



IO1 - I-THEN Set of methodologies and guidelines

# **ALIGNMENT OF METHODOLOGIES WITH THE JOB MARKET**

Assessment on the real impact of ITHEN's selected methodologies and identified competences on students' opportunities in the international job market



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## THE ITHEN PROJECT

ITHEN is an Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership project that involves international tertiary VET institutions and universities collaborating for the development of joint international courses in the business management and marketing fields.

### 1.1. Context of I-THEN

In Europe, despite official attempts for the creation of regular paths starting from Tertiary Vocational Education and Training bodies (TVETs, in Italy ITS – Istituti Tecnici Superiori) and continuing with a third year and a bachelor's degree, this connection is not systematized yet. Only few TVETs assign ECTSs for their modules, making it difficult for Universities to recognize their exams, and therefore forcing TVET graduates wishing to continue their studies to start their Bachelor's degree from the beginning, discouraging them as it entails a huge quantity of additional time.

Only specific agreements between TVETs and universities allow this recognition, which, anyway, is often incomplete, requiring some integrations.

Among ITHEN's partners there are TVETs that have activated agreements with Universities to recognize ECTS and enable students to complete their studies obtaining a bachelor's or a Master's with an additional 1-3 years of study. This method has been successfully tested since 2018 and has proved to be very effective.

The ITHEN Network aims to adopt this synergy between TVETs and Universities on a larger geographical scale to become ordinary practice in the medium term and – hopefully – officially systematized with dedicated policies in the longer term.

### 1.2. Aim and Objectives

Main aim of I-THEN is to establish a strategic and structured cooperation between European and non-European Universities and TVETs delivering technical higher education creating a network for the development of joint international courses.

### 1.3. Main expected outcomes

- To overcome the skill gap encountered by students wishing to work in international business environments by fostering the development of key entrepreneurial and cultural awareness competences.
- To establish a synergy between Universities and TVETs. A synergy that will facilitate the transition between different EQF level courses and degrees (from EQF 5 to 6 and 7), thus increasing the learning and job opportunities of TVET students and all Europe.
- To connect technical higher education with the market. By involving market representatives in all stages of the design and delivery of new joint international courses, technical education in the fields of marketing and



business management can meet the requirements of today's international job market.

- To upskill teachers, enabling them to successfully contribute to the development of entrepreneurship and cultural awareness competences among their students.

## 1.4. Targets

What are ITHEN's target groups?

- 32 teachers trained on ITHEN's methodologies.
- >250 people among deans and teachers of TVETs and Universities, SMEs and trade organizations, students, representatives of associated partners, public authorities and other national/regional/local stakeholders, participating to the project's Multiplier Events.
- 140 students attending the local pilots.
- 10 new TVETs, Universities, Chambers of Commerce, Public Bodies, Corporations and International Organizations from Europe and Worldwide will formally join the network.
- 40 SMEs or non-profit organizations involved in the in-depth interviews.

## 1.5. Partners

ITHEN is the result of the cooperation between 8 project partners from Italy, Spain, Portugal, Slovenia, Turkey and Germany, and 6 associated partners from Argentina, Canada, Chile, Italy and Turkey. The project partners are:

- **Fondazione ITS JobsAcademy** - Italy (Project coordinator)  
<https://jac-its.com/en/>
- **Institut de Vic** - Spain  
<https://www.ivic.cat/portal/index.php>
- **Institut Escola del Treball de Lleida** - Spain  
<https://www.escoladeltreball.cat/en/home/>
- **EIA – Ensino, Investigação e Administração** - Portugal  
<https://www.uatlantica.pt/>
- **Univerza na Primorskem Università del Litorale** - Slovenia  
<https://www.upr.si/en%20>
- **Mugla Sitki Kocman University** - Turkey  
<https://www.mu.edu.tr/en>
- **OneOffTech** - Germany  
<https://oneofftech.xyz/>
- **Associazione Multiculturale I Due Mondi** - Italy  
<https://www.demixgroup.com/i-due-mondi/>



## 2. INTRODUCTION

In ITHEN's design phase, partners – 6 TVETs and Universities and 2 private companies - have identified the needs of students graduating from business or marketing courses and entering an international job market. These needs mainly emerged from the experience of Fondazione ITS JobsAcademy (Italy), Institut de Vic (Spain), Escola del Treball de Lleida (Spain) and Atlantica University (Portugal), who have been delivering the joint course "International Marketing Management - IMM" since 2018.

Main finding resulting from the needs analysis is that marketing and business students enter the international job market prepared from a technical point of view but lacking basic key competences such as entrepreneurship and cultural awareness, making it difficult for them to apply their technical competences in an international environment.

With activity O1-A1 "DEFINITION OF KEY COMPETENCES NEEDED FROM STUDENTS ATTENDING INTERNATIONAL JOINT COURSES", partners have thus collaborated to identify a set of competences specifically aimed at developing these two key competences – entrepreneurship and cultural awareness – and their related skills in students enrolled in marketing or international business courses. The final aim is to improve the students' skills and competences, enabling them to prepare for their entrance in the job market and meet the market requirements of international business and marketing professions.

In Activity O1-A2 "DRAFT OF A SET OF I-THEN METHODOLOGIES", partners collected innovative methodologies able to develop the competences and skills identified with O1-A1. These methodologies will be integrated and used within the IMM - International Marketing Management course and in all future joint international courses delivered by the ITHEN network.

Activity O1-A3 "ALIGNMENT OF THE METHODOLOGIES WITH REQUIREMENTS OF THE JOB MARKET" saw the collection of feedback from SME representatives aimed at assessing the potential impact of the selected methodologies (O1-A2) and identified competences (O1-A1) on graduates' opportunities in the international job market. The involvement of SMEs made it possible to verify the relevance of ITHEN's identified skills and methodologies for the international job market in the fields of marketing and business management.

SMEs' feedback was collected through questionnaires, developed in order to understand the skills needed in the job market, with special focus on current trends in the job market trends and future dynamics.

The questionnaire also sought SMEs' feedback regarding their needs in terms of curricular and extracurricular internships and on-the-job experiences. This will help partners plan their internships, especially abroad.

The questionnaire was delivered to stakeholders at all levels, such as SMEs and private sector employers in the marketing and business management sectors. The questionnaire enabled partners to acquire a qualitative understanding of the impact of the selected methodologies and identified competences and helped them understand the future plans of companies regarding their capacity and interest in hosting international interns, also based on the identified competences.





