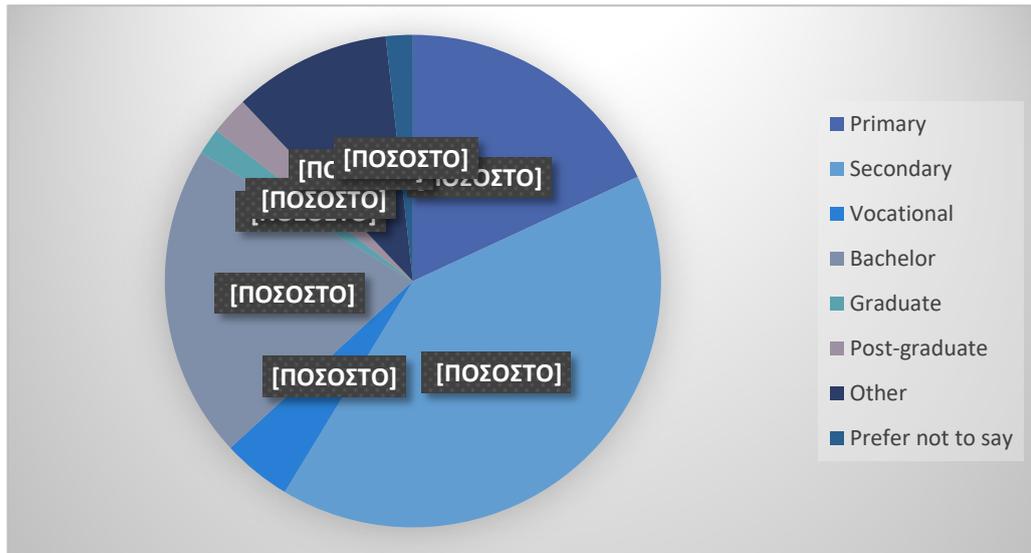


Figure 94: Age category



The age distribution of the participants is as follows: 35% belonged in the age category of 40 to 49 years-old, 35% were over 50, 22% were 30 to 39 years old and, finally 8% were 18 to 29 years-old.

Figure 95: Educational level



41% of the participants had completed secondary education, 21% had a bachelor degree, 18% had completed primary education and 4% had vocational training. By small percentages, participants are distributed in the rest of the educational levels.

The majority (61%) of the participants were active in the field of agri-food, 25% in textiles, 9% in tourism, and 2% in the field of finance.

Figure 96: Sector of economic activity

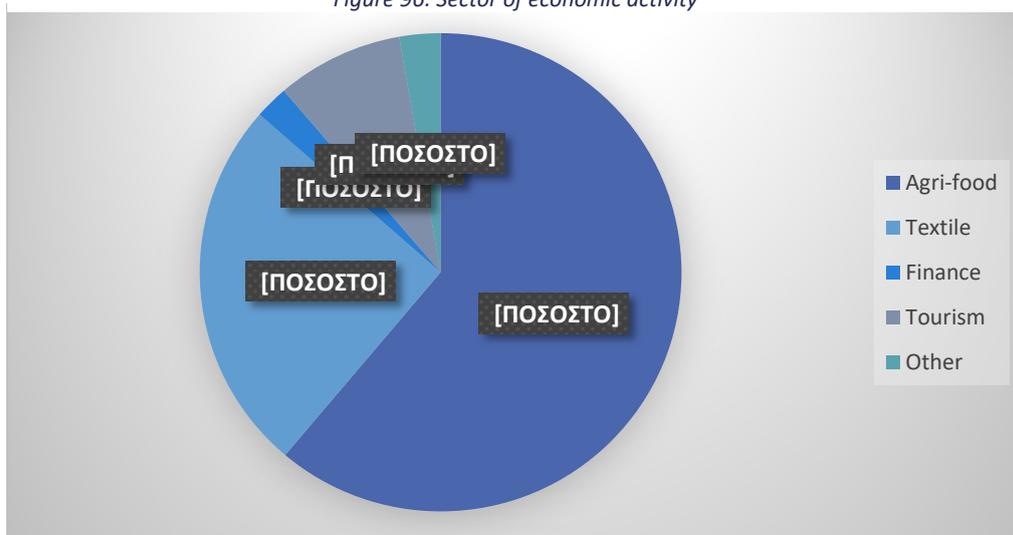
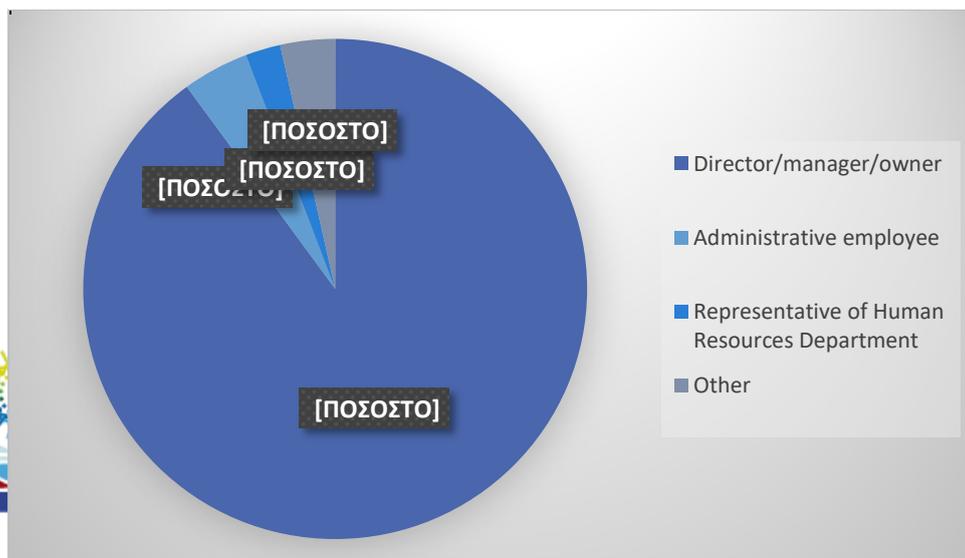


Figure 97: Position in the company



As seen in Figure 97, 90% of the participants stated that they were managers, directors or owners of the companies in which they were active. 4% were administrative employees, 2% were representatives of the human resources departments and 2% were employed in different positions which were not specified.

Personal skills

As seen in Figure 98, personal skills are highly desired by managers in Jordan. All items received a mean value over 4 with the highest being 4,5.

The most highly valued personal skill in Jordan is autonomy, with a mean value of 4,5. Working with minimum supervision is followed by literacy and adaptability, skills sharing the second place in ranking with a mean value of 4,4. Apart from public speaking which scored 4,1 all other personal skills recorded a mean value of 4,3.

Figure 98: Ranking of items evaluating importance of Personal skills for Managers: Jordan

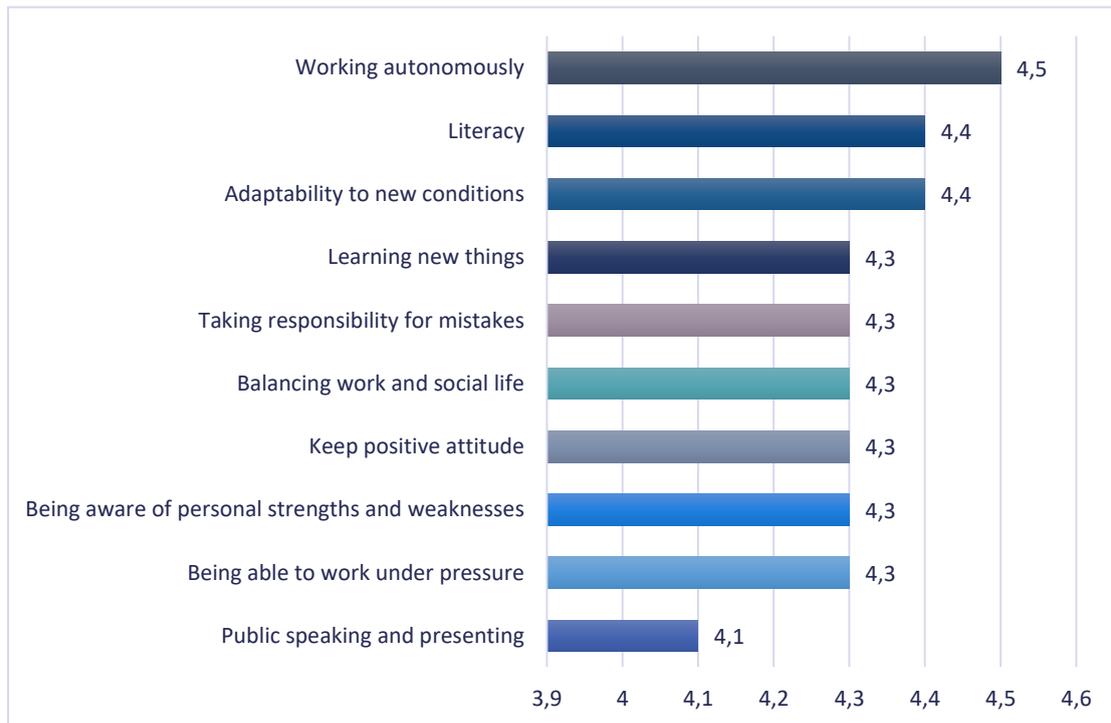


Table 39: Personal skills ranking for managers: Jordan

Personal skills	Mean value
Autonomy	4,5
Literacy	4,4
Adaptability	4,4
Self-awareness	4,3
Balancing work and social life	4,3
Continuous learning	4,3
Responsibility	4,3
Positive attitude	4,3
Tolerance to stress/ Endurance	4,3
Public speaking	4,1

Social skills

The seven social skills evaluated through the items seen in Figure 99 are assessed as highly important recording mean value over 4. It is interesting that two of the items received a mean value of 4,3 and the rest a mean value of 4,2. This shows that the skills are not

differentiated in importance but are all very desirable by managers. However, we should mention that the two skills scoring 4,3 sharing the 1st place in importance are Customer orientation / service and attend the needs of the customers and collaboration.

