

ATSIV

Training needs analysis

Advancing the Third Sector through Innovation and Variation
Training needs analysis report
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Executive summary

The following paper is part of the project ATSIV, implemented under the framework of the European Commissions' Programme Erasmus+, within Key Action 2: Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices, Action: Strategic partnership for adult education.

The current research is part of ATSIV's First Intellectual Output (O1), which aims to frame the current situation of the NGO sectors in the partner countries, create a skills matrix and benchmark the best practices in adult teaching. These three research items are planned in order to be a scientific foundation for the creation of the ATSIV training programme, aimed at increasing the capacity of NGOs.

The aim of the Training Needs Analysis specifically is to identify the current strengths, weaknesses and overall training needs of NGO workers in the project partner countries. The following paper includes information and analysis regarding those topics, collected from the partner countries through extensive questionnaires and focus groups.

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1. Introduction

The following report aims to consolidate and summarize the findings from questionnaires and focus groups, conducted utilizing the quadruple helix approach in the ATSIV partner countries. More detailed information and data by country can be found in the individual country reports for the questionnaire results and the focus group results.

To start off, the analyzed data has been collected through 232 questionnaires and 105 focus group participants in 4 EU countries: Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, and Poland. Participants widely varied in age, life experience, occupation and interests. The goal of this extensive research was to gather perspectives from a considerable number of stakeholders to the NGO sector, including NGO workers and people directly involved in the NGO sector, as well as people from various fields, which have worked with or have been affected by NGO work.

The collected data can show both what the current skillset of NGO workers is, as well as the training needs identified by NGO workers and other stakeholders. Furthermore, the information shows trends in training, as well as directions, in which the NGO sector can expand in. It should be noted that the information collected is based on self-reporting and focus groups.

The following report will be used as a first step to creating a curriculum and a serious game created specifically for non-governmental organizations in order to provide the most needed and up-to-date knowledge on the most needed topics by the third sector.

2. Analysis of questionnaires and focus groups

2.1 Greece

a) Questionnaire results

The 64 respondents from the questionnaire identified strong and weak skills for themselves, as well high and low areas in terms of needs for training.

Existing skills:

The following table shows the average level of confidence for the skills (where 4 is the maximum level of confidence) mentioned in the questionnaire, as well as the number of respondents (as percentage), who gave one of the two extreme answers – that they are either not confident at all or very confident in the particular skill.

	Not confident at all	Average level of confidence	Very confident
Grant Proposal Writing	16%	2.4	7%
Project life cycle	6%	2.6	9%
Needs assessment	5%	2.9	17%
Design a project	5%	2.8	16%
Prepare a logical framework	3%	2.7	13%
Prepare a timeplan	7%	3	27%
Budgeting/cost monitoring	11%	2.6	15%
Project implementation	6%	2.9	21%
Project Monitoring Techniques	7%	2.4	5%
Provide financial reports to donors, gov. and public	16%	2.4	15%
Risk management	13%	2.5	13%
Quality assessment	13%	2.5	10%
Project evaluation	6%	2.5	8%
Sustainability and long-term impact	17%	2.4	13%
Project dissemination and exploitation	10%	2.8	24%
Funding sources	13%	2.3	6%
Set up crowdfunding campaigns	22%	2.2	6%
Find institutional donors (Private foundations)	19%	2.3	8%
Apply for structural funds	39%	1.9	3%
Apply for European funds	32%	1.9	3%

Find international donors	32%	1.9	3%
Apply for state funds	29%	2	5%
Receive individual funding	16%	2.5	8%
Corporate social responsibility	11%	2.5	8%
Human resource management	8%	2.9	27%
Project team management	8%	3	34%
Volunteer management	8%	3	35%
Time management and multitasking	5%	2.9	30%
Marketing techniques	15%	2.5	13%
Presentation skills	3%	3.1	36%
Web design and creation	13%	2.6	18%
Use of social media	5%	3	24%
Create video	27%	2.1	5%
Use free apps & online tools for NGOs	21%	2.2	6%
Prepare newsletters/press releases/flyers	13%	2.8	22%
Networking	7%	2.8	20%
Communication/Negotiation with partners	5%	2.9	22%
Advocacy	10%	2.6	16%
Strategic planning	7%	2.5	15%
Identifying strategic challenges	10%	2.5	13%
Implementing strategic thinking	13%	2.5	13%
Event management	6%	3.2	38%
Average	13%	2.57	15%

Highlighted are the numbers above, which are above the set threshold of the **average** of the data. In this case, the highlighted numbers are respectively the: skills, which have received the most “not confident at all” from respondents (in the first column), the skills with a higher than average overall level of confidence (in the second column) and finally – the skills, which have been pointed out by the most respondents as ones, in which they feel very confident (in the last column).

The two extremes are taken into consideration to show a more holistic picture of the answers, instead of just the averages.

Interesting to note is that in all cases of above-average percentage reported of NGO workers with no confidence in a subject, that particular skill also has a low average of confidence, meaning that there isn't a big polarization in knowledge but instead a serious problem with the specific skills.

This is something that is worth investigation through comparison with the assessed needs for training.

The mentioned skills are:

- Apply for structural funds
- Apply for European funds
- Find international donors
- Apply for state funds
- Create video
- Set up crowdfunding campaigns
- Use free apps & online tools for NGOs
- Find institutional donors (Private foundations)
- Sustainability and long-term impact
- Grant Proposal Writing
- Provide financial reports to donors, gov. and public
- Receive individual funding
- Marketing techniques

Arranged from highest percentage of reported answers of “not confident at all” to the average. These skills are both with the highest rate of respondents, which do not feel confident at all, as well as with a lower than average overall level of confidence.