Finally, the involvement of SMEs in this phase of the ITHEN project also lays the foundations for the future expansion of the ITHEN network.



### 3. MAIN FEATURES OF THE SURVEY

Main purpose of the survey was to understand the needs of SMEs in terms of employees' skills and competences, required as well in curricular and extracurricular internships and on-the job experiences.

The questionnaire included 3 main sections.

The first section was useful to define the characteristics of the people interviewed and of their companies. Aim of this first section was to learn SMEs' internship experiences and the main motivations behind the decision of hosting interns.

The purpose of the second section was to explore which sectorial competences have become more important for companies in the search of new professionals and interns to hire, both in the last 3 years and what is expected for the future 3 years.

Finally, in the third section the questionnaire assessed which of the extra-curricular skills connected to ITHEN's methodologies have proved to be relevant for the companies both in the last 3 years and what is expected in the future 3 years.

In total 55 SMEs were involved:

- 15 SMEs were involved by the Italian partners (JAC and I Due Mondi)
- 11 SMEs were involved by the Spanish partners (IVic and IET)
- 9 SMEs were involved by the Portuguese partners (Atlantica)
- 7 SMEs were involved by the Slovenian partners (UP)
- 9 SMEs were involved by the Turkish partners (MSKU)
- 4 SMEs were involved by the German partners (OOT)

The criteria used for the choice of companies were the following:

- companies with international outreach
- companies with local headquarters (preferably companies that are physically close to the partners: both national SMEs and international corporations with headquarters in the partners' territory)
- experienced and successful companies
- companies from different sectors
- companies with an eco-friendly and green approach
- medium size companies.

The department or referent to involve was chosen from one of the following offices/departments:

- HR - Human Resources
- Marketing / International Marketing / Advertisement
- Internationalization
- Management and Administration.

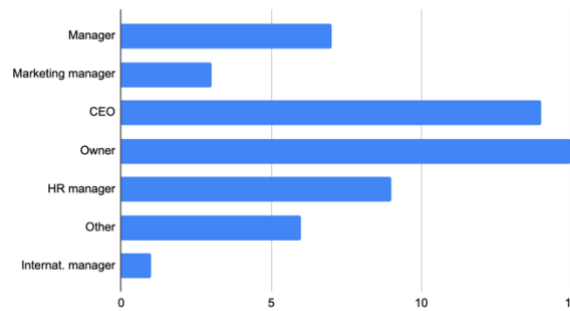
Here below is an overview of the features of the companies that have responded to the questionnaire in Germany, Italy, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, and Turkey:

1. The staff responding to the questionnaire was mainly represented by CEOs and owners (see chart below):



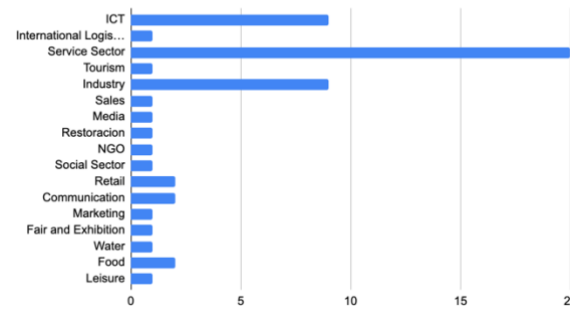


Position in the organization



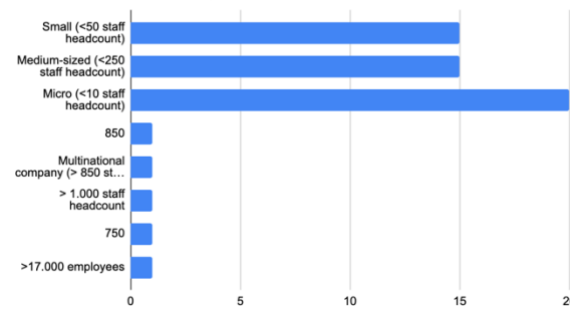
2. The 3 sectors most represented were the service sector, ICT and Industry/Manufacturing.

Which sector does your company belong to?



3. The involved companies were mainly small SMEs with less than 10 employees (including number of part-time / full-time / permanent / temporary workers).

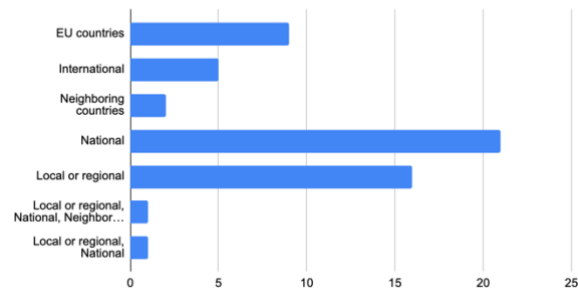
Total number of employees



4. The involved companies have sold the largest share of goods and / or services in domestic – rather than international – markets in the past two years.

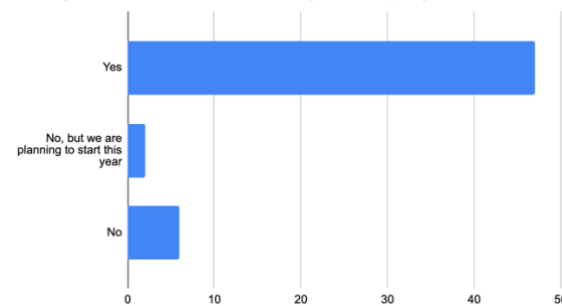


In which market did your company sell the largest share of goods and/or services during the past two years?



5. Most of the surveyed companies have already recruited interns in the past:

Have you ever recruited interns in your company?

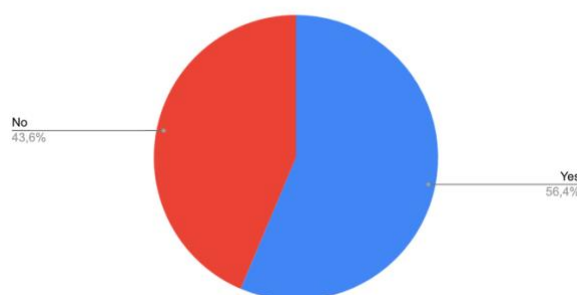


Finally, companies were asked if they would like to be informed and contacted regarding further developments of the ITHEN network. This would allow them to:

- have possible access to multilingual and multicultural interns, prepared to work in international contexts, especially in the fields of marketing and business management;
- participate in the development of courses with specific content tailored on the needs of their company;
- get in touch with foreign companies from all over the world.