Figure 99: Ranking of items evaluating importance of Social skills for Managers: Jordan

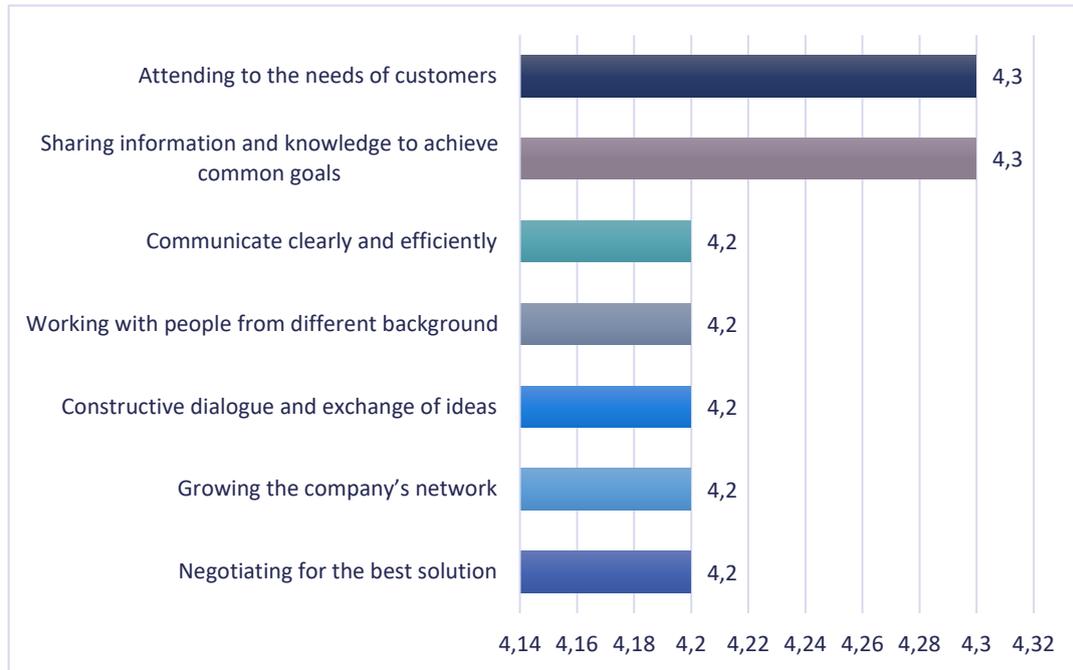


Table 40: Social skills ranking for managers: Jordan

Social skills	Mean value
Customer orientation/ Service and attend	4,3
Collaboration	4,3
Negotiation	4,2
Networking	4,2
Cultural adaptability	4,2
Conversation skills	4,2
Communication	4,2

Methodological skills

As far as methodological skills are concerned, the mean value range is close to the previous categories, with two items dropping slightly under mean value 4. Those are “Assigning tasks to others” and “Gathering and evaluating data”. Three items scored a mean value of 4, “Able to work on multiple projects and tasks”, “Monitoring the performance of others” and “Coordinating activities of groups and individuals”. Of those five items ranking last in importance for managers, three regard management of team and individuals. This result is in line with the rest of the countries, where, again, skills related to management were recorded low mean values. Highest in ranking is the item “Take proactive actions to avoid and overcome risks” with mean value of 4,3. Four items recorded a mean value of 4,2 including items related to problem solving, time management and prioritization. It is clear that the first five places in the ranking are occupied by items related to preventing or managing crisis. Items related to the life within the company, including teambuilding, vision setting and planning activities. Readiness to face the unexpected is highly valued in Jordan.

Figure 100: Ranking of items evaluating importance of Methodological skills for Managers: Jordan

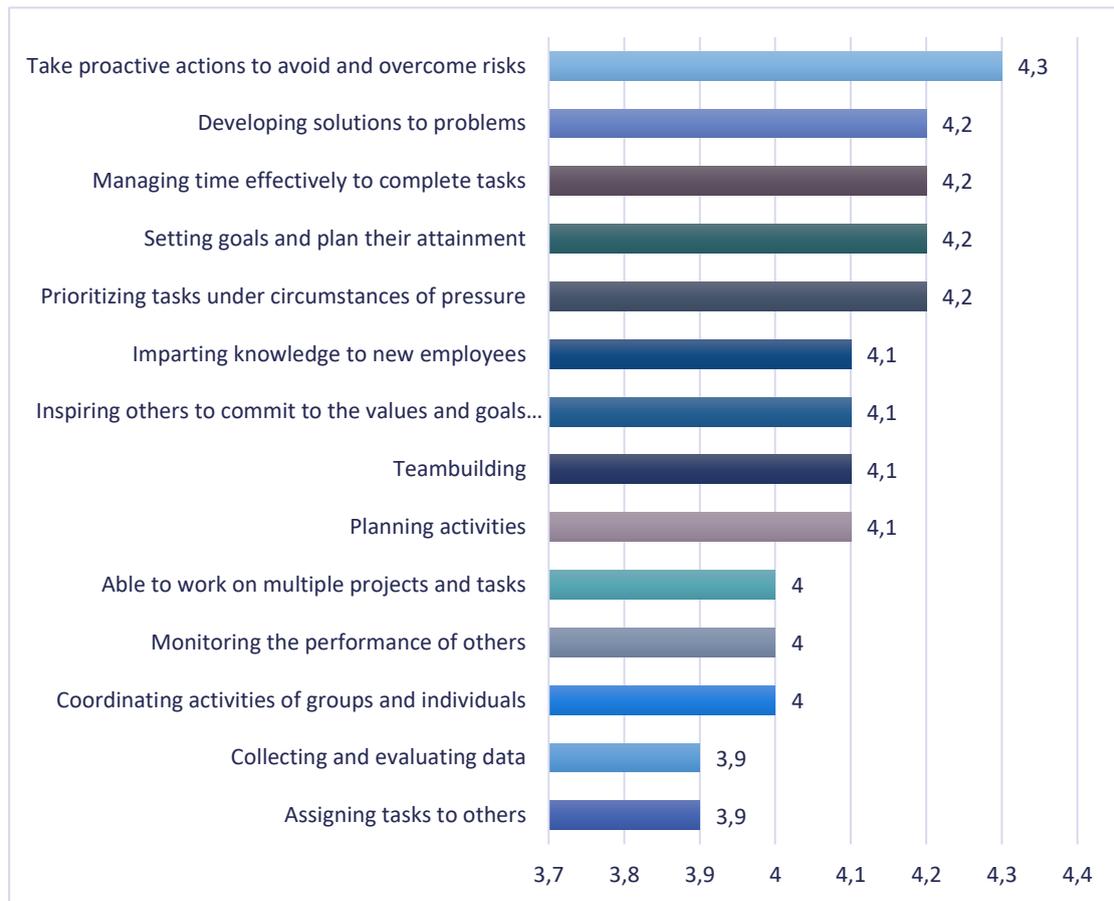


Table 41: Methodological skills ranking for managers: Jordan

Methodological skills	Mean value
Proactivity	4,3
Problem solving	4,2
Time management	4,2
Prioritization	4,2
Vision setting	4,2
Planning	4,1
Teambuilding	4,1
Mentoring	4,1
Motivate and inspiring others	4,1
Supervising others	4
Multitasking	4
Leadership	4
Gather and evaluate information	3,9
Assign tasks	3,9

Soft skills managers in total

While analysing the data for each country, some similarities and divergencies already surfaced regarding soft skills and their importance for managers. For example, in all six countries skills related to team management were valued low in importance. Social skills were higher than the other two categories and particularly Service and attend was evaluated almost in all countries as most important. In this section, the final ranking of skills in demand are presented. The ranking is based on the mean value calculated for 6 six countries in total.

