

**CEPLIS
TRAINING WORKING GROUP**

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Introduction

Within the European policy on vocational training, the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) or Continuing Professional Education (CPE) represents the system through which the members of the professional categories maintain, increase and improve their own knowledge and competences and develop the personal skills requested in their professional life.

Life Long-Learning (LLL) represents a pillar of the European Union for the creation of a knowledge- and innovation-based dynamic society.

The responsibility for the regulation of training falls on Member States and the European Union action is directly linked to the subsidiarity principle.

Nowadays, in the absence of possible harmonization of national legislations, the professionals organizations gathered within the Ceplis have intended, through the constitution of the Working Group on Vocational Training, to approach -with method and through direct investigation- the problems that constitute a limit for the development of a “European” professionalism based on common principles and training.

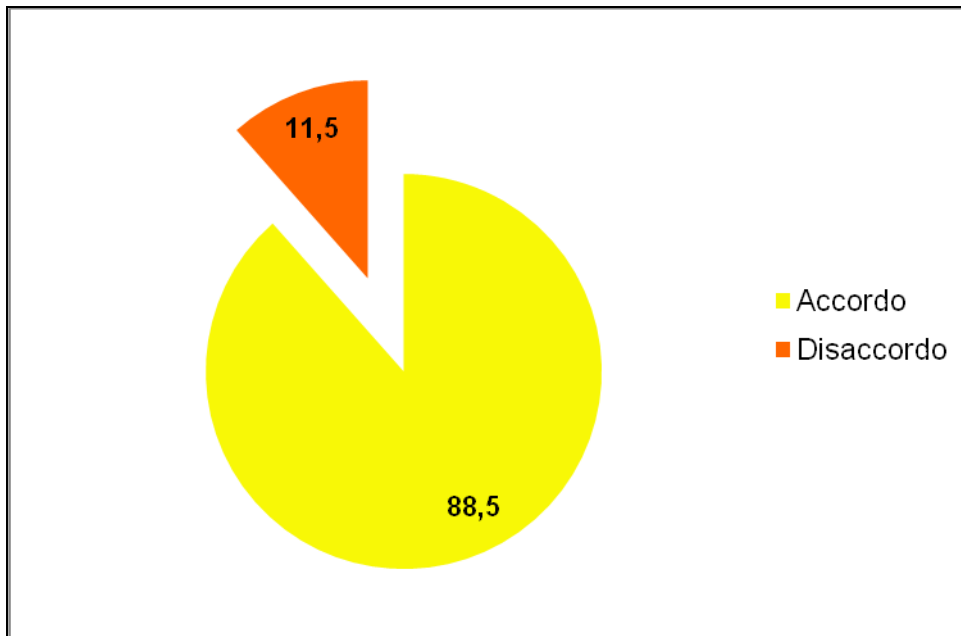
With the administration of the questionnaire to all the adherent organizations we have intended to carry out a first survey, which will be followed by others for specific professions, in order to verify the common aspects and the critical state of the vocational training systems adopted in different Member States. The intent is to single out, in a following step of the research, common lines of action to be submitted to the European Institutions’ attention.

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Results of the research

62 Professional Registers, Boards and Associations of liberal professions coming from 17 Member States of the European Union have participated at the research.

The investigation starts with a clear convergence of opinion (88.5%) on the definition given of Continuing Professional Development as a “*set of learning activities that are followed after the studies that have led to the professional practice and that are fundamental to increase all the necessary theoretical, practical and interpersonal capacities to the development of the professional activities*” (see graphic 1)