Need for training:

Further, the next table shows the results from the questionnaire regarding the strength of need of training (where 4 is high need for training) mentioned in the questionnaire, as well as the number of respondents (as percentage), who gave one of the two extreme answers – that they either have no need for training in the specific skill or they have a high need for training.

	No need for training	Average need for training	High need for training
Grant Proposal Writing	2%	3.5	64%
Project life cycle	4%	3.3	51%
Needs assessment	5%	3.1	39%
Design a project	3%	3.2	49%
Prepare a logical framework	3%	3.3	53%

Prepare a timeplan	3%	3.2	44%
Budgeting/cost monitoring	5%	3.2	51%
Project implementation	4%	3.2	47%
Project Monitoring Techniques	2%	3.4	60%
Provide financial reports to donors, gov. and public	6%	3.3	60%
Risk management	0%	3.5	62%
Quality assessment	2%	3.4	52%
Project evaluation	2%	3.3	47%
Sustainability and long-term impact	0%	3.3	47%
Project dissemination and exploitation	5%	3	35%
Funding sources	0%	3.5	63%
Set up crowdfunding campaigns	1%	3.4	58%
Find institutional donors (Private foundations)	3%	3.5	61%
Apply for structural funds	2%	3.6	71%
Apply for European funds	0%	3.8	79%
Find international donors	0%	3.7	78%
Apply for state funds	3%	3.6	70%
Receive individual funding	6%	3.3	57%
Corporate social responsibility	6%	3.4	65%
Human resource management	2%	3.3	48%
Project team management	10%	3	39%
Volunteer management	10%	2.9	38%
Time management and multitasking	6%	3	41%
Marketing techniques	2%	3.4	57%
Presentation skills	11%	2.9	36%
Web design and creation	8%	3.1	48%
Use of social media	8%	2.9	33%
Create video	5%	3.3	52%
Use free apps & online tools for NGOs	2%	3.4	64%
Prepare newsletters/press releases/flyers	6%	3.1	43%
Networking	7%	3.1	45%
Communication/Negotiation with partners	6%	3.1	46%
Advocacy	6%	3.3	58%
Strategic planning	2%	3.5	60%
Identifying strategic challenges	2%	3.5	63%

Implementing strategic thinking	3%	3.4	55%
Event management	8%	2.8	30%
Average	4%	3.29	53%

Highlighted are the numbers above, which are above the set threshold of the **average** of the data. In this case, the highlighted numbers are respectively the: skills with a higher than average overall need for training (in the second column) and the skills, which have been pointed out by the most respondents as ones, in which they feel a high need for training (in the last column).

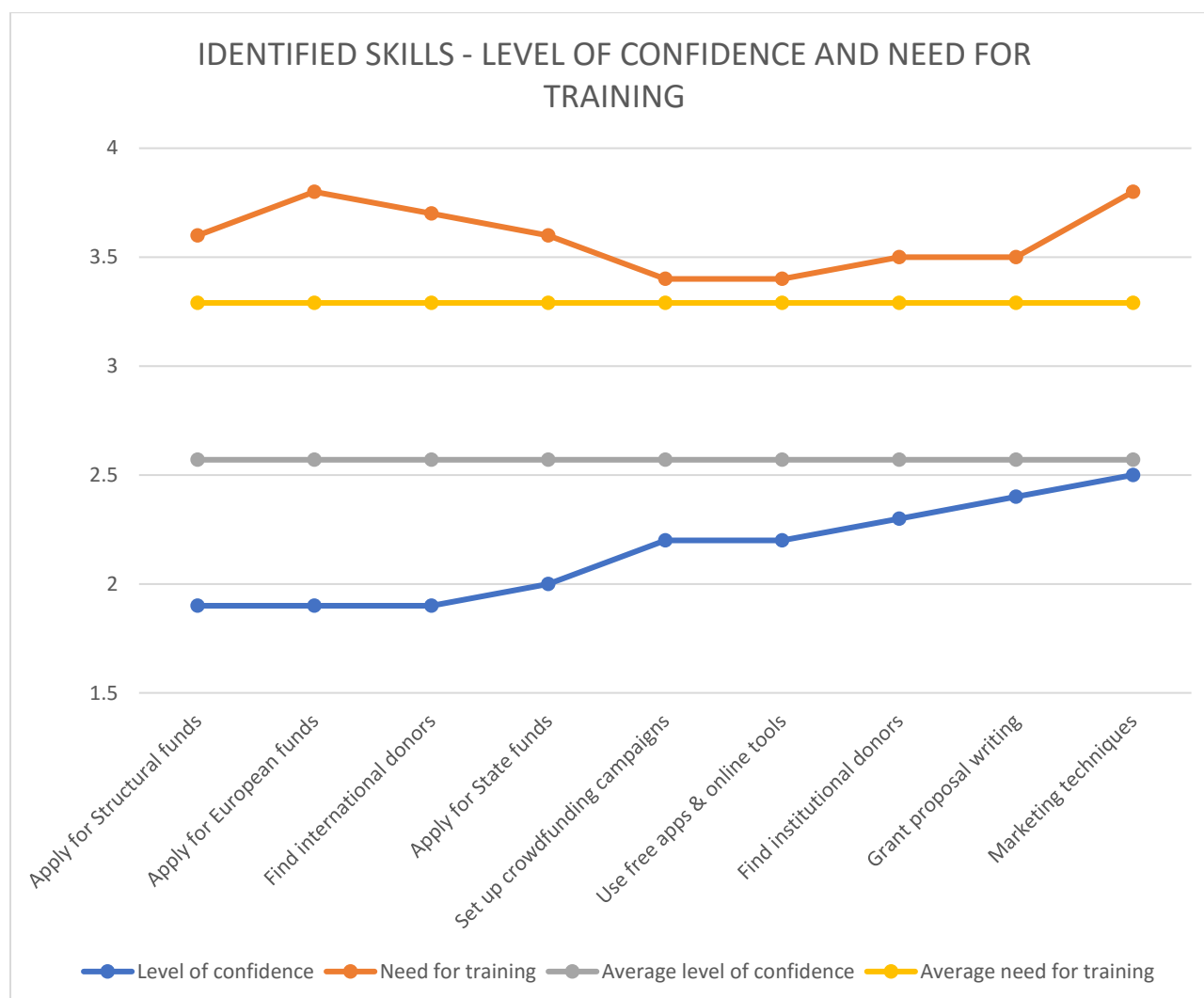
The two extremes are taken into consideration to show a more holistic picture of the answers, instead of just the averages. Especially for this case, it is important to note the first column – even when respondents feel confident or very confident in some skills, there are very few participants, who feel that there is no further training need. This means that although some skills are shown in the questionnaires with a lower average need for training, all mentioned skills have been recognized as valuable to have and to further develop in a consistent basis.