Table 42: Soft skills demand ranking total

Skills category	Skill	Mean	Rank
Social	Customer orientation/ Service and attend	4,4	1 st
Personal	Literacy	4,2	2 nd
Personal	Positive attitude	4,2	2 nd
Personal	Adaptability	4,2	2 nd
Personal	Autonomy	4,1	3 rd
Personal	Continuous learning	4,1	3 rd
Personal	Responsibility	4,1	3 rd
Personal	Tolerance to stress/ Endurance	4,1	3 rd
Social	Collaboration	4,1	3 rd
Social	Communication	4,1	3 rd
Methodological	Problem solving	4,1	3 rd
Methodological	Time management	4,1	3 rd
Methodological	Teambuilding	4,1	3 rd
Methodological	Prioritization	4,1	3 rd
Methodological	Multitasking	4,1	3 rd
Personal	Self-awareness	4	4 th
Personal	Balancing work and social life	4	4 th
Social	Networking	4	4 th
Social	Cultural adaptability	4	4 th
Social	Conversation skills	4	4 th
Methodological	Planning	4	4 th
Methodological	Mentoring	4	4 th
Methodological	Vision setting	4	4 th
Methodological	Proactivity	4	4 th
Social	Negotiation	3,9	5 th
Methodological	Leadership	3,9	5 th
Methodological	Motivate and inspiring others	3,9	5 th
Methodological	Assign tasks	3,9	5 th
Personal	Public speaking	3,8	6 th
Methodological	Supervising others	3,8	6 th

Methodological	Gather and evaluate information	3,2	7 th
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The skill scoring the highest mean value for all countries participating in the survey is Service and Attend. The needs of the customers are of outmost importance and employees with developed such a skill are certainly desired across the countries of interest. Three personal skills share the second place in ranking. Literacy, positive attitude and adaptability recorded a mean value of 4,2 and are considered very important by managers. A mean value of 4,1 is given to 11 skills, of which 4 are personal, 2 social and 5 methodological. A variety of skills are included in this group covering several aspects of the life in the workplace. From being able to working without supervision, to collaborating and building a team, and being tolerant to stress, and prioritizing and working under pressure and managing time. This group of skills relates and serves the needs of a company usually in periods of pressure or crisis. The next group of skills sharing the 4th place in the ranking includes abilities connected mainly to internal processes. Setting the vision of the team and the company and planning its achievement, conversation skills, planning and mentoring all enable a company to run smoothly. In addition, life-balance and self-awareness connected to well-being of the employees and their confidence also contribute to the well-being of the team and the company.

With 3,9 mean value, skills in the 5th place of the ranking, concern mainly skills related to management. Leading, motivating others and assigning tasks are included here. As mentioned in the analysis of each country, assessing these skills as low in importance can be explained by the group in which the participants in the survey belong. Being themselves managers, participants are required to have mastered and put in daily practice those skills. It is, therefore, of secondary importance to find these skills in the employees as well. Of course, additional data are necessary to cross-check this interpretation. Last in the ranking are public speaking and supervising others in 6th place and gathering and evaluating data in 7th place.

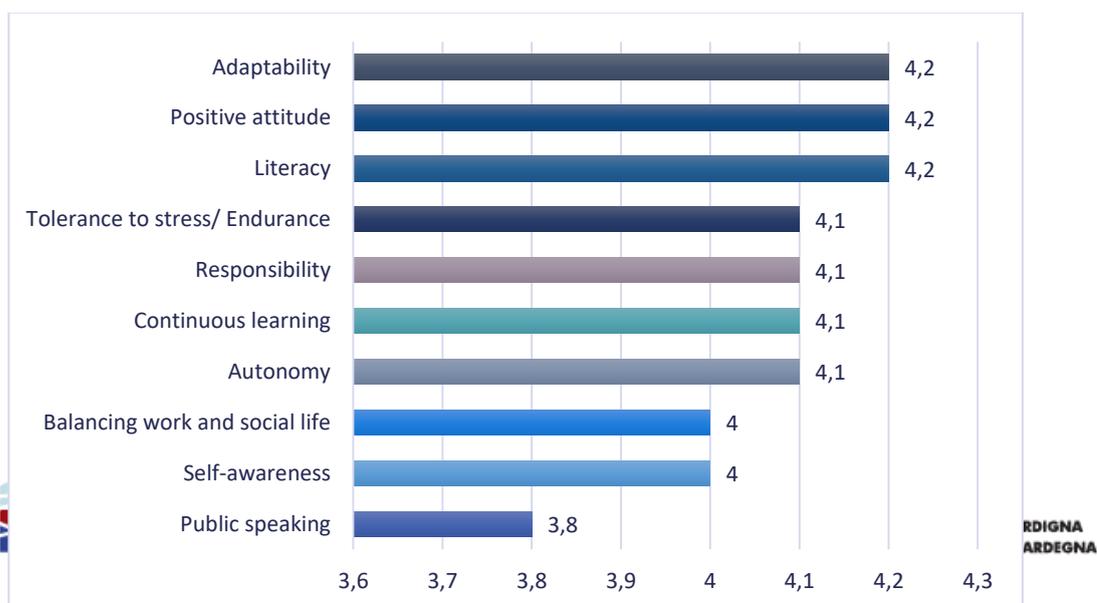
In the next sub-sections, a short review of each category of skills is carried out.

Personal skills: All countries

Personal skills are of high importance for managers. Apart from public speaking scoring a mean value of 3,8 all other items recorded mean value higher than 4. Adaptability, positive attitude and literacy are considered as most important with mean value of 4,2. With mean value 4,1 are evaluated the ability to tolerate and work under stress, taking responsibility for actions, continuous learning and working autonomously and not requiring constant supervision and guidance by the manager.

Skills more connected to the employees' personal lives in relation to their professional lives, such as self-awareness and balancing work and social life record a mean value of 4.

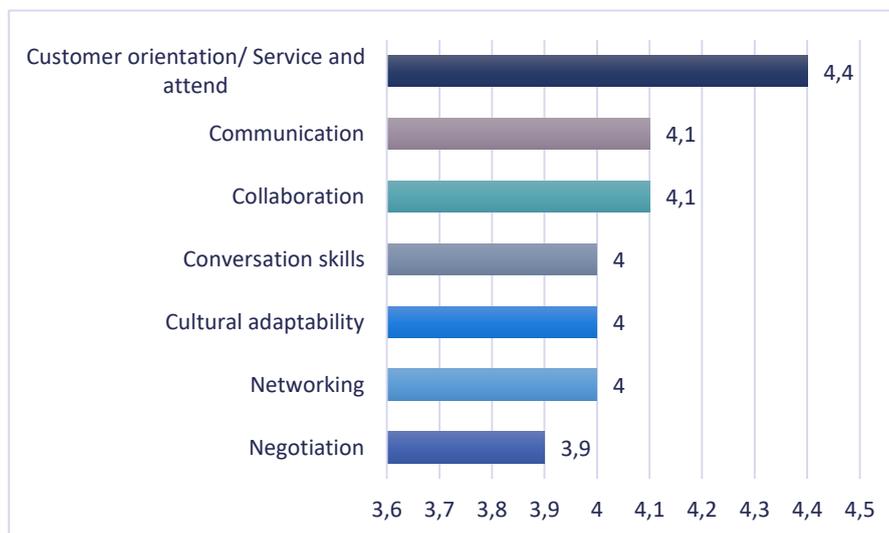
Figure 101: Personal skills ranking in total



Social skills: All countries

Customer orientation/service and attend ranks first in social skills and in total. With mean value of 4,4, managers consider providing customers with what they need the most important skill of all. Communication and collaboration follow with mean value of 4,1 followed by constructive dialogue, working with people from different backgrounds and networking with mean value 4. Finally, negotiation as a skill ranks last with mean value of 3,9.

Figure 102: Social skills ranking in all countries

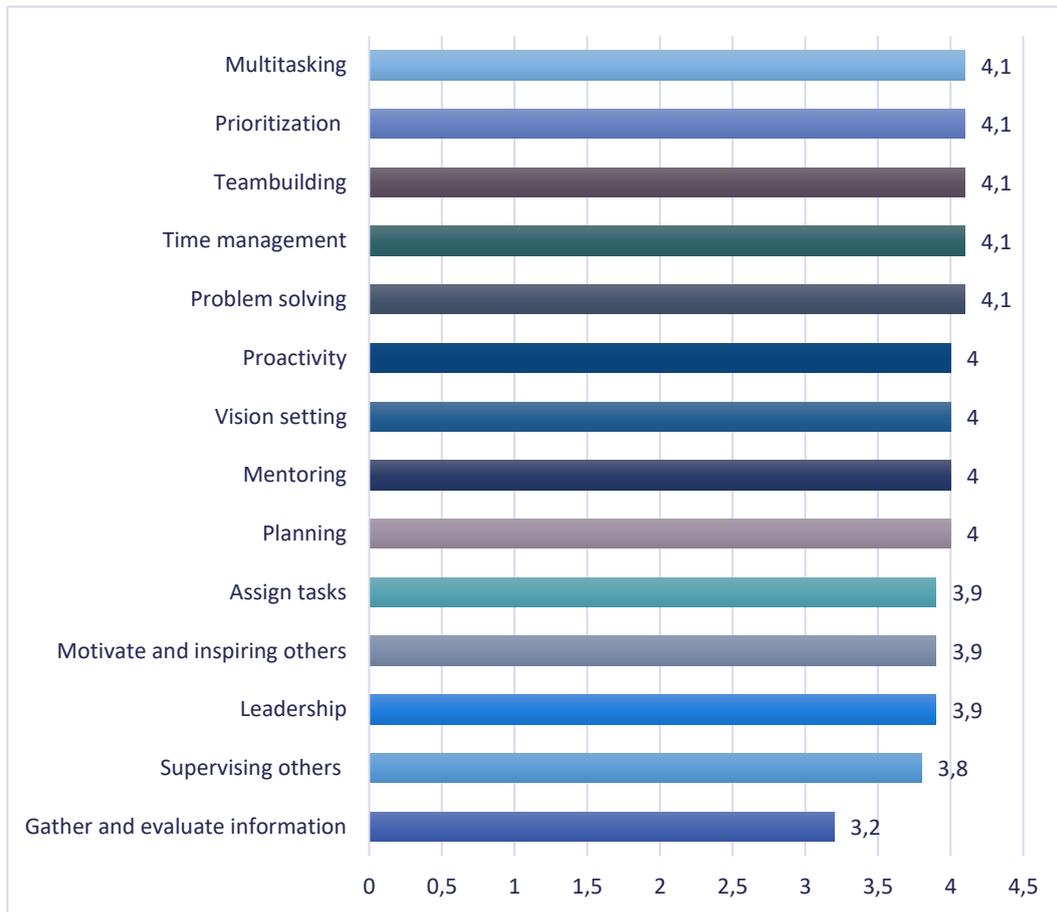


Methodological skills: All countries

Methodological skills are record mean values lower than the rest of the skills, with the lowest being 3,2 and referring to gathering and evaluating data skill. The rest of the skills are evaluated around the value of 4. Prioritization, multitasking, problem solving, time management and teambuilding recorded a mean value of 4,1. As mentioned earlier, all

these skills are related to managing difficult circumstances. Based on this, employees able to handle crises by providing solutions, prioritizing tasks and organizing their timely completion are expected to be highly desired.