Graphic n.1. Opinions on the definition of Continuing Professional Development

Continuing Professional Development Regulation

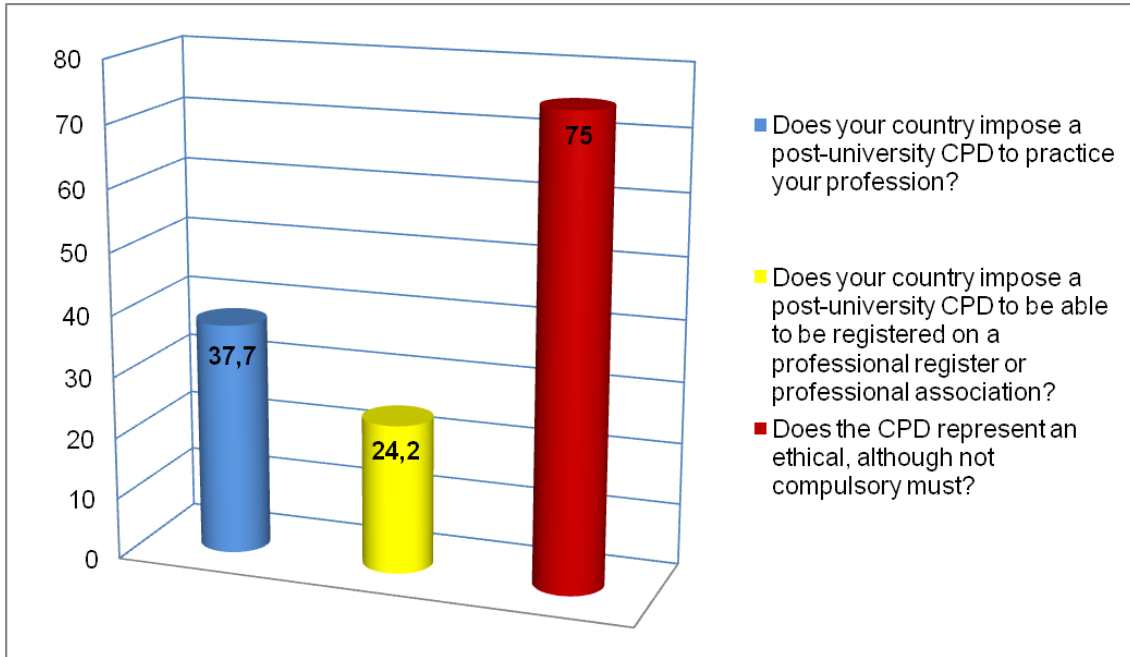
The first analysed area is related to the Continuing Professional Development Regulation that is present in the different Countries and in the different professional areas.

The analysis of the outcome of Table 1 and Graphic 2 shows that the compulsoriness of CPD for the practice of the profession is relatively low: 37.7% in order to practice and 24.4% to be registered on a professional register or professional association, respectively.

On the other hand, 75% of participants have indicated CPD as an ethical duty for professionals. This demonstrates that liberal professionals identify the CPD as a fundamental principle in their daily activity, which is at the core of the productive and social world, and that they go well beyond the rules emanated by their correspondent national systems in this field.

	Yes	
	Number	%
Does your country impose a post-university CPD to practice your profession?	23	37,7
Does your country impose a post-university CPD to be able to be registered on a professional register or professional association?	15	24,2
Does the CPD represent an ethical, although not compulsory must?	45	75,0

Table 1. Compulsoriness of CPD



Graphic 2. Compulsoriness of CPD (in percentage)

Who provides post-university training

Even if the CPD is not compulsory, it is interesting to know what are its sources and its general organization.

In this respect, a series of questions have been asked, starting from the first on who provides post university training (Table 2). What emerges is that Professional Registers, Professional pertinent Associations or Regulatory Boards (87.1%) along with Universities (80.65%) are the main providers, followed by a significant share of private bodies (75.8%), while Public Bodies have a secondary role (58.1%).

	Number	%
University	50	80,7
Professional Register, Professional pertinent Association or Regulatory Board	54	87,1
Public bodies	36	58,1
Private bodies	47	75,8

Table 2. Who provides post university training (multiple answers possible)

In addition to the information on providers, it is also interesting to know who teaches during the training courses (Table 3)

As you can see from Table 3, CDP is essentially managed by university professors (93.6%). This fact underlines the positive relation existing between university and professional world, but it also shows the risk of using training methods and contents belonging to a pre-professional CV.