As the pie chart below shows, 56.4% answered that they would like to be kept informed on the future activities of the ITHEN network.

Would you like to be contacted for further development of the I-THEN network?





## 4. OVERALL - GLOBAL FINDINGS

The survey analyzed SMEs' feedback on a list of curricular competences selected by the ITHEN's network on the basis of [European Key Competences Framework](#) (Personal, Social and Learning to learn, Citizenship, Multilingual, Digital, Initiative and Entrepreneurship, Cultural awareness and expression, Science, Technology and engineering, Mathematical).

In fact, starting from this list, the partners have identified 14 sectorial competences and have grouped them in 4 categories: **Management; Digital; Technical; Transversal.**

The scenario emerging from the survey, involving 55 companies in six countries, shows us how some sectorial competences have become more and more important for companies in the search of new workers and interns to hire in the last 3 years, and these same competences are expected to be increasingly important also in the future 3 years.

The 55 companies interviewed were asked to select which of the listed sectorial competences are to be considered essential in their workers/interns, ranking them in terms of importance (From 1: Not at all important– to 5: Extremely important).

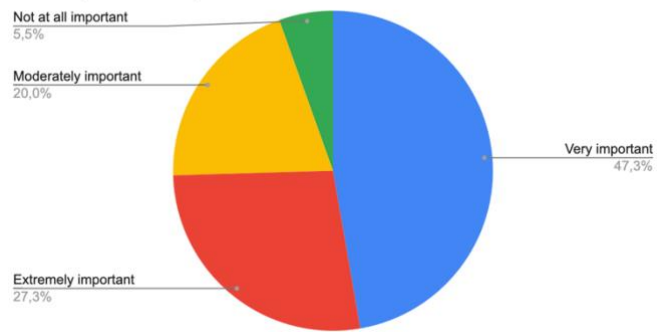
The management category included the following competences:

- Knowledge Management as a trigger for the development of the Organizational Development competence: the ability to identify key information, knowledge and data an organization must have for reaching its goals.
- Marketing management competence: the ability to deal with basic daily marketing activities in companies and organizations.
- Innovation management competence: the ability to deal with modern concepts of innovation management in an organization, including the concepts of sustainable, international and open innovation and research.
- Logistic management competence: the ability to understand contemporary issues in logistics and supply chain management.
- Management and planning in non-profit organizations competence: the ability to organize people and capital and communicate properly and solve problems.
- HR development and management in non-profit organizations competence: the ability to recruit the proper candidate and to integrate them in the organization, as well as to train and help them in their professional development process.

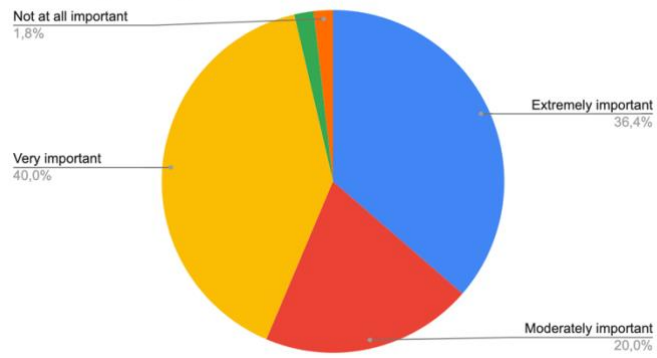
As the graphs below show, out of the 6 competences, the one considered most important is the "Marketing management competence", with 36,4% of respondents considering it extremely important (level 5 in a 1-5 Likert scale).



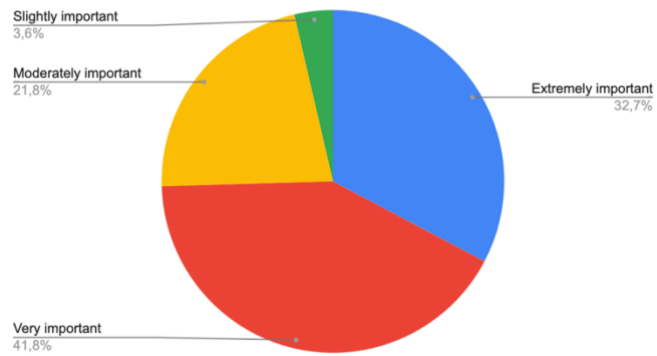
### Knowledge Management as a trigger for Organizational Development competence