Figure 103: Methodological skills ranking for all countries based on managers evaluation





Qualitative research: *Data analysis and findings*

Qualitative research: Data analysis and findings

In the previous chapters, the analysis and outcomes of the quantitative surveys conducted as part of the project were presented. This chapter focuses on the qualitative research activities implemented during the past two months in Greece, Lebanon, Palestine and Spain. Due to particular conditions prevailing in Palestine at the time of the implementation of the specific research activity, instead of focus, the research team conducted individual interviews. In addition, in Spain, 4 focus groups were conducted, 2 by FAMP and 2 by Catalan Youth Agency, Department of Employment, Social Affairs and Families. Taking into consideration that FAMP implemented 2 focus groups mixed with managers and women and the fact that soft skills did not prevail as important issue, the results are not recorded here.

The chapter is organized in two large sections, one devoted to the outcomes of the focus groups conducted with the participation of women and the second to the outcomes of the focus groups conducted with managers. These findings are expected to shed light and provide significant insight to interpret quantitative data.

Focus groups with women

The outcomes of 4 focus groups conducted in Greece, Lebanon, Palestine and Spain are presented in this section. All focus groups were conducted based on a common focus group guide designed according to the objectives of the research activity. The focus group guide is attached at the end of this document. In addition, it should be noted that participants in all groups were provided before the research activity with an informed consent form which provided information about the project and the activity. All participants consented to the terms, including recording of the focus groups.

Focus group with women: Greece

The focus group with women was conducted on Wednesday, 21st of April, 2021, from 17:30 to 19:30. Prior to the focus group, participants had received and signed a consent form related to data processing and recording of the focus group.

Four women participated in the focus group: one of them was 38 years-old working in the field of tourism, and three under the age of 30 and actively searching for a job. One in the field of HR, one in Finance and one in Tourism. As far as the educational background of the participants is concerned, one had completed a graduate program, two had a bachelor degree and one had completed vocational training.

All participants had been at some point employed and all were familiar with the procedure of searching for a job, even if they employed different means. For example, participants who were digitally literate used online platforms to search for a job or even for trainings to prepare for job applications. These participants were university graduates. One of the participants, who had completed secondary school and was not familiar with computers and internet, was searching for a job through friends. In addition, she mentioned that lately a friend was helping her to find a job online. She was the only one who had used public services to find a job but due to lack of requirements (e.g. diplomas) she was not able to find a job using these services.

Apart from requirements such as educational level or technical and specialized knowledge, the rest of the participants considered digital skills as high in demand and imperative in order to find a job. However, soft skills were mentioned as extremely important as well.

The first skills mentioned were **critical thinking** and **decision-making**, two skills evaluated, according to one of the participants, during the recruitment phase through a game-based application procedure. In addition, to these skills, **patience** and **persistence** were mentioned as qualities and skills evaluated through specific tasks candidates had to complete as part of the same procedure.

Emotional intelligence is also one of the skills that seems to be important as shows the

following quote “*One level of the game was recognition of facial expressions. There were faces popping out quickly on the screen and you had to press very fast if it was anger, sadness, happiness ...*”.

Being able to recognize the emotions in others was recognized by all participants as important, especially when you need to persuade someone. Non-verbal communication, including body gestures and tone of voice, was also mentioned as part of this process.

“*Being able to stay calm and talk to each other and understand each other*” were the first and most important for one of the participants. Being able to stay calm entails, of course, recognition of one’s emotions and can be seen together with emotional intelligence, whereas *talk and understand each other* involves **communication skills**. Being able to make a point clearly but also **listening** to the other **actively** are two skills necessary for people to talk and understand each other. In addition, staying calm was connected to management of situations of crisis or situations of conflict with colleagues and handle a situation.

Staying calm and being able to handle difficult situations with the colleagues but also with customers was a skill that all participants considered as important.

“*When you have to deal with customers in a tourist office definitely you want to serve the customer but you need to have some boundaries as well because sometimes people exceed the proper limits and then you have to deal with it. So, it is best if you have your boundaries set from the beginning*”.

In relation to cooperation with others, participants mentioned **reliability** and **trust** as very important to have good outcomes even when you work under pressure.

Evaluating a situation, “reading the customer” and setting your limits are skills that are acquired mainly through experience, according to the participants. On the other hand, **adaptability** can help handle different situations and is highly valued, as one of the participants say:

I think that the skill employers will ask now, and what I would ask myself if I had employees is being adaptive and flexible. [...] when you have more experiences in a sector or in different sectors you increase your adaptiveness. And I have seen this because now I am a volunteer in a consulting center, before I was working in a hair salon and I had to work with women which was very difficult and I had to adapt in a different personality every half an hour. I think that experience helps.

Apart from **personal experience**, one of the participants, supported that soft skills can be acquired through **training**. Herself had attended many trainings with groups as well as personal courses with physical presence in the past and online today. In fact, she mentioned the soft skills offered by and through LinkedIn. Information about these trainings came from the professional circle mainly. In addition, companies encourage candidates to train on skills through LinkedIn.

Focus groups with women: *Lebanon*

Fourteen women coming from different Lebanese regions and representing diverse Lebanese cultures constitute the audience of the “Women Focus Group”. They are NEET women having different educational backgrounds and working in many labour sectors with different job statuses and various professional experiences.

Prior to the Focus Group, the participants are asked to fill out a google docs form with personal information and answers to a few preparatory questions related to the topic in discussion. The required information is available on the following the link:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdB6CGI-xKFbEOkIhujVEiDXVFwuYe6nBoLquMMQZJ1ARhzaA/viewform?usp=sf_link

The qualitative “Women Focus Group” study was conducted on May 3, 2021 via CCIA-BML zoom platform from 11:00 a.m. until 13:15 p.m. (Beirut time) with the assigned audience

discussed in the above section. Annex 2 provides screenshots of the zoom focus group after ensuring the participants' consent to do so.

This focus group aims at exploring NEET women's perspectives and providing them with the opportunity to express their opinions and share their experiences and demands through answering and discussing the TOR set questions.

Prior to the discussion, the Focus Group audience is informed about the goals of the project and the participating countries, the confidential and voluntary nature as well as the importance of participation, thus, complying with the required ethical aspects.

According to the Focus Group participants, the skills needed for women's integration into the labor market are numerous and various by profession; however, the most important are digital skills, **communication skills, and teamwork skills, as well as the flexibility and ability to work, plan and organize. The participants point out about the importance of self-management as a part of soft skills** necessary to access the job market. The audience note that even though these skills are crucial, political affiliation remains a key factor affecting the employment process in the country.

Focus group with women: *Palestine*

This focus group aims at obtaining information on important aspects of women integration in the labour market. It included assessing women needs for training on digital and soft skills, identifying good policies and practices integrating digitally skilled women in the labour market and HR practices friendly to women.

Due to the limited time, and the complexity of conducting face to face either a ZOOM call and in order to get the needed information efficiently, a one to one phone calls were conducted with 10 Palestinian women between 18-29 years old.

According to the participants beside proper working experience in the field of study, the following skills are usually mentioned in job posting:

- Ability to work with the team
- Communication skills
- Good English language skills
- Good presentation and negotiation skills
- Working under pressure

Beside the mentioned skills, usually technical skills are mentioned according to the type of position (for instance using Photoshop and illustrator for a graphic designer).

Even though all the mentioned skills are important, the participants believe that **communication** skills are the most important skills needed to have success in the labour market, since, as they supported, communication is imperative for survival. Also using computer and its application is the second most mentioned skills, the participants believe that not knowing the basics of using the computer and its application make it difficult to find a suitable job.

Regarding the soft skills, the participant were more familiar with the term, and were able give examples about it including communication skills, negotiation, time management, leadership, working with the team, dealing with customers, working under pressure. The participants believe they have some of the soft skills mentioned, thus it needs improvement to match the labour market's requirements, one participant added;

"I can say I have the best communication skills, but I didn't have the chance to test it in a working place, thus I am not sure about to what degree I have a certain skill, and if I need to improve it or not".

Focus groups with women: *Spain*

The focus group with women was conducted by Catalan Youth Agency, Department of Employment, Social Affairs and Families on May 11th 2021 at 10am. Four women participated.

Women participating in the focus group considered individual background as of great importance in relation to the skills one may acquire. This is especially true, according to participants, for digital skills which require of course access to specific resources. They highlight that each individual's point of departure associated with their initial training can condition women's access to certain training in digital skills. They once again mention the huge bias among migrants, who often have no access to training and where digital literacy or not is much more noticeable.