The presence -as teaching staff- of Professional Register, Professional pertinent Association or Regulatory Board members is however considerable (88.7%), while the collaboration between different Professional Registers, Professional pertinent Associations or Regulatory Boards is more limited (79%)

	Number	%
Members experts within the Register, professional/regulatory pertinent Association	55	88,7
University teachers	58	93,6
Teachers belonging to other professional/regulatory registers, and associations	49	79,0
Other experts	55	88,7

Table 3. Who are the teachers (multiple answers possible)

The survey did not give a clear picture in relation to the possible presence of a minimum quantification (number of hours) for the CPD because the answers given show an extremely varied situation that deserves a specific thorough analysis.

The training activities organisation modalities (Table 4) demonstrate the prevalence of a specific tool (seminars, 92.6%) as compared to the others. 82.9% of the questionnaires have shown positive answers on the existence of additional organisation modalities for training activities in addition to those proposed. In this sector, it may be interesting to carry out an in-depth analysis of the innovative force that the liberal professions world is able to express, and also to verify if there are good practices that could be disseminated within other Countries also.

	Number	%
A certain number of planned hours made	39	79,6
Seminars	60	92,6
Masters	32	72,7
Practical stages	30	69,8
Other	34	82,9

Table n 4. Training activities organisation modalities

The attempt to understand the importance that is given to the various forms of learning (Table 5) does not seem to provide definitive results. Nevertheless, it can be observed that none of the suitable forms of Learning presented in the questionnaire finds meaningful comparison among the participants. This would confirm the above individuated fact according to which – in the world of liberal professions - there are other forms of learning as compared to those that are used traditionally.

	Low	Medium	High
Learning in workplace from colleagues and mentors	27,6	39,7	32,8
Learning from personal reflection in own practice, either alone or in groups	33,3	45,6	21,1
Self-directed study to explore new areas of work and competence	30,5	40,7	28,8

Table n. 5. What emphasis and recognition is given to (results in percentage)

Systems of control, verification and certification

At a second stage, the learning system of control, verification and certification has been analysed. The result of this analysis shows that this function is driven mainly by the Professional pertinent Association or Regulatory Board (60.3%), and only marginally (33.3%) by Public Administration, which should, on the contrary, show more interest to this fundamental function.

	Number	Percentage
Is there any control system or quality agencies that assess the courses?	33	56,9
Tests and checks are carried out by the Public Administration	19	33,3
Tests and checks are carried out by the professional association or Order	35	60,3
Other forms of tests and checks	13	25,0
Does the system of certification exist in regard to your CPD	19	36,5

Table n. 6 Presence of systems of control, verification and certification

Role of Professional Registers, Boards and Associations

Finally, the Role of Professional Registers, Boards and Associations within the CPD system was analysed

As shown in Table 7, the main role of professional registers or associations is to provide their members with adequate information on the courses they organise (91.8%); their knowledge of members' training needs turns out to be of utmost importance (88.5%).

The existence of a modality for assessing members' training results is scarce (55%) along with the knowledge of possibilities that Europe provides in terms of post-university education (41%).

	Number	Percentage
Does your professional register or association have a committee or working group for its members' CPD?	48	78,7
Does your professional register or association have a committee or working group for informing on the possibilities Europe provides in terms of post-university education?	25	41,0
Does your professional register or association provide a complete and periodical information on CPD?	44	72,1
Does your professional register or association provide information on the courses it organises?	56	91,8
Does your professional register or association provide information on the courses organised by other organisations?	42	70,0
Does your professional register or association know its members' training needs?	54	88,5
The professional Register or Association have a modality to assess its members' training results?	33	55,0

Table n. 7. Role of the Professional Registers, Boards and Associations in the vocational training system

In-depth analysis

With the purpose of carrying out a first in-depth analysis on these general data, it was decided to compare data resulting from two specific professional areas: Health and care area (physicians, biologists, veterinarians, psychologists, etc.) and Technical Area (engineers, architects, experts, etc.).

