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Mapping Prevention Science Workforce Education and Training Needs In Europe

Work Package objective:

The objective of this work package was to develop a robust understanding of the workforce skills needs of current employers of prevention workers across Europe (including scientists, researchers, practitioners etc.). This research surveyed the needs of a range of Prevention Science policy specialists, research organisations and organisations delivering prevention support programmes, to identify any particular areas of course delivery that need to be developed in order to address the current needs of employers.

Preliminary results:

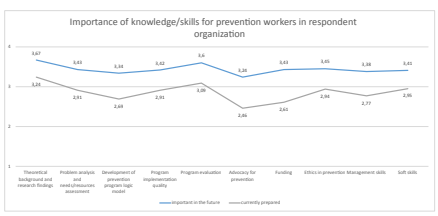
There were 156 respondents form 26 countries, with the top five responses from Croatia (12.8 %), Italy (10.9 %), Spain (7.7 %), Finland (7.1 %), Poland (7.1 %) etc.

Section 3. Q5. How important should the following knowledge/skills be for prevention workers in your organisation, in the future?

	Not at all (%)	Slightly (%)	Moderately (%)	Very (%)
Theoretical background and research findings (e.g. human development, etiology, epidemiology, behavioural science, developmental psychology, health psychology) (N = 121)	2.5	5.0	15.7	76.9
Problem analysis and needs/resources assessment (N = 119)	1.7	9.2	33.6	55.5
Development of prevention program logic model (N = 120)	3.3	13.3	29.2	54.2
Program implementation quality (implementation fidelity, program adaptation, quality of program delivery, contextual support, training for program delivery) (N =120)	2.5	12.5	25.0	60.0
Program evaluation (research/methodology skills) (N = 120)	1.7	6.7	21.7	70.0
Advocacy for prevention (lobbying for support, influence on policy development, community collaboration) (N = 119)	2.5	19.3	30.3	47.9
Funding (knowing opportunities for funding (state, local, EU level) development of project proposal for funding/grants) (N = 120)	3.3	10.0	26.7	60.0
Ethics in prevention (gender issues, culture issues, research issues) (N = 120)	1.7	11.7	26.7	60.0
Management skills (building and maintaining team, people positioning, motivating people)	1.7	13.3	30.8	54.2
Soft skills (communication, team work, collaboration, networking) (N = 120)	2.5	10.1	31.1	56.3

- Approximately 68% of the total sample (N=176) responded to this question.
- Knowledge and skills relating to theoretical background and research findings were reported as the most important knowledge/skills for prevention workers (almost 77 % participants find it VERY important).
- 60 % participants perceived very important knowledge/skills regarding program implementation quality, funding and ethics in prevention.
- More than 50 % of participants find management skills, soft skills, program analysis and needs/resources assessment and development of prevention program logic model very important.
- Knowledge/skills relating to advocacy of prevention ranked the lowest, although 47.9 % of participants still reported it as very important.
- In conclusion, between 50-75 % of participants find all mentioned fields of prevention very important.

Importance of knowledge/skills (N=114)



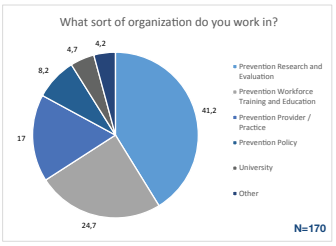
1. very, 2. moderately, 3. slightly, 4. not at all

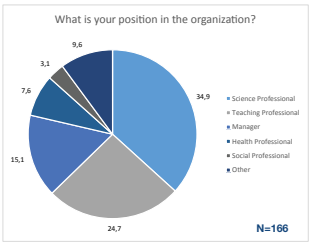
- Respondents perceived that there is a need to improve knowledge/ skills of prevention workers in all areas (differences between "important knowledge/skills in the future" and "prevention workers currently prepared")
- The "biggest" gap is in the area of Funding (knowing opportunities for funding at national, local, EU level, development of project proposal for funding/grants), Advocacy for prevention (lobbying for support, influence on policy development, community collaboration) and Development of prevention program logic model.

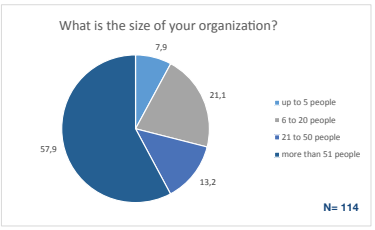
Section 3. Q6. How adequately do you feel that people in your organization are currently prepared for work in prevention regarding these areas?