Participants mentioned that each job offer demands specific skills but they supported that in recent years there has been an increase in the demand for digital or technological skills associated with the boom in the new technologies and the use of data as a resource. However, they believe that social skills or capacities such as **good communication or interactive skills, adaptability, and not resisting change** are even more important. They say that these are transversal and useful in any field. They also agree that these social skills are essential for good work performance, as the other more technological skills can be acquired through training.

They say that even today in meetings, team workshops or meetings with clients, men speak more, monopolising the time and always taking leadership positions.

In this sense, they highlight that the competences acquired by the end of higher education are not sufficient to guarantee professional success, which is instead associated with other factors inherent to the person like drive, interest, motivation, flexibility, etc.

They recall that oftentimes demands for flexibility, associated with more flexible hours for certain occupations, can lead to difficulties balancing work and personal life, so they say that this is an important issue to highlight.

Companies seem to be setting aside the old custom of requiring degrees (nicknamed *titulitis* in Spain) and are moving toward hiring processes where social skills and capacities are much more important when filling a certain job. Responses to certain situations within the workplace aimed at generating **good team dynamics, a pleasant work environment, communicating between persons and other factors are increasingly evaluated in hiring processes.**

They say that in general, the companies where they work have a list of trainings to improve competences and skills, internal or external trainings associated with contextual or other factors to improve **internal relations or communication, group facilitation, mentoring in conflicts, better use of digital networks or platforms, etc.**

Soft skills mapping based on focus groups with women

In the following tables the soft skills discussed during the focus groups with women are presented first by country and then by soft skill category.

Greece	Lebanon	Palestine	Spain
Critical thinking	Communication	Teamwork	Communication
Decision-making	Teamwork	Communication	Coordinating
Persistence	Flexibility	Languages	Mentoring
Patience	Planning	Public speaking	Teamwork
Emotional intelligence	Organization	Working under pressure	Collaboration
Communication skills	Self-management	Negotiation	
Service and attend			
Adaptability			
Active listening			
Responsibility			
Reliability			

Table 43: Soft skills mapping based on focus groups with women by country

Table 44: Soft skills based on focus groups with women by soft skills category

Personal	Social	Methodological
Persistence	Emotional intelligence	Decision-making
Patience	Communication	Planning
Critical thinking	Service and attend	Organization
Adaptability	Active listening	Coordinating
Responsibility	Teamwork	Mentoring
Reliability	Flexibility	
Flexibility	Negotiation	
Languages	Collaboration	
Public speaking		
Working under pressure		

Focus groups with managers

Four countries conducted focus groups with managers, Greece, Lebanon, Palestine and Spain. As in the case of the focus groups with women, as far as Spain is concerned, the results presented here are provided by the Catalan Youth Agency, Department of Employment, Social Affairs and Families. However, during the focus group conducted by FAMP there was no mention of soft skills. Even though it is in itself an important finding regarding soft skills, no further analysis is provided.

Focus group with managers: Greece

The focus group with employers was conducted on Monday, 19 of April 2021 and lasted 2 hours, from 15:00 to 17:00. Eleven people participated in the focus group, 7 represented businesses and 4 were members of the INTERNISA team, three from AAH and one from RCM. The participants represented the four sectors as follows: 2 from tourism, 2 from textiles, 1 from agri-food, and 1 from finance.

The focus group with managers focused significantly on issues related to gender, gender roles and perceptions influencing the presence of women in the labour market. In addition, interesting discussion unfolded on digitalization and the needs for upscaling of companies or digitalization of companies, however, in relation to lack of resources met often in SMEs.

In the new realm of digitalization, soft skills are still necessary and according to the participants, are harder to be learned. *“We cannot work forever remotely...in this stage I believe that the skills needed should be reconsidered. We need many soft skills, many soft skills!”*

Communication was the first skill mentioned by participants. Including several other skills, communication is fundamental for all businesses.

“Basic communication courses and I would say, listening should be the first one and then the rest. Basic principles of communication. People have completely forgotten that we are all transmitting and receiving messages, that we talk and listen. Everyone has forgotten this. I am not saying why they have forgotten it, because our life is difficult, I understand this...ok. But this is the problem”.

Included in this set of skills is, according to the participants, **active listening** and **public speaking**. Both trying to make a clear point to convince others and listen to what they have to say using active listening, non-verbal skills are extremely significant for cooperation.

“There are parts of human nature that we need to learn how to handle...Can I go in a room or talk with a customer, a supplier, a colleague and communicate what I have in my mind and help him have the same dream as mine?”

Negotiation and **conflict management** were also mentioned as part of working with other people, which involve not only social skills, such as persuasion, but also personal skills, such as self-awareness. Connected to self-awareness, **anger management** was one of the skills discussed by participants.

As one of the participants in tourism said: *“We have young people, young professionals who come and really learn any software we ask them, not in 48 hours but in 3. They can check in and check out a customer in 3 hours. But they have no emotional intelligence skills, they don't have empathy for the person who is in front of them, they don't have any skill in speaking or listening and we need to build that”.*

Empathy is one of the most important soft skills, needed in every professional sector but especially in tourism, as one of the participants says. In addition to the identified, by the participant, difficulty to teach empathy, COVID-19 and the regulations in force in touristic services amplifies the problem. Participants mentioned the need for transferring knowledge to others in order to develop these skills, therefore **mentoring** as skill is rendered as is important.

“We are trying to create now, the new generation of professionals and we are trying as mentors to transfer to them what the customer wants, that the customer wants human contact...”

Lacking human contact due to covid-19 restrictions and digitalization, the particular participant active in tourism, stresses the need to find ways to mentor the new professionals and show them how to communicate and connect with others. Systematic work to train others in soft skills as well as in digital skills is done by the organization in which one of the participants coming from the agri-food sector.

“We invest in training, in our beneficiaries and our trainers. Because in Greece professional trainers usually [...] they are not professional trainers. Most of the time they are consultants, maybe academics, this does not mean they cannot be adult trainers. [...] It is very important for a good professional to have some tools to be able to do the work of a trainer and of a mentor, right? it is different to go into a room and have 10 year-old children looking at you as a god and it is different to go to a professional 30-35 years-old and trying to change the way he thinks and to convince him when he is already doing his job. You are going peer-to-peer now [...] There are different dynamics and we have to create in different sectors in Greece where economy can be developed a generation of able professionals, academics, entrepreneurs who will become the “teachers” for the next generation.”

What is supported here is that, professionals with a specialized background, often fail in transferring their knowledge to other people due to lack of soft skills. What is proposed by the participant is to train trainers with specialized background in soft skills to be able to transfer knowledge to entrepreneurs. At the same time, trainees-entrepreneurs would be trained not only in specialized knowledge and tools but in soft skills necessary for them to collaborate with others, develop their businesses and ensure sustainability.

Focus groups with managers: *Lebanon*

Based on the provided list from CCIA-BML, sixteen employers from various economic sectors in Lebanon comprise the participants' list of the “Employers/HR Focus Group”. The participants' distribution on textile, agri-foods, tourism and financial sectors are as follows: 5 participants from the agri-food sector; 4 participants from the tourism sector; 3 participants from the textile sector; and 4 participants from the finance sector. The mentioned employers/HR have been invited to participate in the assigned Focus Group via email. They have been asked to confirm their participation beforehand.

A qualitative “Employers/HR Focus Group” study was conducted on May 11, 2021 via CCIA-BML zoom platform from 14:30 p.m. until 16:30 p.m. (Beirut Time) with the assigned audience discussed in the above section. Annex 3 provides screenshots of the zoom focus group after ensuring the participants' consent to do so.

This focus group aimed at obtaining information on important aspects of women integration into the labour market based on employers' perspectives. It explores employers' needed qualifications and skills from employees in general and women employees in specific. In addition, it examines their approaches and investments in employee training and skill upgrading. Hence, it estimates their approaches and viewpoints about women needs for training on digital and soft skills. It identifies and explores employers' perceptions about existing HR policies in the workplace and their compliance with women's personal, social, gender, and professional aspects and in relation to the cultural and national contexts where necessary.

In addition, it provides employer participants with the opportunity to express their opinions and share their experiences and demands through answering and discussing the TOR set questions.

Prior to the discussion, the Focus Group audience is informed about the goals of the project and the participating countries, the confidential and voluntary nature as well as the

importance of participation, thus, complying with the required ethical aspects. Participants are asked to introduce themselves and share some information about their occupations, economic sectors, and the size of company they own or work for.

Even though the discussion about skills was very interesting and provided significant information on the technical requirements and the digital skills required today in most of the sectors, soft skills were not mentioned.

Regarding the skills needed in their institutions, the majority of the participants' answers confirm that there is an increasing lack and gap in the needed skills for many occupations within different sectors; in their opinion, this could be the result of government neglect of technical and vocational education. In addition, participants denote a lack of scouting and searching for skills within the job seekers and that most of the time, the required profiles do not comply with the posted advertisement.

As for the digital skills, the employer participants present two opinions depending on the economic sector as follows: some consider that having such skills is secondary, especially when it comes to manual jobs; others state that such skills are very essential and among the basic requirements for different job levels in the institution.

The participants share that these skills are necessary though the requirements vary by occupation. While digital skills are a crucial requirement to ensure progress and integration into the labour market, still there is a considerable need for some other essential skills constituting the skeleton of every job position and occupation, such as communication skills and social intelligence skills.