### Marketing management competence

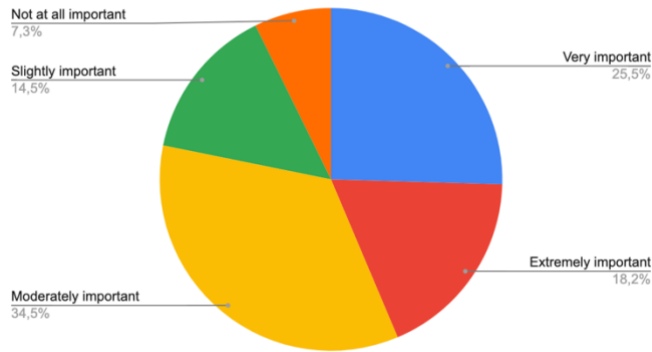


### Innovation management competence

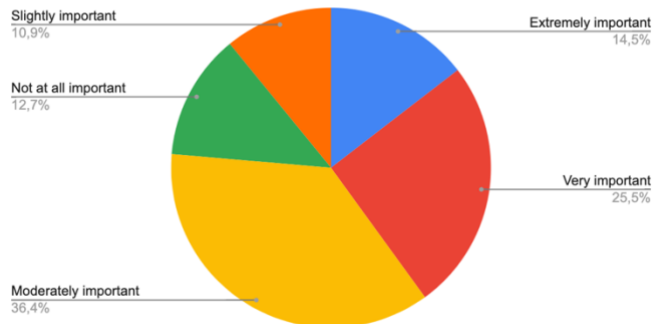




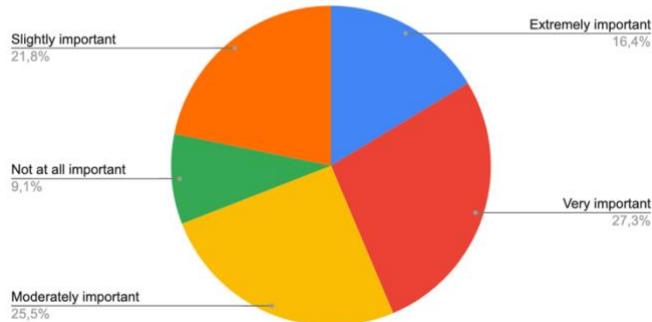
#### Logistic management competence



#### Management and planning in non-profit organizations competence



#### Human resources development and management in non-profit organizations related competence



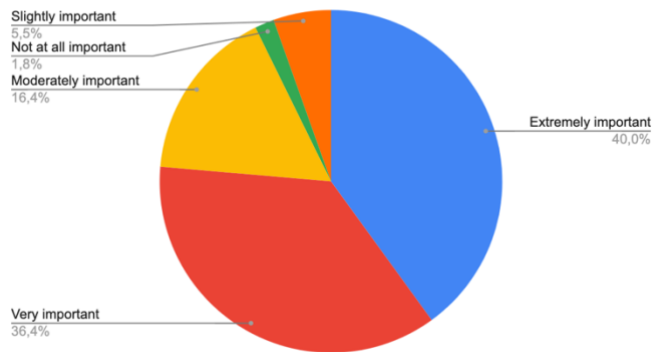
The digital category included the following competences:

- Digital Marketing for International markets competence: the ability to create appropriate digital marketing strategies to foster the international expansion of the company.
- Social media and Community Management competence: the ability to develop a strategic vision in the corporate management of social networks.

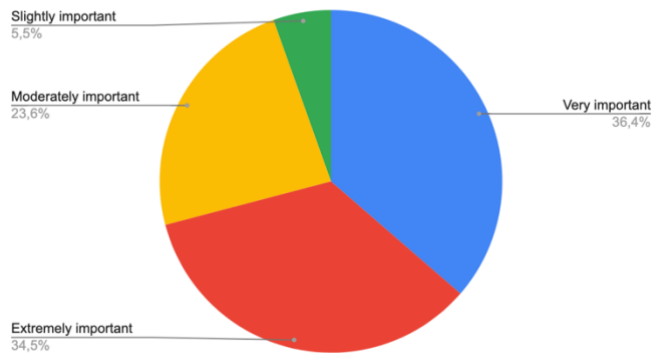
As the graphs below show, of the 2 competences, the one considered most important is "Digital Marketing for International markets competence", with 40% of respondents considering it to be extremely important.



#### Digital Marketing for International markets competence



#### Social media and Community Manager competence



The technical category included the following competences:

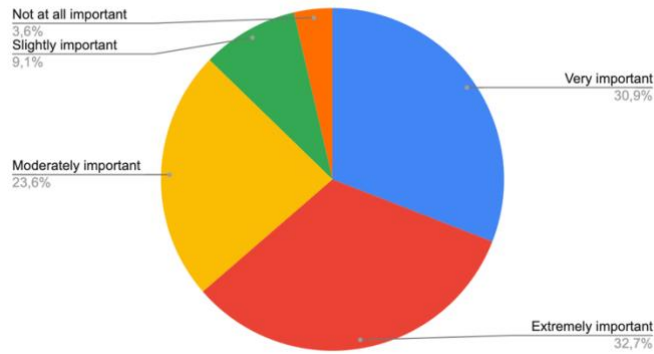
- Sales techniques for International Markets competence: the ability to conclude agreements with customers/clients.
- Excel or Google Sheets advanced level competence: the ability to use the main functions and graphics from Excel or Google Sheets to analyze data, extract conclusions and make visual graphics or reports.
- Statistics in Research marketing competence: the ability to use statistical variables to draw conclusions in research marketing.

As the graphs below show, out of the 3 competences, the one considered most important is "Excel or Google sheets advanced level competence", with 40% of respondents considering it to be extremely important.

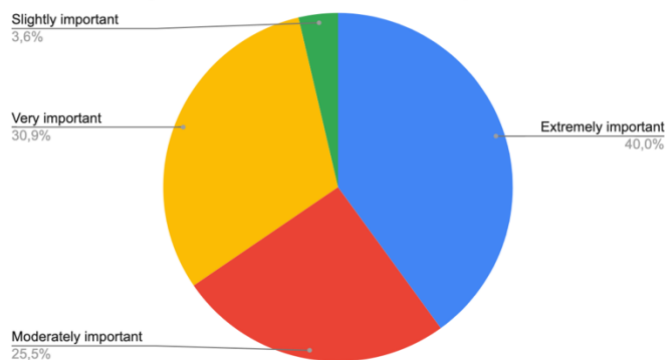




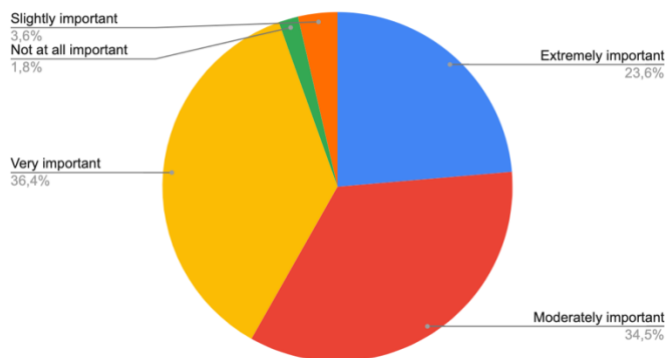
#### Sales techniques for International Markets competence



#### Excel or Google sheets advanced level competence



#### Statistics in Research marketing competence



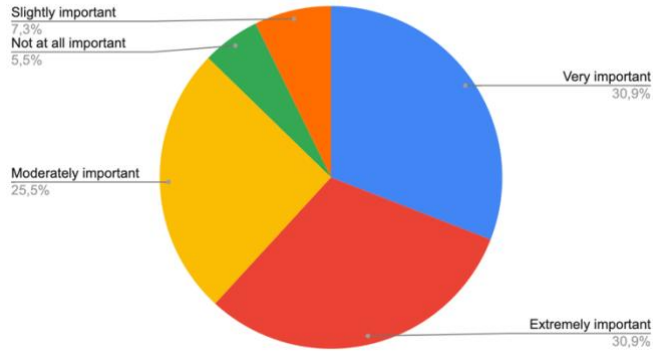
The transversal category included the following competences:

- Well-being competence: the ability to organize projects which create well-being to the target group and society, according to shareholders vision and expectations.
- Strategic Corporate Social Responsibility competence: the ability to develop / support social projects that most contribute to a better society.
- Creativity and Innovation competence: the ability to master innovation as one of the key factors in socially responsible and sustainable development.