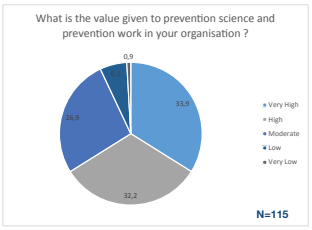
	Not at all (%)	Slightly (%)	Moderately (%)	Very (%)
Theoretical background and research findings (e.g. human development, etiology, epidemiology, behavioural science, developmental psychology, health psychology) (N = 121)	1.7	14.9	41.3	42.1
Problem analysis and needs/resources assessment (N = 120)	2.5	26.7	48.3	22.5
Development of prevention program logic model (N = 120)	5.0	40.8	34.2	20.0
Program implementation quality (implementation fidelity, program adaptation, quality of program delivery, contextual support, training for program delivery) (N = 120)	1.7	30.8	42.5	25.0
Program evaluation (research/methodology skills) (N = 120)	1.7	25.0	35.8	37.5
Advocacy for prevention (lobbying for support, influence on policy development, community collaboration) (N = 120)	10.8	45.0	31.7	12.5
Funding (knowing opportunities for funding (state, local, EU level) development of project proposal for funding/grants) (N = 119)	8.4	37.0	39.5	15.1
Ethics in prevention (gender issues, culture issues, research issues) (N = 120)	1.7	29.2	42.5	26.7
Management skills (building and maintaining team, people positioning, motivating people)	1.7	13.3	30.8	54.2
(N = 120)	2.5	35.8	44.2	17.5
Soft skills (communication, team work, collaboration, networking) (N = 118)	2.5	24.6	48.3	24.6

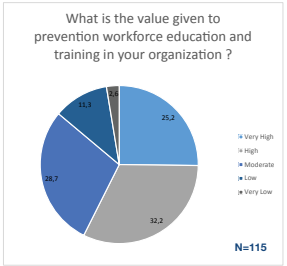
- Approximately 68% of the total sample (N=176) responded to this question.
- When it comes to preparedness for prevention in participants' organizations numbers are lower, a possible conclusion could be that additional education/training is needed.
- The lowest perceived level of knowledge/skills of prevention workers in participants' organizations is in advocacy for prevention (12.5 % find their colleagues adequately prepared), funding (15.1%) and management skills (17.5 %).
- Moderate assessment can be seen in knowledge/skills related to problem development (20.0% find their colleagues adequately prepared), problem analysis and needs/resources assessment (22.5%), soft skills (24.6%), program implementation quality (25.0 %) and ethics in prevention (26.7%).
- The highest preparation is reported for theoretical background (42.1 % finds prevention workers in their organization very adequately prepared) and program evaluation (37.5 %).
- Development of prevention program logic model is moderately assessed but it should be noted that 45.8 % of participants find their colleagues not at all prepared (5.0 %) or slightly prepared (40.8 %) in that field of prevention work.

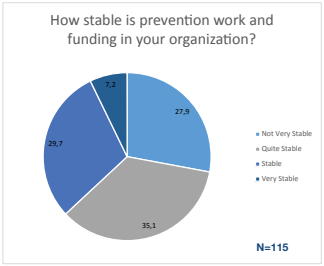












Key findings:

- **Importance of knowledge/skills for prevention workers:** About 80 % and more respondents think all mentioned fields of prevention knowledge/skills are moderately and very important for prevention workers in their organisations.
- **Preparedness for prevention in participants' organisations:** There is a need to invest in education/training, mostly in the field of advocacy for prevention, funding and management skills, then in knowledge/skills related to problem development, problem analysis and needs/resources assessment, program implementation quality and program evaluation.
- Most of the respondents (97.0 %) report that their institutions have links with **higher education institutions**, such as universities, academies and colleges.
- Respondents perceive that there is a need to **improve knowledge/skills of prevention workers** in all areas of prevention science (the "biggest" gap between gained and needed knowledge/skills of prevention is in the area of **Funding, Advocacy** for prevention and **Development of prevention program logic model**.
- **Value** given to prevention science and prevention work in respondent organisations is perceived as high or very high in 66.1 %, to prevention workforce education and training in 57.4 % and to stability of prevention work and funding in 62.0 %.

SPAN Science for Prevention Academic Network

The Science for Prevention Academic Network (SPAN) has been awarded a large grant to support the establishment of a network of prevention scientists and educators across Europe. The project will: (1) develop and share best practice in the prevention science education training and workforce and (2) support the development of innovative ICT based content for prevention science.

SPAN will achieve this by bringing together experts from 32 European institutions across 25 countries to map the prevention science sector, improve education and training, build networks and run workshops with researchers, with a particular focus upon young researchers. In addition the project will develop a quality plan designed to improve the integration of prevention science in higher education across Europe and will provide recommendations on how best to align prevention science with the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS).

Project work is organized in nine work packages. Presented results are part of work done within **Work Package 4 - European Prevention Workforce Needs Analysis.**

Lifelong Learning Programme