Still, it is important to note the most recognized skills in terms of need of training:

- Apply for European funds
- Find international donors
- Apply for structural funds
- Apply for state funds
- Grant Proposal Writing
- Risk management
- Funding sources
- Find institutional donors (Private foundations)
- Strategic planning
- Identifying strategic challenges
- Project Monitoring Techniques
- Quality assessment
- Set up crowdfunding campaigns
- Corporate social responsibility
- Marketing techniques
- Use free apps & online tools for NGOs
- Implementing strategic thinking

Ranked from highest need to average score. When compared to the list above of skills with lowest level of confidence, the skills which emerge as both with a high need for training and low confidence, or the ones recognized as lacking and very important skills, are:

- Apply for structural funds
- Apply for European funds
- Find international donors
- Apply for state funds
- Set up crowdfunding campaigns
- Use free apps & online tools for NGOs
- Find institutional donors (Private foundations)
- Grant Proposal Writing
- Marketing techniques



The skills, which have a low level of confidence but are not identified with a high need for training are the following, which could be identified as lacking in the organizations but not identified as crucial for their operations and development (by the organizations themselves):

- Create video
- Sustainability and long-term impact
- Provide financial reports to donors, gov. and public
- Receive individual funding

This information is interesting to ponder and compare with the results from the focus groups.

b) Focus group results

In 4 focus groups in Greece, 32 participants expressed their opinions on the topics of ATSIV and shared their experience and outlooks for the situation of the Third sector in Greece. The participants came from strongly varying age (ranging in all age groups, with most participants from the 35-44 age group), education and background.

Through various discussions, related to the topics, the conclusions, which are related on the one hand to the training needs, identified from the questionnaire as both with a high need for training and a low level of confidence, and on the other – as strong discussion points in the focus groups, are as follows:

- **Funding** (international donors, individual funding, institutional donors) – During the conducted focus groups, problems regarded funding were identified on the one hand as lack of strategic management and proper human resource management, and on the other – lack of knowledge on how to find and access funding opportunities.
- **Crowdfunding campaigns** – None of the focus groups' participants has ever created a crowdfunding campaign mainly due to lack of knowledge and experience, even though they recognize that this is an important fundraising tool. Most of the participants do not feel confident/ready to use crowdfunding but is among their priorities.
- **Corporate social responsibility** – Lack of transparency of NGOs, or at least the perceived lack of transparency by stakeholders has acted as a hurdle in creating programs that could enhance CSR, as well as lack of project management. An interesting view was expressed on what kind of skills stakeholders need to acquire in order to collaborate with an NGO. For a business to make a good CSR policy it needs to get the know-how from NGOs thus, interaction between the two should be a mutually reciprocal process.
- **Advocacy** - Advocacy was discussed inside the framework of the logic the topics for advocacy are chosen. One opinion expressed was that because of the search for funding, a number of NGOs are created advocating a specific cause which attracts funding during a particular period of time. For example, a large number of NGOs dealing with the refugee

crisis sprang during the last 5-7 years in Thessaloniki. Nonetheless, once funds are directed towards another goal, these local/national NGOs will not be able to survive economically. The advice was that NGOs in Thessaloniki should have Thessaloniki as their scope and focus on issues faced by the city in order to be sustainable.

- **Project work** – project design, quality assessment, project evaluation, risk management – Lack of project design was noted by the participants and it was attributed to the lack of professionalism and of specialized/trained personnel. Poor project design was perceived to influence NGO inability to access funds (a business or foundation would normally want to make sure that the money donated will go towards the specific goal that the NGO set-an NGO with a clear plan of action with defined steps has more chances of winning a grant or funding). There is a lack of skills in proposal writing that creates problems in effectively communicating with local foundations via concept notes and online applications. Moreover, it was said that sometimes a good proposal may not be followed by a good interview/oral presentation.
- **Financial reporting** - The general impression was very negative about the lack of transparency in NGOs financial data. This was linked back to not having a proper internal structure with specialised personnel. Best practices from business sector were also mentioned as an approach that will add value to this process.

It can be summarized that the focus groups delved deeper into the causes of identified issues and shortcomings, as well as identified some new issues that need tackling.