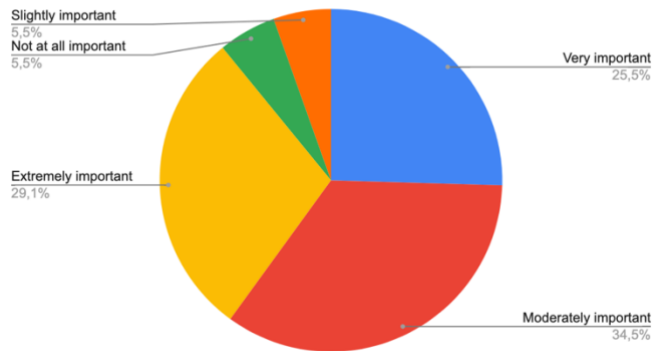


As the graphs below show, of the 3 competences, the one considered most important is "Creativity and Innovation competence", with 38,2% of respondents considering it to be extremely important.

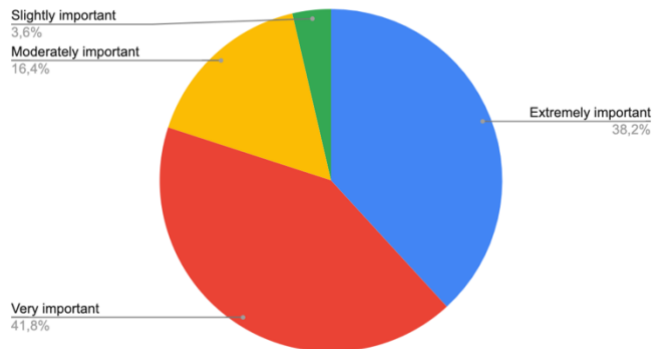
#### Well-being competence



#### Strategic Corporate Social Responsibility competence



#### Creativity and Innovation competence



Companies were asked to say which of the selected competences were to be acquired "at school" (any level of education), which of them were instead to be acquire



necessarily "on the job" and which were important to learn "both at school and on-the-job".

In the management category, the companies responded that all the selected competences should be learned both at school and on-the-job:

- Knowledge Management as a trigger for Organizational Development competence (with 58,2% of votes)
- Marketing management competence (with 61,8% of votes)
- Innovation management competence (with 69,1% of votes)
- Logistic management competence (with 45,5% of votes)
- Management and planning in non-profit organizations competence (with 45,5% of votes)
- Human resources development and management in non-profit organizations related competence (with 49,1% of votes)

In the digital category, the companies responded that the 2 competences selected should be learned both at school and on-the-job:

- Digital Marketing for International markets competence (with 61,8% of votes)
- Social media and Community Manager competence (with 65,5% of votes)

In the technical category, the companies responded that the following competence should be learned at school:

- Excel or Google sheets advanced level competence (with 45,5% of votes):

and the following competences both at school and on-the-job:

- Sales techniques for International Markets competence (with 52,7% of votes)
- Statistics in Research marketing competence: (with 47,3% of votes)

In the transversal category, the companies responded that all selected competences should be learned both at school and on-the-job:

- Well-being competence (with 54,5% of votes)
- Strategic Corporate Social Responsibility competence (with 49,1% of votes)
- Creativity and Innovation competence (with 76,4% of votes)

In conclusion, of the ITHEN's 14 competences, the interviewed companies believe that only one - Excel or Google sheets advanced level competence - should be learned at school, and that none should be learned only directly on-the-job, while the remaining 13 skills should be learned both at school and on-the-job.

When asked "Is there any other sectoral competence that you look for in your workers/interns?", 69.1% of respondents said no. The remaining 30.9% indicated the following skills, even if the questionnaire explicitly asked for competences:

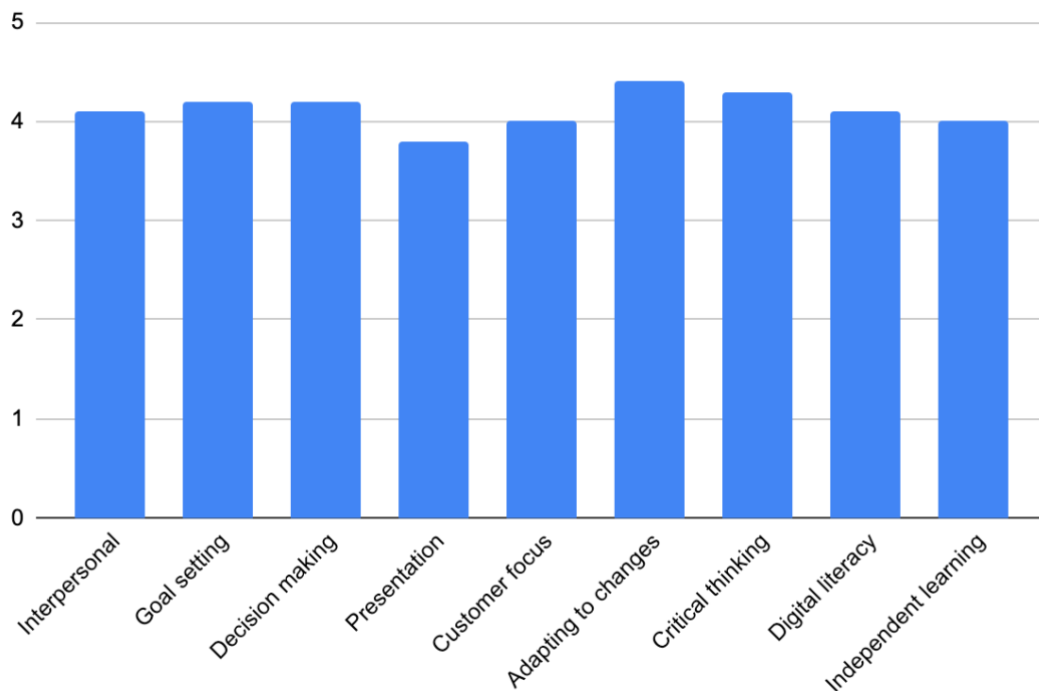
- Give & Take feedback
- Communication skills
- Analytical skills
- Teamwork
- Critical thinking
- Data science
- Basic Leadership
- Change Management
- Algorithmic thinking
- Data Management
- Facilitation



- Moderation
- Presentation skills
- Language skills
- Marketing Intelligence
- Problem solving
- Video design
- Negotiation skills
- 2D or 3D drawing
- Positive attitude and energy
- Client orientation.