In this context, some of the employers, especially the ones dealing with international standards and certifications, offer technical support and training programs to ensure the professional development of their employees knowing that this development will yield better determination and outcomes. The audience report that employees nowadays are aware of the importance of trainings and professional development. They recommend more training, especially for women in order to empower their presence and integration into the labour market.

Moreover, employers state that women's participation in training programs targets professional development and progress within the same institution as a part of the exerted effort; this is due to women's general job stability. On the other hand, men participation in training when possible addresses improving their resume and perhaps increasing their opportunities outside the institution.

Focus group with managers: *Palestine*

The research team have introduced the participants of the objective of the focus group discussion, the implementing partner, ActionAid Organization, the regional partners, and funding authority. Also, the research team explored the objective of the FG to solicit information on important aspects of women integration in the labour market, assessing women needs for training on digital and soft skills, identifying good policies and practices integrating digitally skilled women in the labour market and HR practices friendly to women. The research team met with 8 managers/ businesses, specifically two managers of each sector targeted. The research team have met with each manager individually because it was difficult to arrange or group them all for the meeting at the same time due to their busy work, remoteness among participants in geographic areas and Ramadan period, and COVID-19. Furthermore, the 8 meetings took place either face-to-face or by phone depending on the circumstances and preferences of the interviewee.

Prior to starting the interview, each manager/ owner introduced him/herself and the position they possess at their businesses or organization. Importantly, all the interviewees met were the business owners, managers, or HR managers, to ensure that information was obtained at high level. The list of participants is attached to this report, in addition to the

demographic information.

The soft skills that are important to include **communication, leadership, teamwork, presentation** skills, and other similar skills that improve the personalities and confidence of potential candidates.

Focus group with managers: *Spain*

The focus group with managers conducted by Agencia Catalana De La Joventut on the 6th of May, 2021, at 10 am. 6 managers participated, 4 women and 2 men.

Discussing issues of training and skills acquisition, participants in the focus group mentioned that in general women tend to receive more training throughout their work life than men. They cite a sort of contradiction, as the administration offers many trainings associated with improving digital or workplace competences that allow trainees to acquire sound knowledge, yet many job offers do not reward this “extra” training in terms of salary or recognition.

With regard to certain job sectors such as engineering, where a high level of technical education is required, training geared towards the soft skills such as learning how to communicate, teamwork, empathy, etc., is often missing.

In the world of micro-companies, there is a keen interest in working on digital issues and how to create networks, newsletters, attractive profiles on Instagram, dissemination on the social media, etc.

Also, within the all digital competences, from the most basic to the most technical, one facet worth working on is content creation. The emphasis should be placed on content creation, programming and competences in this area to make people more autonomous. The participants note that this competence should be fostered and worked on starting in the most basic education with children.

In this sense, there are projects at schools (Alba-STEAM project) which seek to encourage a larger number of women in technical or technological studies. They stress that these skills should be instilled from a young age because more projects of this kind have to be reinforced and undertaken to foster digital competences in children.

There has been a great deal of evolution in the public administration in the last 10 years, and an important list of trainings associated with the new competences, including the digital competences, is offered, as well as many others associated with specific job characteristics. Since the COVID pandemic, there has been a larger number of job demands and trainings related to learning on the digital platforms.

Soft skills mapping based on focus groups with managers

In the following tables the soft skills discussed during the focus groups with managers are presented first by country and then by soft skill category.

Table 45: Soft skills mapping based on focus groups with managers by country

Greece	Palestine	Spain
Communication	Communication	Communication
Active listening	Leadership	Teamwork
Public speaking	Teamwork	Empathy
Negotiation	Public speaking	
Conflict management		
Emotions management		
Empathy		
Mentoring		

*Table
skills
focus*

by soft

Personal	Social	Methodological
Public speaking	Communication	Mentoring
	Active listening	
	Negotiation	
	Conflict management	
	Emotions management	
	Empathy	
	Teamwork	

*46: Soft
based on
groups with
managers
skills
category*

Recommendations advancing the participation of young women in the labour market

In this section we will attempt to integrate the findings from all research activities in order to finalize the catalogue of soft skills integrating all skills with high value for both managers and women. In addition, divergencies between the two will be discussed taking into consideration the qualitative research findings.

When examining the tables ranking the soft skills for women and men, it becomes apparent that women mean values for soft skills are lower for women than managers while presenting a wider range of values. With lowest value 2,8 for Collaboration and highest 4,2 for Service and Attend skill, women present as possessing at low or medium level several of the skills. Only nine skills have a value over 4 whereas managers have given mean value of over 4 to 24 skills. This indicates that managers demand from their employees to possess many skills at an advanced level.

Five common skills for managers and women appear over the value of 4:

- **Service and attend**, which was the first one in both rankings
- **Continuous learning** with mean value for both groups 4,1
- **Responsibility** with mean value for both groups 4,1 and
- **Networking** with mean value for both groups 4

The skills with the highest divergence are seen in Table 47. Highest divergence is observed for collaboration, which managers consider as very important with mean value over whereas women scored 2,8. Multitasking is also low for women compared to the managers demand, indicating an important skills mismatch. Prioritization and tolerance to stress present also a gap.

Table 47: Highest divergency in mean values between managers and women

Skill category	Soft skill	Managers	Women
Personal	Tolerance to stress/ Endurance	4,1	3,3
Methodological	Prioritization	4,1	3
Methodological	Multitasking	4,1	2,9
Social	Collaboration	4,1	2,8
Social	Teamwork	4	2,9

The gap between demand and supply should be addressed through trainings to achieve skills matching.

Higher in rank skills for both managers and women recorded a mean value of over 4 and are presented in the following table.

Table 48: Highest ranking soft skills for managers and women

Skill category	Soft skill	Mean value
Social	Customer orientation/ Service and attend	4,4
Personal	Literacy	4,2
Personal	Positive attitude	4,2
Personal	Adaptability	4,2
Personal	Continuous learning	4,1

Personal	Responsibility	4,1
Personal	Autonomy	4,1
Personal	Continuous learning	4,1
Personal	Responsibility	4,1
Personal	Tolerance to stress/ Endurance	4,1
Social	Collaboration	4,1
Social	Communication	4,1
Methodological	Problem solving	4,1
Methodological	Time management	4,1
Methodological	Teambuilding	4,1
Methodological	Prioritization	4,1
Methodological	Multitasking	4,1
Personal	Attention to detail	4
Personal	Commitment	4
Personal	Critical thinking	4
Social	Networking	4
Social	Teamwork	4
Personal	Self-awareness	4
Personal	Balancing work and social life	4
Social	Cultural adaptability	4
Social	Conversation skills	4
Methodological	Planning	4
Methodological	Mentoring	4
Methodological	Vision setting	4
Methodological	Proactivity	4

At this point, the soft skills mapped during the focus group should also be taken into consideration. As seen in the previous sections, managers mentioned fewer soft skills than women. In addition, managers mentioned mainly social skills, which is in line with the ranking of soft skills in each of the countries where we observed that methodological skills scored lower compared to the rest of the skills.

Managers mentioned communication as fundamental skill, especially in a digitalized era. More particularly, managers suggested developing communication skills to be used in online collaborations, transactions, trainings or any other activity of the company requires attracting the attention of an audience. In addition, empathy was stressed, in order for teams to work effectively but also to understand clients and achieve the goals of the company. Closely connected to empathy, negotiation and conflict management were identified as significant to achieve agreements and resolve problems internally and with people outside the company. Most of the skills were mentioned mainly in terms of keeping the team working in a positive environment, for team members to be satisfied and creative.

In line with the managers, women emphasized emotional intelligence as a core skill to achieve good results in ones work but also to keep good relations with co-workers. However, the self-assessment in the survey with women showed this particular skill can be further

developed. Including empathy, emotional intelligence concerns also managing one's own emotions and those of others and, when developed, can have multiple positive outcomes.

Persistence, patience, critical thinking responsibility and reliability were the core personal skills mentioned by women, especially young women participating in the focus groups. Public speaking was mentioned by both managers and women during the focus groups, a skill that recorded a low value in the women survey. This indicates possible need for training in public speaking.

Soft skills catalogue

Taking into consideration the findings from the quantitative surveys and the findings from the focus groups, the following catalogue has been formed to include skills of highest importance. All of the skills included here are of great importance with very small differences.