The combined results and implications will be discussed further in the conclusion of the report.

2.2 Poland

a) Questionnaire results

The 53 respondents from the questionnaire identified strong and weak skills for themselves, as well high and low areas in terms of needs for training.

Existing skills:

The following table shows the average level of confidence for the skills (where 4 is the maximum level of confidence) mentioned in the questionnaire, as well as the number of respondents (as percentage), who gave one of the two extreme answers – that they are either not confident at all or very confident in the particular skill.

	Not confident at all	Average level of confidence	Very confident
Grant Proposal Writing	25%	2.25	11%
Project life cycle	17%	2.38	8%
Needs assessment	11%	2.45	6%
Design a project	13%	2.58	17%
Prepare a logical framework	23%	2.38	15%
Prepare a timeplan	25%	2.6	30%
Budgeting/cost monitoring	19%	2.53	19%
Project implementation	13%	2.74	19%
Project Monitoring Techniques	17%	2.68	19%
Provide financial reports to donors, gov. and public	23%	2.33	15%
Risk management	15%	2.38	13%
Quality assessment	30%	2.1	9%
Project evaluation	28%	2.26	11%
Sustainability and long-term impact	21%	2.32	2%
Project dissemination and exploitation	17%	2.47	8%
Funding sources	17%	2.21	9%
Set up crowdfunding campaigns	28%	2.25	9%
Find institutional donors (Private foundations)	30%	2	6%
Apply for structural funds	26%	2.36	8%
Apply for European funds	34%	2.09	11%
Find international donors	47%	1.87	8%
Apply for state funds	19%	2.38	9%

Receive individual funding	26%	2.28	11%
Corporate social responsibility	25%	2.45	8%
Human resource management	17%	2.72	23%
Project team management	19%	2.45	15%
Volunteer management	19%	2.62	15%
Time management and multitasking	19%	2.64	22%
Marketing techniques	19%	2.49	22%
Presentation skills	21%	2.72	32%
Web design and creation	30%	3	22%
Use of social media	22%	2.64	22%
Create video	26%	2.23	13%
Use free apps & online tools for NGOs	41%	1.94	8%
Prepare newsletters/press releases/flyers	17%	2.81	38%
Networking	21%	2.6	17%
Communication/Negotiation with partners	7%	3.04	40%
Advocacy	36%	2.13	17%
Strategic planning	17%	2.57	25%
Identifying strategic challenges	21%	2.6	32%
Implementing strategic thinking	19%	2.66	22%
Event management	9%	2.83	25%
Average	22%	2.45	16%

Highlighted are the numbers above, which are above the set threshold of the **average** of the data. In this case, the highlighted numbers are respectively the: skills, which have received the most “not confident at all” from respondents (in the first column), the skills with a higher than average overall level of confidence (in the second column) and finally – the skills, which have been pointed out by the most respondents as ones, in which they feel very confident (in the last column).

The two extremes are taken into consideration to show a more holistic picture of the answers, instead of just the averages.

When analyzing this data, it can be observed that, unlike in Greece’s results, there are some polarities: three of the skills (Prepare a time plan, Web design and creation, Advocacy) have both an above-average percentage of respondents with no confidence at all and an above-average rate of very confident respondents. This points to a high dispersity in knowledge and a sense of “false average” for these particular cases.

The other skills, which have an above-average response of “not confident at all” are:

- Find international donors
- Use free apps & online tools for NGOs
- Apply for European funds
- Quality assessment
- Find institutional donors (Private foundations)
- Project evaluation
- Set up crowdfunding campaigns
- Apply for structural funds
- Receive individual funding
- Create video
- Grant Proposal Writing
- Corporate social responsibility
- Prepare a logical framework
- Provide financial reports to donors, gov. and public

Arranged from highest percentage of reported answers of “not confident at all” to the average. These skills are both with the highest rate of respondents, which do not feel confident at all, as well as with a lower than average overall level of confidence (all aside from the three earlier mentioned also have lower than average levels of confidence).

Need for training:

Further, the next table shows the results from the questionnaire regarding the strength of need of training (where 4 is high need for training) mentioned in the questionnaire, as well as the number of respondents (as percentage), who gave one of the two extreme answers – that they either have no need for training in the specific skill or they have a high need for training.

	No need for training	Average need for training	High need for training
Grant Proposal Writing	10%	3.13	47%
Project life cycle	9%	2.94	38%
Needs assessment	7%	3.17	38%
Design a project	17%	2.7	26%
Prepare a logical framework	6%	3.23	49%
Prepare a timeplan	11%	2.85	26%
Budgeting/cost monitoring	15%	2.68	23%
Project implementation	19%	2.77	28%
Project Monitoring Techniques	7%	2.92	30%

Provide financial reports to donors, gov. and public	5%	3.08	38%
Risk management	6%	3	30%
Quality assessment	9%	2.87	28%
Project evaluation	12%	2.74	28%
Sustainability and long-term impact	2%	2.94	28%
Project dissemination and exploitation	8%	2.91	26%
Funding sources	9%	3.06	38%
Set up crowdfunding campaigns	2%	3.19	43%
Find institutional donors (Private foundations)	0%	3.06	30%
Apply for structural funds	0%	3.15	34%
Apply for European funds	6%	3	30%
Find international donors	2%	3.28	47%
Apply for state funds	13%	2.98	38%
Receive individual funding	0%	3.26	42%
Corporate social responsibility	4%	3.2	47%
Human resource management	2%	3.09	34%
Project team management	8%	3.02	32%
Volunteer management	13%	2.77	28%
Time management and multitasking	2%	3.2	40%
Marketing techniques	2%	3.3	51%
Presentation skills	15%	2.64	23%
Web design and creation	8%	2.9	30%
Use of social media	6%	2.92	32%
Create video	0%	3.28	51%
Use free apps & online tools for NGOs	2%	3.47	58%
Prepare newsletters/press releases/flyers	17%	2.75	30%
Networking	0%	3.38	53%
Communication/Negotiation with partners	2%	3.25	43%
Advocacy	4%	3.21	41%
Strategic planning	8%	3.06	32%
Identifying strategic challenges	11%	3.02	32%
Implementing strategic thinking	10%	3.49	32%
Event management	2%	3.28	49%
Average	7%	3.05	36%