Finally, the data shows the **Extra-curricular Skills** that have become increasingly important for the companies in the last 3 years and that could be even more important in the next 3 years.

Of the 14 skills presented in the questionnaire, the respondents found them all important (in fact, only 1 skill - Presentation skill - has an average score below 4, on a Likert scale from 1 to 5). The most important skill is the capacity to Adapt to changes, followed by Critical Thinking.



As a final question, companies were asked if they have ever used some **methodologies** in their in-company training, and to list them. The methodologies that were indicated are:

Whiteboard talks: using only a whiteboard and markers, students complete a short (seven minutes or less), informal presentation on a research topic, concept, theory, etc.<sup>1</sup> Whiteboard presentations are ideal for: conferences, seminars, trainings, company Events.

<sup>1</sup> <https://brocku.ca/esrc/whiteboard-talks/>



Agile methodologies: they were born as software development methods with a less structured approach, which are focused on the objective of delivering functioning and quality software to the customer quickly and frequently. Although each of the agile methods is unique in its specific approach, they all share a common vision and a set of core values. Indeed, all methodologies incorporate the concept of iteration and the continuous feedback that this concept provides in order to release and subsequently refine a software system. All methodologies involve planning, testing and continuous integration activities along with other forms of evolution in order to refine any aspect of both the project and the software. All methodologies are said to be lightweight (especially when compared to the traditional waterfall process) and are inherently adaptable. Finally, all methods focus on providing an important incentive for people to collaborate and make decisions together quickly and effectively.

Scrum: an agile approach based on the theory of empirical process control. Decisions are made on the basis of experience. The work is managed by a team that frequently inspects the product while developing it, to adapt it, if necessary. Scrum is a framework for managing the software development cycle in an iterative and incremental way, using a set of techniques and processes. The method was officially presented to the public in 1995, but it originates from the so-called "holistic" or "rugby" approach, already tested in the automotive industry and by printer manufacturers for the production of commercial products. The entire process is carried out by an interdisciplinary group of resources, who work in stages on a collective project, continuously passing the ball and acting as a single entity. The term 'Scrum', in fact, is borrowed from rugby and indicates the 'scrum' as a metaphor for the team of developers advancing synergistically towards the goal, dragging the other players involved.

Lean startup: a continuous design, verification and modification process, with extensive use of the web, aimed at adapting the product step by step to the needs of customers, while keeping costs under control. Lean startup is a methodology for developing businesses and products that aims to shorten product development cycles and rapidly discover if a proposed business model is viable; this is achieved by adopting a combination of business-hypothesis-driven experimentation, iterative product releases, and validated learning. Lean startup emphasizes customer feedback over intuition and flexibility over planning. This methodology enables recovery from failures more often than traditional ways of product development. Central to the lean startup methodology is the assumption that when startup companies invest their time into iteratively building products or services to meet the needs of early customers, the company can reduce market risks and sidestep the need for large amounts of initial project funding and expensive product launches and financial failures

5S methodology: it is based on the organisation of the workspace for efficiency and effectiveness by identifying and storing the items used, maintaining the area and items, and sustaining the new organizational system. 5S is a workplace organization method that uses a list of five Japanese words, translated as "sort", "set in order", "shine", "standardize", and "sustain". The list describes how to organize a work space for efficiency and effectiveness by identifying and storing the items used, maintaining the area and items, and sustaining the new organizational system. The decision-making process usually comes from a dialogue about standardization, which builds understanding among employees of how they should do the work.





## 5. NATIONAL FINDINGS

At the national level, the results emerging from the questionnaires in the six involved countries (Germany, Italy, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, and Turkey) will be illustrated in charts and tables in the following paragraphs.

In general, as described in detail in the following paragraphs, no major differences were found at the national levels compared with the global level. In each category, the same competences were found to be the most important both at the national and global levels.

However, it emerges that not all countries rated the chosen competences with the same degree of importance: for example, while Portugal and Turkey in each category identified at least one competence with a score >4 ("very important"), the responding SMEs in other countries also gave scores <4, up to the case of Spain, where no SME identified the digital competences important, giving them a maximum score of 2 ("Slightly important").

### 5.1. ITALY

In Italy, the four competences (one for each category) that were considered most important by the surveyed companies were the following:

- Marketing management competence (average score: 4.26)
- Social media and Community Manager competence (average score: 4.06)
- Sales techniques for International Markets competence (average score: 3.73)
- Creativity and Innovation competence (average score: 3.86)

In the tables below, the detail for each category.

In the management category the competence considered most relevant is "Marketing management competence".

Competence	Marketing management	Innovation management	Logistic management	Knowledge Management as a trigger for Organizational Development	Management and planning in non-profit organizations	Human resources development and management in non-profit organizations
	4	4	4	5	4	3
	4	4	4	4	3	4
	4	4	4	3	4	4
	5	5	5	5	5	5
	1	3	1	1	1	1
	4	4	3	5	4	4
	3	3	3	3	3	3
	5	3	2	4	4	4
	4	4	2	3	2	2
	5	5	3	4	3	3
	5	5	3	3	2	2
	5	4	4	4	3	3
	5	3	2	4	2	2
	5	2	1	1	1	1
	5	3	5	4	2	3
average score	4,26	3,73	3,06	3,53	2,86	2,93





In the digital category the two competences were considered equally important, with a slight preference for "Social media and Community Manager competence"

Competence	Digital Marketing for International markets	Social media and Community Manager
	5	5
	4	5
	4	4
	5	5
	3	3
	3	4
	3	3
	4	4
	3	5
	4	4
	4	4
	5	4
	4	4
	4	2
	5	5
average score	4	4,06

In the technical category the competence considered most relevant is "Sales techniques for International Markets".