Skill category	Soft skill	Description
Social	Customer orientation/ Service and attend	The ability to recognize, acknowledge and attend to the needs of the customer. This skill is connected to emotional intelligence and to emotions management.
Social	Communication	The ability to communicate with others clearly. Others understand the message being conveyed in interpersonal and group communications.
Social	Emotional intelligence	Recognition of emotions in oneself and in others. Emotions management and empathy are part of emotional intelligence. This skill is imperative for collaboration, dealing with customers, resolving conflicts etc.
Social	Emotions management	Emotions management refers to the ability of managing one's own emotions but also those of others. Usually connected to anger and anger management, this skill helps collaboration.
Social	Collaboration	Being able to share information and work closely with others to achieve common goals.
Social	Conflict management	Managing conflict refers to the ability of containing a conflicting situation to avoid escalation. This is an important skill especially when many people work together.
Personal	Positive attitude	Keeping a positive output, even when things seem dim comes natural to some people, but

		needs to be practiced for most people.
Personal	Adaptability	Being able to respond to changing conditions or different people.
Personal	Continuous learning	Developing oneself continuously keeping up-to-date with knowledge and skills.
Personal	Responsibility	Taking responsibility for actions, behaviours and outcomes.
Personal	Autonomy	Being able to work with minimum supervision and guidance.
Personal	Tolerance to stress/ Endurance	Staying calm when things are difficult and not panicking.
Methodological	Problem solving	Being able to assess a situation and find the best solution to problems. This is connected to skills such as analytical thinking, flexibility and thinking out-of-the-box.
Methodological	Time management	Time management refers to the ability of using time productively and efficiently and it connected a various other skills, such as organizing, setting goals, prioritization etc.
Methodological	Teambuilding	Creating a team out of individuals. This is connected to several skills like vision setting, delegating tasks and roles, managing emotions and conflict.
Methodological	Prioritization	Assessing the importance of each task and completing the most important first.
Methodological	Multitasking	Being able to manage multiple responsibilities or tasks at the same time.
Personal	Attention to detail	Being careful, thorough, and accurate, thus making less mistakes and gaining overall in time and productivity.
Personal	Commitment	Commitment refers to believing in the work one is doing, the specific and overall goals. This helps in completing tasks with positive attitude but is very much connected to the work place environment.
Personal	Critical thinking	Being able to use reasoning, find connections, understanding the logic behind things and being

		reflective.
Social	Networking	Connecting to other people and organizations, building and maintain connections.
Social	Teamwork	Working efficiently with others is imperative and often difficult, since various others skills are required such as communication, emotional intelligence etc.
Personal	Self-awareness	Being aware of oneself, of the strengths and weaknesses. This skill can guide decisions regarding carrier or training decisions.
Personal	Balancing work and social life	Being able to maintain both a professional and a personal life is often hard but imperative for both aspects of life. Time management, prioritization, planning and organization are some of the skills related to this one.
Social	Cultural adaptability	Working with people from different backgrounds becomes more and more important. Being open to others and not guiding behaviour based on prejudices are vital for this skill to be developed.
Methodological	Planning	Designing how the tasks at hand will be completed, including necessary resources, time and people.
Methodological	Mentoring	Imparting knowledge to others and helping them develop professionally.
Methodological	Vision setting	A clear leadership skill, vision setting entails creating a vision, setting goals and inspiring others to try and achieve it.
Methodological	Proactivity	Assessing the risks in plans and preparing for challenges. This skill is connected to critical thinking, problem solving, planning etc.

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Annexes

Annex 1: Questionnaire addressed to companies



INTERNISA

Developing the INTERNISA network of synergies to increase the number of digitally skilled women employed in the ENI CBC MED territories via matching demand and supply in the labour market

**Mapping soft skills women need to overcome structural and cultural problems in ENI CBC MED territories and (re)enter the labour market
Questionnaire addressed to companies**



Demographics

1. **Please indicate your gender**
 1. Male
 2. Female
 3. Trans-gender
 4. Non-Binary
 5. Prefer not to say

2. **Please select the age category that includes your age:**
 1. 18-29 years-old
 2. 30-39 years-old
 3. 40-49 years-old
 4. 50 or above
 5. Prefer not to say

3. **Please select nationality:**
 1. Greek
 2. Italian
 3. Jordanian
 4. Lebanese
 5. Spanish
 6. Palestinian
 7. Tunisian
4. **What is your marital status?**
 1. Single
 2. Married or in a domestic partnership
 3. Divorced
 4. Widowed
 5. Other
 6. Prefer not to say

5. **Please indicate the highest level of formal education you have completed.**
 1. Primary
 2. Secondary
 3. Vocational
 4. Bachelor
 5. Graduate
 6. Post-graduate
 7. Other. Please specify _____
 8. Prefer not to say
6. **Position in the company**
 1. Director/manager/owner
 2. Representative of Human Resources Department
 3. Administrative employee
 4. Other
7. **Size of the company (establishment)**
 1. Large (250 persons and more)
 2. Medium (100-249 persons)
 3. Small (10-99 persons)
 4. Micro (less than 10 persons)

8. Economic activity

1. Agri-food
2. Textile
3. Finance
4. Tourism

9. In your company do you take any of the following actions: YES NO

	YES	NO
Monitor and evaluate the performance of your employees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Review the skill and training needs of your employees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Stay informed on new technologies or applications	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Train new employees on the job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Enroll your employees to external trainings to improve or acquire skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If yes, please specify the topic and main objectives of the trainings

Organize internal seminars and training to improve or acquire skills?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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If yes, please specify the topic and main objectives of the trainings

If yes, did you hold 1 training the past:

1. one 1 month
2. six months
3. one year
4. five years
5. other _____

If no, please explain why:

10. Recruitment

	YES	NO
Have you had a hiring procedure in the last 12 months?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If yes, did you encounter any problems?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
What kind of problems did you encounter?		
There were no or few applicants	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Applicants lacked required qualification/education level	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Applicants lacked required technical skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Applicants lacked required soft skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Applicants expected wages higher than we can offer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Applicants did not like working conditions we can currently offer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Applicants lack the required work experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (specify)

11. Are you planning on hiring people the next year?
YES NO

12. Personal skills

Please indicate the **level of importance** of each of the following skills, based on **1-5 scale** where **1**: Not important, **2**: Slightly important, **3**: Moderately important, **4**: Important, **5**: Very important

	1	2	3	4	5
Working autonomously	<input type="radio"/>				
Adaptability to new conditions	<input type="radio"/>				
Literacy	<input type="radio"/>				
Being able to work under pressure	<input type="radio"/>				
Being aware of personal strengths and weaknesses	<input type="radio"/>				
Keep positive attitude	<input type="radio"/>				
Public speaking and presenting	<input type="radio"/>				
Balancing work and social life	<input type="radio"/>				
Taking responsibility for mistakes	<input type="radio"/>				
Learning new things	<input type="radio"/>				

13. Social skills

Please indicate the **level of importance** of each of the following skill, based on **1-5 scale** where **1**: Not important, **2**: Slightly important, **3**: Moderately important, **4**: Important, **5**: Very important

	1	2	3	4	5
Sharing information and knowledge to achieve common goals	<input type="radio"/>				
Negotiating for the best solution	<input type="radio"/>				
Attending to the needs of customers	<input type="radio"/>				
Growing the company's network	<input type="radio"/>				
Constructive dialogue and exchange of ideas	<input type="radio"/>				
Working with people from different background	<input type="radio"/>				
Communicate clearly and efficiently	<input type="radio"/>				

14. Methodological skills

Please indicate the **level of importance** of each of the following skill, based on **1-5 scale** where **1**: Not important, **2**: Slightly important, **3**: Moderately important, **4**: Important, **5**: Very important

	1	2	3	4	5
Planning activities	<input type="radio"/>				

Assigning tasks to others	<input type="radio"/>				
Coordinating activities of groups and individuals	<input type="radio"/>				
Take proactive actions to avoid risks	<input type="radio"/>				
Monitoring the performance of others	<input type="radio"/>				
Making decisions	<input type="radio"/>				
Provide clear guidance to others	<input type="radio"/>				
Able to work on multiple projects and tasks	<input type="radio"/>				
Developing objectives and strategies	<input type="radio"/>				
Prioritizing tasks under circumstances of pressure	<input type="radio"/>				
Collecting and evaluating data	<input type="radio"/>				
Teambuilding	<input type="radio"/>				
Setting goals and plan their attainment	<input type="radio"/>				
Inspiring others to commit to the values and goals of the company	<input type="radio"/>				
Imparting knowledge to new employees	<input type="radio"/>				
Managing time effectively to complete tasks	<input type="radio"/>				
Risk assessment	<input type="radio"/>				
Provide constructive feedback to others and promote development and improvement	<input type="radio"/>				
Developing solutions to problems	<input type="radio"/>				

15. Based on your experience, please indicate the soft skills you consider as most important in your sector.

Annex 2: Questionnaire addressed to women



INTERNISA

Developing the INTERNISA network of synergies to increase the number of digitally skilled women employed in the ENI CBC MED territories via matching demand and supply in the labour market

**Mapping soft skills women need to overcome structural and cultural problems in ENI CBC MED territories and (re)enter the labour market
Questionnaire addressed to women**



Demographics

1. Please indicate your gender

1. Male
2. Female
3. Trans-gender
4. Non-Binary
5. Prefer not to say

2. Please select the age category that includes your age:

1. 18-29 years-old
2. 30-39 years-old
3. 40-49 years-old
4. 50 or above
5. Prefer not to say

3. Please select nationality:

1. Greek
2. Italian
3. Jordanian
4. Lebanese
5. Spanish
6. Palestinian
7. Tunisian

4. What is your marital status?

1. Single
2. Married or in a domestic partnership
3. Divorced
4. Widowed
5. Other
6. Prefer not to say

5. Please indicate the highest level of formal education you have completed.

1. Primary
 2. Secondary
 3. Vocational
 4. Bachelor
 5. Graduate
 6. Post-graduate
 7. Other. Please specify _____
 8. Prefer not to say
-

Current status

6. Are you currently employed?

YES NO

If yes, please indicate the economic activity of the company

1. Agri-food
2. Textile
3. Finance
4. Tourism

If yes, please indicate position in the company:

1. Director/manager/owner
2. Representative of Human Resources Department
3. Administrative employee
4. Other

7. Are you currently enrolled as a student in school or any formal educational programme ?

YES NO

If yes, please specify _____

8. Were you enrolled in an adult learning program in the past 2 years?

YES NO

If yes, please indicate title of the program _____

9. Have you participated in any training in the past 2 years?

YES NO

If yes, please indicate the title or the topic of the training _____

10. Did you apply for a job the past 12 months?

YES ...NO

If yes, did you meet any of the following difficulties:	YES	NO
There were many applicants	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lacked required qualification/education level	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lacked required technical skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lacked required soft skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Wage offered was lower than expected	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Skills

11. Personal skills

Please indicate your **level of agreement** with the following statements, based on 1-5 scale where 1: Totally disagree, 2: Disagree, 3: Somewhat agree/disagree, 4: Agree, 5: Totally agree

1 2 3 4 5

I take responsibility for my mistakes	<input type="radio"/>				
I complete each task as flawlessly as possible	<input type="radio"/>				
I like to learn new things	<input type="radio"/>				
I try to see different perspectives of an issue	<input type="radio"/>				
I always keep a positive attitude	<input type="radio"/>				
I always finish what I have started	<input type="radio"/>				
I know what my weaknesses are	<input type="radio"/>				
Often when I do something, my mind wanders	<input type="radio"/>				
I cross-check data before using them	<input type="radio"/>				
Stress keeps me from doing things	<input type="radio"/>				
I accept criticism without getting defensive	<input type="radio"/>				
When I do something wrong, I lie	<input type="radio"/>				
I complete the tasks I undertake	<input type="radio"/>				
I spend time with my friends and/or family every week	<input type="radio"/>				

12. Social skills

Please indicate your **level of agreement** with the following statements, based on 1-5 scale where 1: Totally disagree, 2: Disagree, 3: Somewhat agree/disagree, 4: Agree, 5: Totally agree

	1	2	3	4	5
I ask questions to acquire information	<input type="radio"/>				
When people fight, I prefer to stay out of it	<input type="radio"/>				
People understand what I am saying	<input type="radio"/>				
I prefer to work alone	<input type="radio"/>				
It is easy to understand how people feel	<input type="radio"/>				
In conversation I try to make people agree with me	<input type="radio"/>				
I can find common ground in a dispute	<input type="radio"/>				
People trust me	<input type="radio"/>				
Speaking in front of people is stressful	<input type="radio"/>				
I like helping others	<input type="radio"/>				
Working in a team is creative	<input type="radio"/>				
I make good first impression to others	<input type="radio"/>				
People agree with my ideas	<input type="radio"/>				
I am aware of how my tone of voice may affect others	<input type="radio"/>				
When people are angry, I can calm them down	<input type="radio"/>				

13. Methodological skills

Please indicate your **level of agreement** with the following statements, based

on 1-5 scale where 1: Totally disagree, 2: Disagree, 3: Somewhat agree/disagree, 4: Agree, 5: Totally agree

	1	2	3	4	5
I like planning my day	<input type="radio"/>				
People come to me for advice	<input type="radio"/>				
I can break the ice among people who do not know each other	<input type="radio"/>				
I always have a notepad with me	<input type="radio"/>				
I speak with enthusiasm	<input type="radio"/>				
I can identify opportunities for action	<input type="radio"/>				
When I have many things to do, I get confused	<input type="radio"/>				
I feel confident that others will accept my ideas and decisions	<input type="radio"/>				
I rarely complete all the tasks on my daily to do list	<input type="radio"/>				
I am surprised by the consequences of my decisions	<input type="radio"/>				
I like doing one thing at a time	<input type="radio"/>				
I can collect information on a topic easily	<input type="radio"/>				
I believe that if you want a job done well, you should do it yourself	<input type="radio"/>				
I inspire others	<input type="radio"/>				
I often push back deadlines on things I have to do	<input type="radio"/>				
When trying to solve a problem, I weigh the pros and cons of different solutions	<input type="radio"/>				
I can identify the risks in a plan	<input type="radio"/>				
I always monitor the progress of a task	<input type="radio"/>				
I can understand easily if a source of information is valid	<input type="radio"/>				
I have artistic abilities	<input type="radio"/>				

14. Based on your experience, please indicate the soft skills you consider as most important when applying for a job.

Annex 3: Focus group guide with women



Developing the INTERNISA network of synergies to increase the number of digitally skilled women employed in the ENI CBC MED territories via matching demand and supply in the labour market

WP 3 Mapping and strategy development

Focus groups guide with women



1. Introduction: presentation of the project and the participants (max. 15 minutes)

1.1 The INTERNISA project, its objectives and core activities

1.2 The goal of the focus group

1.3 Presentation of participants

2. Women entering the labour market

2.1 Getting in the labour market: experiences by both employed and unemployed women.

- What are the major challenges when trying to enter the labour market?

2.2 Employment services

- Are there any state-led employment services facilitating the process? (mapping possible solutions to challenges connected mainly to high levels of unemployment)
- Are there any other institutions or organizations active in employment and have you ever sought help or guidance from them? What was your experience.
- How were you informed about these services?

2.3 Policies promoting women integration and benefiting women

- Do you think that women have the same opportunities as men in getting a job? Yes – no, and why?
- Are there/or are you aware of any state practices aiming specifically at integrating women in the labour market?
- If yes, how were you informed about them?
- If yes, do you think they are needed? Why?
- (ask for examples)
- If no, why? You think that such policies are needed?

3. Digital and soft skills in demand

3.1 Skills asked for when applying for jobs and skills demanded as part of the job.

- What kind of skills are asked for in job postings?
- What is the focus in the interviews?
- Which skills are the most important on the job?
- Do you know what digital skills are?
- Do you think you have any of them? If yes, which ones? (take notes to use them later)
- Do you know what soft skills are?
- Do you think you have any of them? If yes, which ones? (take notes to use them later)

3.2 Training to acquire skills

- How did you acquire these skills? On the Job or training
- If the answer is training, then online or offline?
- Why did you decide train on these skills?
- Which skills you think are the important (both digital and soft skills)?

Why do you think these skills are important?

- Would you attend a seminar to acquire those skills?
- Are you aware of training programs available on digital skills?
- Are you aware of training programs available on soft skills?

4. Code of conduct

4.1 Challenges related to the cultural context.

- How does your family feel about you working/wanting to work?
- Do many of your friends work?
- Is it acceptable to work with men?

4.2 Women in the workplace

- Do you think that women have equal opportunities as men when searching for a job?
- What would be/is more important for you in the workplace?
- Have you ever experienced discrimination based on gender?
- Have you ever had problems with male co-workers?
- Can you report a co-worker for inappropriate behaviour?
- Are there mechanisms protecting women from inequality and discriminatory behaviour?
- Do you think that women get the same salary as men?
- Do you think that women have the same opportunities as men to rise in the professional hierarchy?
- Do you think having a child would change your professional status? How? Why?

Annex 4: Focus group guide with managers



Developing the INTERNISA network of synergies to increase the number of digitally skilled women employed in the ENI CBC MED territories via matching demand and supply in the labour market

WP 3 Mapping and strategy development

Focus groups guide with employers



1. Introduction: presentation of the project and the participants (max. 15 minutes)

1.1 *The INTERNISA project, its objectives and core activities*

1.2 *The goal of the focus group*

1.3 *Presentation of participants*

2. Women entering the labour market

2.1 *Presence of women in the market and societal perceptions of women working*

- What will someone see when entering your company? How many men and women are working there?
- When you have a job opening where do you advertise it and why?
- Do you have in mind specific jobs/tasks in your company that you assign to women?

2.2 *Employment services*

- Are there any state-led employment services that you use when you are search for employees?
- Are there any other institutions or organizations active in employment and have you ever sought help or guidance from them? What was your experience.
- How were you informed about these services?

2.3 *Policies promoting women integration and benefiting women*

- Do you think that women have the same opportunities as men in getting a job? Yes – no, and why?
- Are you aware of any state-led programs supporting companies to employ women?
- If no, why? You think that such policies are needed?
- If yes, how were you informed about them?
- If yes, have you applied for the program?
- If yes, do you think they are needed? Why?

3. Digital and soft skills in demand

3.1 *Companies needs in skills*

- In your job postings, what are the most important skills that you require from the candidates?
- What does your companies' hiring process involve?
- What do you value as most important?
- Which skills are the most important on the job?
- Do you require digital skills from your employees?
- Do you know what soft skills are? (here you give the cards to the participants, or show the skills on a screen or write them on a board)
- Do you think they are important in the workplace?

3.2 *Training to acquire skills*

- Do you think that your employees have any of these skills? Which ones?
- How do you think they acquired them? On the job or through trainings?
- Which skills you think are more important (both digital and soft skills)?
- Have you ever organized a training in your company on digital or soft skills for the employees?
- Has any of your employees attended a training regarding digital or soft skills in the past 2 years?
- Are you aware of training programs available on digital skills?
- Are you aware of training programs available on soft skills?

4. Code of conduct

4.1 Women in the workplace

- Do you think that women have equal opportunities as men when searching for a job?
- Do you think that gender affects work performance?
- Do you, in your company, apply equal pay on female and male employees for a same position?
- Are there mechanisms protecting women from inequality and discriminatory behaviour?
- Do you think that women have the same opportunities as men to rise in the professional hierarchy?
- Does your work schedule policy offer a flexible working arrangements or on-site facilities to pregnant women /nursing (flex time, childcare facilities etc.)
- Does marital status influence your decision to hire a candidate? (This can be used only by some of the partners). If yes, has this happened with a female or male candidate? Why did the marital status influence you?
- Would you hire someone to work for you remotely?