Highlighted are the numbers above, which are above the set threshold of the **average** of the data. In this case, the highlighted numbers are respectively the: skills with a higher than average overall need for training (in the second column) and the skills, which have been pointed out by the most respondents as ones, in which they feel a high need for training (in the last column).

The two extremes are taken into consideration to show a more holistic picture of the answers, instead of just the averages.

It can be observed that in the first column – even when respondents feel confident or very confident in some skills, there are very few participants, who feel that there is no further training need. This is a trend that follows the same example from Greece, even if the numbers for no need for training are a bit higher than the ones in Greece. This means that although some skills are shown in the questionnaires with a lower average need for training, all mentioned skills have been recognized as valuable to have and to further develop in a consistent basis.

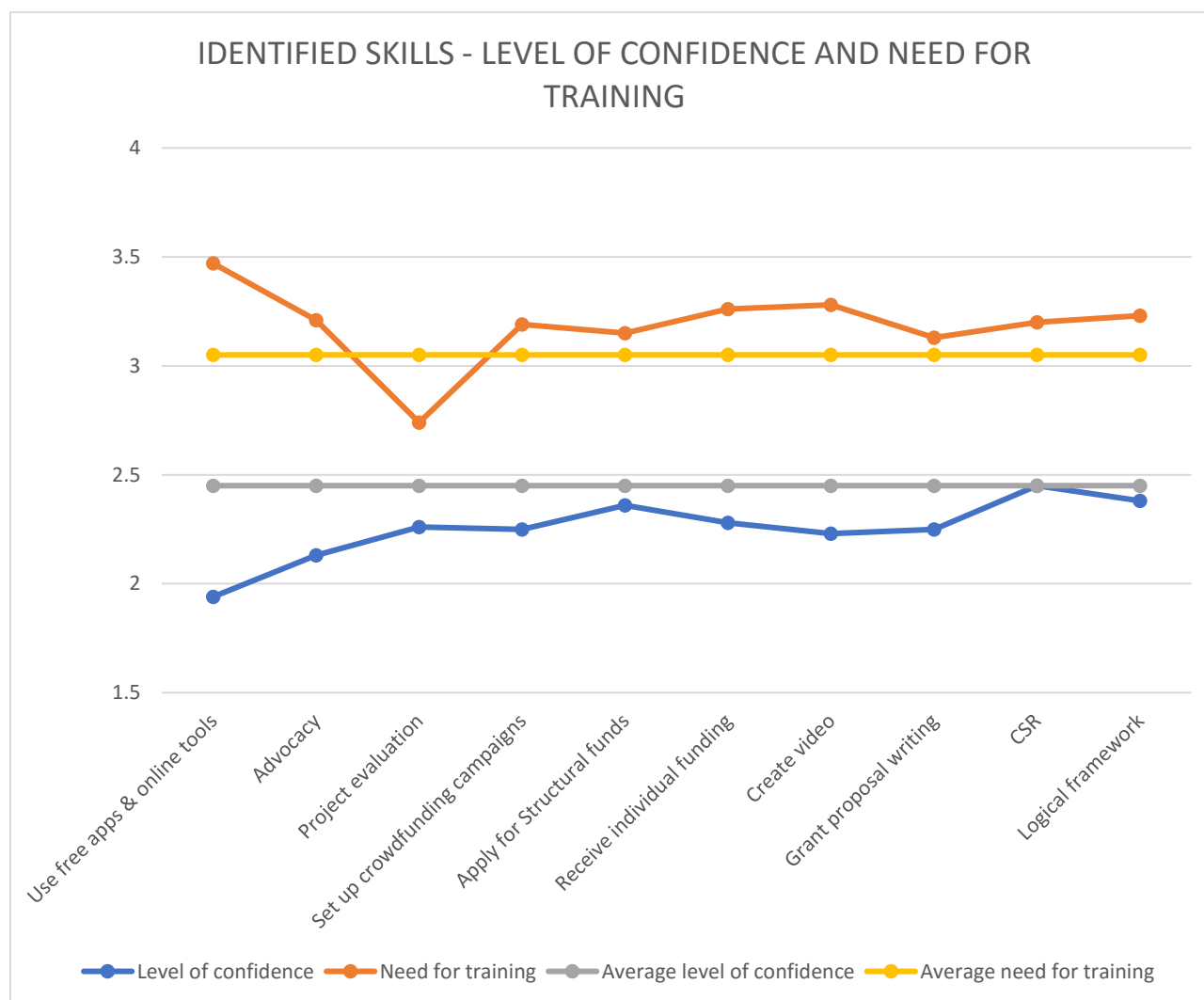
Still, it is important to note the most recognized skills in terms of need of training:

- Implementing strategic thinking
- Use free apps & online tools for NGOs
- Networking
- Marketing techniques
- Find international donors
- Create video
- Event management
- Receive individual funding
- Communication/Negotiation with partners
- Prepare a logical framework
- Advocacy
- Corporate social responsibility
- Time management and multitasking
- Set up crowdfunding campaigns
- Needs assessment
- Apply for structural funds
- Grant Proposal Writing

Ranked from highest need to average score. When compared to the list above of skills with lowest level of confidence, the skills which emerge as both with a high need for training and low confidence, or the ones recognized as lacking and very important skills, are:

- Use free apps & online tools for NGOs
- Advocacy

- Project evaluation
- Set up crowdfunding campaigns
- Apply for structural funds
- Receive individual funding
- Create video
- Grant Proposal Writing
- Corporate social responsibility
- Prepare a logical framework



The skills, which have a low level of confidence but are not identified with a high need for training are the following, which could be identified as lacking in the organizations but not identified as crucial for their operations and development (by the organizations themselves):

- Apply for European funds (very close to threshold)
- Quality assessment
- Find institutional donors (Private foundations)
- Web design and creation
- Prepare a timeplan
- Provide financial reports to donors, gov. and public

This information will be further discussed on the one hand together with similar data from the other researched countries, and on the other – with the results from the focus groups in Poland.

b) Focus group results

In 3 focus groups in Poland, 18 participants expressed their opinions on the topics of ATSIV and shared their experience and outlooks for the situation of the Third sector.

Through various discussions, related to the topics, the conclusions, which are related on the one hand to the training needs, identified from the questionnaire as both with a high need for training and a low level of confidence, and on the other – as strong discussion points in the focus groups, are as follows:

- **Funding** (international donors, individual funding, institutional donors) – The respondents have not faced difficulties to find funding sources, because there's quite useful information provided by web pages dedicated to non-profit sector in Poland. They usually trace funding opportunities from the main national source of information www.ngo.pl and announcements of granting institutions at regional or local level. This is interesting, as the questionnaires showed finding donors is a need that NGOs would like training on. This could lead to the conclusion that NGOs do not need to be trained on how to find funding as theory but how to better “sell” themselves and their ideas.
- **Crowdfunding campaigns** – Crowdfunding is difficult for use in systematic and traditional activities in Poland. This kind of funding is not used, because their activities do not concern the common case for society and do not implement them at national level.
- **Corporate social responsibility** – The respondents tried to reach private companies for CSR cooperation, but without success. Main problem for NGOs is they do not know how to reach effectively companies and how to be attractive for them. One of considerations is that NGOs, influenced by offers writing for public funding, are not able to elaborate attractive way for cooperation proposal. Another consideration is that companies which implement CSR are interested of very limited range of activities, as for example in Poland

are very popular issues concerning ecology, children education and disability, however Polish NGOs operate in many other fields.

- **Advocacy** - In opinion of respondents most of organizations do not need or practice advocacy, because lot of them operate in small communities, they are not interested in law changes, wide social consultations (“small organizations have small horizons”). Another interesting consideration is that advocacy organizations for NGOs should be financed by foreign funds in order to be independent from politics.

It can be summarized that the focus groups confirmed the results from the questionnaire and delved deeper into the causes of identified issues and shortcomings.

The combined results and implications will be discussed further in the conclusion of the report.

2.3 Bulgaria

a) Questionnaire results

The 45 respondents from the questionnaire identified strong and weak skills for themselves, as well high and low areas in terms of needs for training.

Existing skills:

The following table shows the average level of confidence for the skills (where 4 is the maximum level of confidence) mentioned in the questionnaire, as well as the number of respondents (as percentage), who gave one of the two extreme answers – that they are either not confident at all or very confident in the particular skill.

	Not confident at all	Average level of confidence	Very confident
Grant Proposal Writing	11%	2.68	24%
Project life cycle	11%	2.7	22%
Needs assessment	4%	2.93	24%
Design a project	16%	2.67	24%
Prepare a logical framework	16%	2.72	27%
Prepare a timeplan	2%	3.07	36%
Budgeting/cost monitoring	18%	2.51	24%
Project implementation	2%	2.98	24%
Project Monitoring Techniques	11%	2.68	24%
Provide financial reports to donors, gov. and public	24%	2.43	24%
Risk management	27%	2.29	13%
Quality assessment	18%	2.61	22%

Project evaluation	20%	2.64	24%
Sustainability and long-term impact	9%	2.81	27%
Project dissemination and exploitation	7%	2.98	31%
Funding sources	7%	2.62	18%
Set up crowdfunding campaigns	33%	2.05	11%
Find institutional donors (Private foundations)	18%	2.44	20%
Apply for structural funds	29%	2.33	18%
Apply for European funds	13%	2.65	27%
Find international donors	27%	2.28	18%
Apply for state funds	18%	2.42	18%
Receive individual funding	22%	2.27	16%
Corporate social responsibility	29%	2.27	16%
Human resource management	0%	2.87	11%
Project team management	7%	2.93	22%
Volunteer management	2%	2.98	18%
Time management and multitasking	4%	2.8	22%
Marketing techniques	4%	2.45	16%
Presentation skills	9%	3	36%
Web design and creation	24%	2.21	16%
Use of social media	0%	2.89	20%
Create video	22%	2.18	9%
Use free apps & online tools for NGOs	20%	2.58	22%
Prepare newsletters/press releases/flyers	9%	2.69	20%
Networking	4%	2.8	27%
Communication/Negotiation with partners	2%	2.87	22%
Advocacy	18%	2.45	18%
Strategic planning	2%	2.95	31%
Identifying strategic challenges	7%	2.84	27%
Implementing strategic thinking	2%	2.96	27%
Event management	2%	3.07	20%
Average	13%	2.66	22%

Highlighted are the numbers above, which are above the set threshold of the **average** of the data. In this case, the highlighted numbers are respectively the: skills, which have received the most “not confident at all” from respondents (in the first column), the skills with a higher than average

overall level of confidence (in the second column) and finally – the skills, which have been pointed out by the most respondents as ones, in which they feel very confident (in the last column).