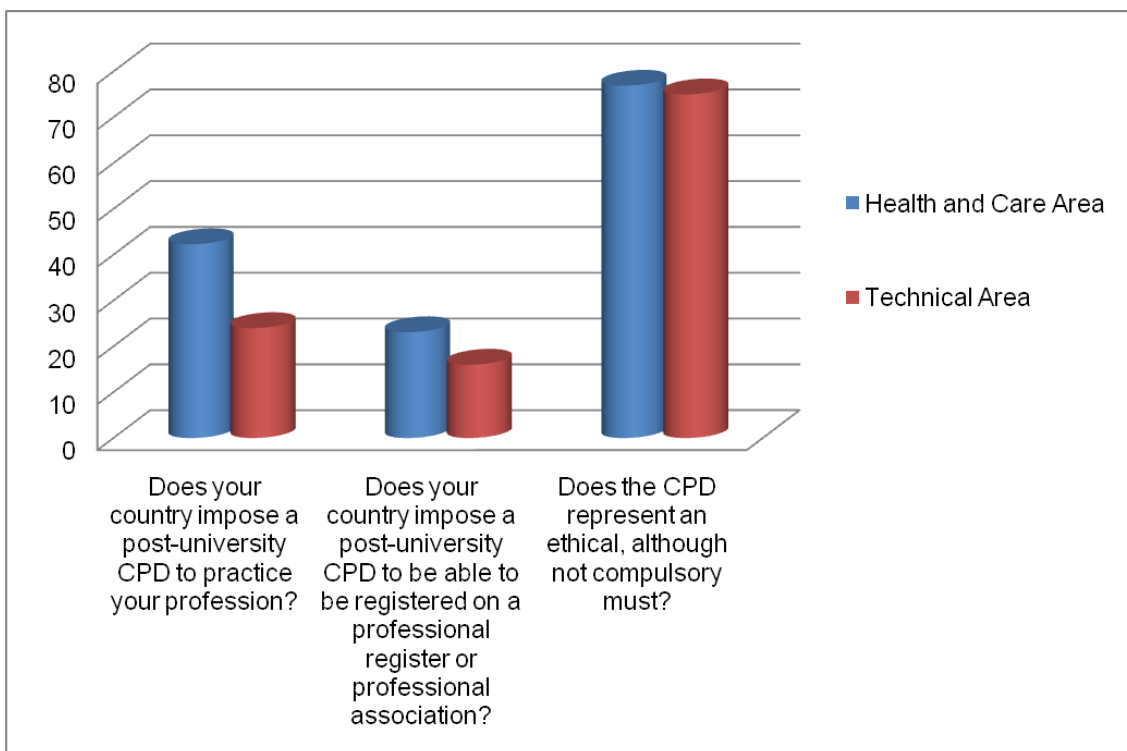
These two areas were selected because they turned out to be statistically more present in this investigation (26 and 25 questionnaires were filled in, respectively).

The first difference comes out with regard to the consent of the definition of CPD proposed in the questionnaire, : 88% of participants from the Technical area agrees on the definition, while only 61.6% of participants from the Health and Care area do the same.

With regard to the compulsoriness of CPD, interesting differences also emerge. Table 8 shows that the compulsoriness for the practice of the profession goes from 24% for the Technical Area to 42.3% for the Health and Care area, whereas the percentage on the ethical side of CPD is basically the same.