Competence	Sales techniques for International Markets	Excel or Google sheets advanced level	Statistics in Research marketing
	4	5	3
	5	3	3
	4	4	4
	5	5	5
	1	2	1
	3	3	4
	3	3	3
	3	4	3
	4	2	4
	2	4	4
	5	5	3
	5	3	4
	4	3	2
	3	3	3
	5	4	5
average score	3,73	3,33	3,4

The competence considered most relevant in the transversal category is "Creativity and Innovation competence".

Competence	Well-being	Strategic Corporate Social Responsibility	Creativity and Innovation
	4	4	5
	4	4	4
	3	3	4
	5	5	5
	1	1	2
	4	4	4
	3	3	3
	3	4	4
	5	5	4
	4	3	4
	2	3	5
	4	4	4
	5	3	5
	1	1	2
	4	5	3
average score	3,46	3,46	3,86



## 5.2. SPAIN

In Spain, the competences that were considered most important by the surveyed companies were:

- Innovation management competence (average score: 4.36)
- Excel or Google sheets advanced level competence (average score: 4.27)
- Creativity and Innovation competence (average score: 4.36)

In the tables below, the detail for each category.

In the management category the competence considered most relevant is "Innovation management competence".

Competence	Marketing management	Innovation management	Logistic management	Knowledge Management as a trigger for Organizational Development	Management and planning in non-profit organizations	Human resources development and management in non-profit organizations
	5	5	4	5	5	3
	3	5	5	5	3	3
	5	5	5	5	5	5
	4	4	4	4	3	4
	3	4	3	4	4	4
	4	5	4	4	3	3
	5	5	5	5	5	5
	4	4	4	4	4	4
	4	3	1	3	3	2
	3	4	5	3	4	2
	4	4	2	3	2	2
average score	4	4,36	3,81	4,09	3,72	3,36

In the digital category both the competencies were considered to be of little relevance.

Competence	Digital Marketing for International markets	Social media and Community Manager
	3	3
	1	2
	3	3
	3	3
	3	1
	1	1
	3	3
	3	3
	1	1
	3	3
	1	1
average score	2,27	2,18

In the technical category the competence considered most relevant is "Excel or Google sheets advanced level competence".

Competence	Sales techniques for International Markets	Excel or Google sheets advanced level	Statistics in Research marketing
	3	5	5
	3	3	3
	5	4	4
	3	4	4
	4	4	3
	2	3	5
	4	5	5
	5	4	4
	5	5	4

	5	5	4
	2	5	2
average score	3,72	4,27	3,9

In the transversal category the competence considered most relevant is "creativity and innovation competence".

Competence	Well-being	Strategic Corporate Social Responsibility	Creativity and Innovation
	5	5	5
	5	4	4
	5	5	4
	3	3	5
	5	3	3
	4	3	5
	5	5	5
	3	5	4
	2	2	4
	4	4	5
	2	2	4
average score	3,9	3,72	4,36

### 5.3. PORTUGAL

In Portugal, the four competences that were considered most important by the surveyed SMEs were the following:

- Marketing management competence (average score: 4)
- Digital Marketing for International markets competence (average score: 4.22)
- Excel or Google sheets advanced level competence (average score: 4.44)
- Creativity and Innovation competence (average score: 4)

In the tables below, the detail for each category.

In the management category the competence considered most relevant is "Marketing management competence".

Competence	Marketing management	Innovation management	Logistic management	Knowledge Management as a trigger for Organizational Development	Management and planning in non-profit organizations	Human resources development and management in non-profit organizations
	3	3	3	4	3	3
	4	4	3	4	3	3
	3	3	3	3	3	3
	4	4	3	5	3	3
	5	4	3	3	3	4
	4	3	4	5	3	2
	4	4	3	4	5	5
	5	5	4	4	4	4
	4	4	2	4	5	5
average score	4	3,77	3,11	4	3,55	3,55

In the digital category the competence considered most relevant is "Digital Marketing for International markets".

Competence	Digital Marketing for International markets	Social media and Community Manager
	3	3
	5	5
	3	3
	4	4
	5	4

	5	5
	4	4
	5	5
	5	5
average score	4,33	4,22

In the technical category the competence considered most relevant is "Excel or Google sheets advanced level".

Competence	Sales techniques for International Markets	Excel or Google sheets advanced level	Statistics in Research marketing
	2	5	5
	4	5	4
	3	3	3
	4	4	4
	4	4	4
	4	5	5
	4	5	4
	5	4	4
	1	5	3
average score	3,44	4,44	4

In the transversal category the competence considered most relevant is "Creativity and Innovation".

Competence	Well-being	Strategic Corporate Social Responsibility	Creativity and Innovation
	3	3	3
	4	4	4
	3	3	3
	3	5	5
	5	3	5
	2	2	3
	4	5	4
	5	4	5
	4	5	4
average score	3,66	3,77	4

## 5.4. SLOVENIA

In Slovenia, the four competences that were considered most important by the surveyed companies were the following:

- Knowledge Management as a trigger for Organizational Development competence (average score: 4.28)
- Digital Marketing for International markets competence (average score: 3.85)
- Excel or Google sheets advanced level competence (average score: 4)
- Well-being competence (average score: 4.14)

In the tables below, the detail for each category.

In the management category the competence considered most relevant is "Knowledge Management as a trigger for Organizational Development".

Competence	Marketing management	Innovation management	Logistic management	Knowledge Management as a trigger for Organizational Development	Management and planning in non-profit organizations	Human resources development and management in non-profit organizations
	4	4	2	4	3	4
	5	5	5	5	4	5
	4	3	4	4	1	1
	3	4	5	5	4	4



	5	5	3	5	5	5
	3	4	3	3	3	4
	3	4	4	4	4	4
average score	3,85	4,14	3,71	4,28	3,42	3,85

In the digital category the competence considered most relevant is "Digital Marketing for International markets".

Competence	Digital Marketing for International markets	Social media and Community Manager
	4	4
	4	4
	5	4
	1	3
	5	5
	4	3
	4	3
average score	3,85	3,71

In the technical category the competence considered most relevant is "Excel or Google sheets advanced level".

Competence	Sales techniques for International Markets	Excel or Google sheets advanced level	Statistics in Research marketing
	3	4	3
	4	3	5
	5	4	3
	3	4	3
	5	5	5
	3	3	3
	4	5	3
average score	3,85	4	3,57

In the transversal category the competence considered most relevant is "Well-being".