	Agreement	
	Health	Technical
Does your country impose a post-university CPD to practice your profession?	42,3	24,0
Does your country impose a post-university CPD to be able to be registered on a professional register or professional association?	23,1	16,0
Does the CPD represent an ethical, although not compulsory must?	76,9	75,0

Table 8. Compulsoriness of CPD for Health and Care Area/Technical Area (in percentage)



Graphic 3. Compulsoriness of CPD for Health and Care Area/Technical Area (in percentage)

The data contained in Table 9 show that the Health and Care Area presents an higher percentage of courses provided by Public bodies (61.5%) as compared to the technical area (52%); on the contrary, the opposite is true for Professional Registers, Professional pertinent Associations or Regulatory Boards (respectively 84.6% for Health and Care against 96% for Technical Area)

	Health	Technical
University	80,8	84,0
Professional Register, Professional pertinent Association or Regulatory Board	84,6	96,0
Public bodies	61,5	52,0
Private bodies	73,1	72,0

Table 9. Who provides post university training for Health and Care Area/Technical Area

Regarding the origin of teachers (Table 10), the Technical area tends to make use of less subjects coming from its own Professional Registers, Professional Associations or Regulatory Boards as compared to the Health and Care Area.

	Health	Technical
Members experts within the Register, professional/regulatory pertinent Association	92,3	84,0
University teachers	92,3	96,0
Teachers belonging to other professional/regulatory registers, and associations	77,0	80,0
Other experts	80,8	92,0

Table 10. Who are the teachers for Health and Care Area/Technical Area

Regarding the organizational formalities of the Training activities, the fact that appears to be more remarkable is the greater use of practical apprenticeships in the Health and Care Area (79%) as compared to what was declared in the Technical area (60%). See Table 11.

	Health	Technical
A certain number of planned hours made	81,0	72,2
Seminars	91,3	90,0
Masters	72,2	75,0
Practical stages	79,0	60,0
Other	89,5	84,6

Table 11. Training activities organisation modalities for Health and Care Area/Technical Area (in percentage)

In comparison to what has been observed when analysing the general data, in this case the Health and Care Area seems to be more interested in the training modalities proposed. Table 12 indicates how the Technical area is less interested in utilizing training modalities that have originated from personal reflection in own practice, either alone or in groups

	Low		Medium		High	
	H	T	H	T	H	T
Learning in workplace from colleagues and mentors	20,0	26,1	44,0	43,5	36,0	30,4
Learning from personal reflection in own practice, either alone or in groups	20,0	40,9	52,0	45,5	28,0	13,9
Self-directed study to explore new areas of work and competence	24,0	30,4	40,0	43,5	36,0	26,1

Table 12. What emphasis and recognition is given to the various types of learning in the Health and Care Area/Technical Area (in percentage)

The greater control from Public Administration in the training activities of the Health and Care Area (Table 13) seems to be related to the obligation underlined in Table 8. The same is true for the presence of a system of certification.

	Health	Technical
Is there any control system or quality agencies that assess the courses?	61,5	45,5
Tests and checks are carried out by the Public Administration	46,2	23,8
Tests and checks are carried out by the professional association or Order	53,9	59,1
Other forms of tests and checks	31,8	23,8
Does the system of certification exist in regard to your CPD	47,8	28,6

Table 13. Presence of systems of control, verification and certification – Health and Care Area/Technical Area (in percentage)

Important differences emerge also on the role of Professional Registers, Boards and Associations within the CPD system. Table 14 shows that Professional Registers, Boards and Associations in the Technical Area know better their members' training needs (95.8%) in comparison to those in the Health and Care Area (80.8%). Moreover, with regard the information on the courses organised by other organisations, the Technical

Area seems to be more active (75%) than the Health Area (64%). On the contrary, the Health Area shows more attention (56%) towards the possibilities Europe provides in terms of post-university education than the Technical Area (32%).

	Health	Technical
Does your professional register or association have a committee or working group for its members' CPD?	80,0	72,0
Does your professional register or association have a committee or working group for informing on the possibilities Europe provides in terms of post-university education?	56,0	32,0
Does your professional register or association provide a complete and periodical information on CPD?	72,0	68,0
Does your professional register or association provide information on the courses it organises?	88,0	92,0
Does your professional register or association provide information on the courses organised by other organisations?	64,0	75,0
Does your professional register or association know its members' training needs?	80,8	95,8
The professional Register or Association have a modality to assess its members' training results?	54,2	48,0

Table 14. Role of the Professional Registers, Boards and Associations in the vocational training system (in percentage).