Competence	Well-being	Strategic Corporate Social Responsibility	Creativity and Innovation
	4	4	4
	5	5	5
	3	3	3
	5	5	3
	5	5	5
	3	3	4
	4	3	3
average score	4,14	4	3,85

## 5.5. TURKEY

In Turkey, the four competences that were considered most important by the surveyed companies were the following:

- Innovation management competence (average score: 4.44)
- Digital Marketing for International markets competence (average score: 4.22)
- Excel or Google sheets advanced level competence (average score: 4.33)
- Creativity and Innovation competence (average score: 4.66)

In the tables below, the detail for each category.

The competence considered most relevant in the management category is "Innovation management competence", which received a rating of 4.44.



Competence	Marketing management	Innovation management	Logistic management	Knowledge Management as a trigger for Organizational Development	Management and planning in non-profit organizations	Human resources development and management in non-profit organizations
	5	5	4	4	5	5
	5	4	5	4	4	4
	5	5	5	5	4	4
	3	3	3	5	3	3
	3	3	2	4	1	1
	4	5	3	4	1	2
	5	5	3	4	3	5
	4	5	3	4	1	2
	4	5	2	4	4	2
average score	4,22	4,44	3,33	4,22	2,88	3,11

In the digital category, of the two competencies, Turkish companies consider "Digital Marketing for International markets competence" more relevant than "Social media and Community Manager competence".

Competence	Digital Marketing for International markets	Social media and Community Manager
	5	4
	4	4
	5	5
	3	3
	3	3
	4	4
	5	5
	4	4
	5	5
average score	4,22	4,11

In the technical category, companies consider "Excel or Google sheets advanced level competence" more relevant than others competences.

Competence	Sales techniques for International Markets	Excel or Google sheets advanced level	Statistics in Research marketing
	4	5	5
	5	3	3
	5	5	4
	3	5	4
	3	5	4
	5	4	3
	4	3	4
	5	4	3
	4	5	5
average score	4,22	4,33	3,88

In the trasversal category, companies consider "Creativity and Innovation competence" more relevant than others 2 competences.

Competence	Well-being	Strategic Corporate Social Responsibility	Creativity and Innovation
	4	4	5
	5	4	4
	5	4	5
	3	3	4
	3	3	4
	3	3	5
	4	5	5
	3	3	5
	5	4	5
average score	3,88	3,66	4,66





## 5.6. GERMANY

In Germany, the competences that were considered most important by the surveyed companies were the following:

- Innovation management competence and Marketing management competence (average score: 3.75)
- Digital Marketing for International markets competence (average score: 4)
- Excel or Google sheets advanced level competence and Statistics in Research marketing competence (average score: 4.25).
- Creativity and Innovation competence (average score: 4.25)

In the tables below, the detail for each category.

The competences considered most relevant in the management category are "Innovation management competence" and "Marketing management competence" which received the same rating of 3.75.

Competence	Marketing management	Innovation management	Logistic management	Knowledge Management as a trigger for Organizational Development	Management and planning in non-profit organizations	Human resources development and management in non-profit organizations
	4	4	3	3	3	2
	2	2	1	1	1	1
	4	4	3	5	3	3
	5	5	4	4	2	2
average score	3,75	3,75	2,75	3,25	2,25	2

In the digital category, of the two competencies, German companies consider "Digital Marketing for International markets competence" more relevant than "Social media and Community Manager competence".

Competence	Digital Marketing for International markets	Social media and Community Manager
	4	3
	2	2
	5	4
	5	5
average score	4	3,5

The competences considered most relevant in the technical category are "Excel or Google sheets advanced level competence" and "Statistics in Research marketing" which received the same rating of 4.25.

Competence	Sales techniques for International Markets	Excel or Google sheets advanced level	Statistics in Research marketing
	2	3	3
	4	4	4
	5	5	5
	5	5	5
average score	4	4,25	4,25

In the trasversal category, companies consider "Creativity and Innovation competence" more relevant than others 2 competences.

Competence	Well-being	Strategic Corporate Social Responsibility	Creativity and Innovation
	4	3	4
	1	1	4
	4	5	4



	5	5	5
average score	3,5	3,5	4,25



## 6. OVERALL - GLOBAL FINDINGS

The main purpose of this report was to better understand the needs of SMEs in terms of employees' skills and competences, required also in curricular and extracurricular internships and on-the-job experiences.

The framework that emerges from the questionnaire carried out at 55 selected companies in the six European countries shows us how some sectorial competences have become more important for the company in the research of new workers to hire and interns in the last 3 years, and that those same competences are expected to be increasingly important in the future 3 years. These competences are:

- Marketing management competence (management category),
- Digital Marketing for International markets competence (digital category),
- Excel or Google sheets advanced level competence (technical category),
- Creativity and Innovation competence (transversal category).

For the responding SMEs, almost all ITHEN's competences need to be acquired "both at school and on-the-job".

Regarding extra-curricular skills which have become more important for the company in the last 3 years and that could be increasingly required in the future 3 years, out of the 14 skills presented, the respondents found them all important (in fact, only 1 skill "Presentation skills" has an average score below 4, on the scale from 1 to 5). The most important one is "Adapting to changes skills", followed by "Critical Thinking skills".

The results of the survey conducted with activity O1-A3 "ALIGNMENT OF THE METHODOLOGIES WITH REQUIREMENTS OF THE JOB MARKET" generally confirm what emerged from the initial needs analysis carried out by the partners regarding main entrepreneurship and cultural awareness competences and skills lacking in students who graduate in marketing and business management and want to operate in international work contexts. In the pilot activity that will involve students of ITHEN partner TVETs and Universities (Activity O1-A5 "PILOTING AND EVALUATION") that will take place in Italy, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain and Turkey between October 2021 and May 2022, special priority will be given to those methodologies aimed at developing "Marketing management competence", "Digital Marketing for International markets competence", "Excel or Google sheets advanced level competence" and Creativity and Innovation competence, considered the most important by the 55 companies involved in the survey.

This report can be used as a guide by university, VET or TVET teachers and course designers for the design of new courses in the areas of marketing and international business management, with the aim to help their students develop skills and competences that are truly expendable in the labor market.