The two extremes are taken into consideration to show a more holistic picture of the answers, instead of just the averages.

The same dispersity, which was observed in results from Poland can be seen here as well. Here, five skills have both above-average reports of workers not confident at all, and very confident (Design a project, Prepare a logical framework, Budgeting/cost monitoring, Provide financial reports to donors, gov. and public, Project evaluation). Aside from them, the skills, identified with the most respondents claiming they are not confident at all and with below-average overall levels of confidence are:

- Set up crowdfunding campaigns
- Apply for structural funds
- Corporate social responsibility
- Risk management
- Find international donors
- Web design and creation
- Receive individual funding
- Create video
- Use free apps & online tools for NGOs
- Quality assessment
- Find institutional donors (Private foundations)
- Apply for state funds
- Advocacy

Need for training:

Further, the next table shows the results from the questionnaire regarding the strength of need of training (where 4 is high need for training) mentioned in the questionnaire, as well as the number of respondents (as percentage), who gave one of the two extreme answers – that they either have no need for training in the specific skill or they have a high need for training.

	No need for training	Average need for training	High need for training
Grant Proposal Writing	13%	2.85	29%

Project life cycle	20%	2.4	11%
Needs assessment	9%	2.61	13%
Design a project	16%	2.61	20%
Prepare a logical framework	16%	2.48	13%
Prepare a timeplan	31%	2.1	7%
Budgeting/cost monitoring	20%	2.57	24%
Project implementation	16%	2.4	7%
Project Monitoring Techniques	13%	2.71	20%
Provide financial reports to donors, gov. and public	22%	2.58	24%
Risk management	13%	2.6	20%
Quality assessment	16%	2.59	18%
Project evaluation	13%	2.63	20%
Sustainability and long-term impact	20%	2.63	22%
Project dissemination and exploitation	22%	2.44	18%
Funding sources	4%	2.84	22%
Set up crowdfunding campaigns	9%	2.91	27%
Find institutional donors (Private foundations)	18%	2.61	18%
Apply for structural funds	27%	2.34	18%
Apply for European funds	20%	2.59	20%
Find international donors	11%	2.84	31%
Apply for state funds	20%	2.5	18%
Receive individual funding	11%	2.93	31%
Corporate social responsibility	11%	2.98	33%
Human resource management	7%	2.51	4%
Project team management	18%	2.25	7%
Volunteer management	13%	2.47	11%
Time management and multitasking	16%	2.6	20%
Marketing techniques	7%	2.68	7%
Presentation skills	20%	2.52	18%
Web design and creation	4%	2.95	27%
Use of social media	9%	2.42	11%
Create video	2%	2.91	22%
Use free apps & online tools for NGOs	9%	2.69	24%
Prepare newsletters/press releases/flyers	7%	2.49	11%
Networking	13%	2.42	9%

Communication/Negotiation with partners	9%	2.47	13%
Advocacy	9%	2.69	20%
Strategic planning	13%	2.56	13%
Identifying strategic challenges	18%	2.3	9%
Implementing strategic thinking	18%	2.33	13%
Event management	20%	2.19	4%
Average	14%	2.58	17%

Highlighted are the numbers above, which are above the set threshold of the **average** of the data. In this case, the highlighted numbers are respectively the: skills with a higher than average overall need for training (in the second column) and the skills, which have been pointed out by the most respondents as ones, in which they feel a high need for training (in the last column).

There is something to be observed from the first column, which was not present in Greece nor Poland. In Bulgaria, the average percentage of respondents, which point out no need for training is stunning – 14% compared to 7% in Poland and just 4% in Greece. This may be attributed to different factors, some of which cultural and others – situational, however that does affect the overall results of the skills needed to be trained.

Even with the lower averages of the need for training, the most recognized skills are:

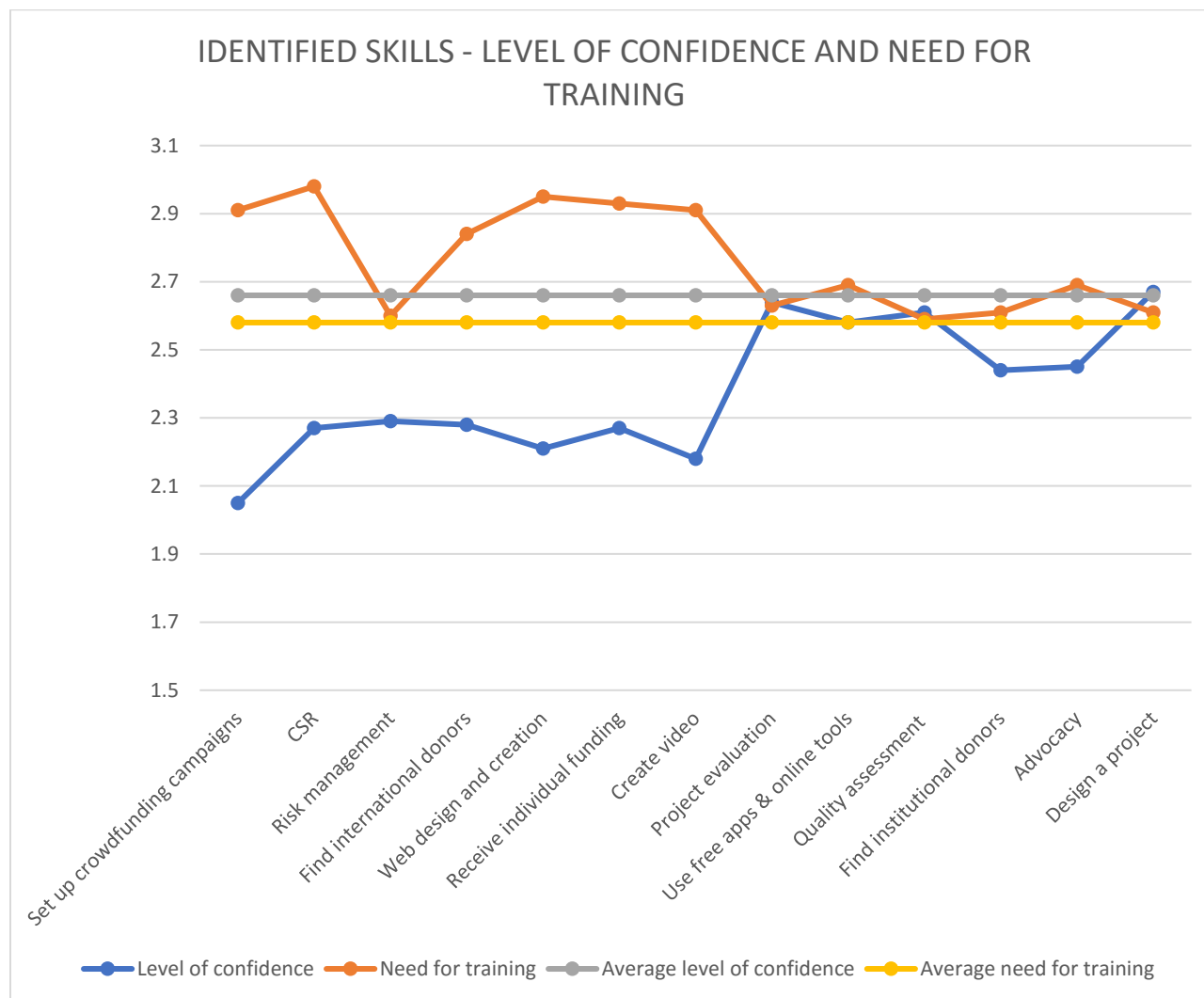
- Corporate social responsibility
- Web design and creation
- Receive individual funding
- Create video
- Set up crowdfunding campaigns
- Grant Proposal Writing
- Find international donors
- Funding sources
- Project Monitoring Techniques
- Advocacy
- Use free apps & online tools for NGOs
- Marketing techniques
- Sustainability and long-term impact
- Project evaluation
- Find institutional donors (Private foundations)
- Design a project
- Needs assessment
- Time management and multitasking

- Risk management
- Apply for European funds
- Quality assessment

Ranked from highest need to average score.

When compared to the list above of skills with lowest level of confidence, the skills which emerge as both with a high need for training and low confidence, or the ones recognized as lacking and very important skills, are:

- Set up crowdfunding campaigns
- Corporate social responsibility
- Risk management
- Find international donors
- Web design and creation
- Receive individual funding
- Create video
- Project evaluation
- Use free apps & online tools for NGOs
- Quality assessment
- Find institutional donors (Private foundations)
- Advocacy
- Design a project



The skills, which have a low level of confidence but are not identified with a high need for training are the following, which could be identified as lacking in the organizations but not identified as crucial for their operations and development (by the organizations themselves):

- Apply for structural funds
- Provide financial reports to donors, gov. and public
- Budgeting/cost monitoring
- Apply for state funds
- Prepare a logical framework

This information will be further discussed on the one hand together with similar data from the other researched countries, and on the other – with the results from the focus groups in Poland.

b) Focus group results

In 3 focus groups in Bulgaria, 29 participants expressed their opinions on the topics of ATSIV and shared their experience and outlooks for the situation of the Third sector in Bulgaria. The participants came from strongly varying age (ranging from 19 to 52, with an average of around 30), education (with present IT, marketing, policy, legal, finance specialists, as well as professionals from other fields) and background (with 6 representatives of universities, 9 of private businesses and the others from NGOs, local authorities and law-enforcement agencies).

Through various discussions, related to the topics, the conclusions, which are related on the one hand to the training needs, identified from the questionnaire as both with a high need for training and a low level of confidence, and on the other – as strong discussion points in the focus groups, are as follows:

- **Funding** (international donors, individual funding, institutional donors) – In the focus group, several examples illustrated that NGO workers in Bulgaria lack knowledge of possible funding sources.
- **Crowdfunding campaigns** – while participants mostly were aware of crowdfunding and named it a source of additional funding, most admitted they were not entirely sure how to utilize it fully; moreover, participants noted that the general public in Bulgaria doesn't have enough awareness or faith in crowdfunding yet, which is a significant challenge.
- **Corporate social responsibility** – while CSR is recognized as an opportunity for companies in Bulgaria to find ideas they identify with and help them along, some of the participants expressed the feeling that CSR is sometimes outsourcing of activities from business to NGOs in Bulgaria and it needs to be developed as an idea and mechanics further so that its idea is clear to all.
- **Online literacy** - web design and creation, create video, use free apps & online tools for NGOs – while some recommendations were made for digital tools for NGOs (Asana, Workspace for business (which is free for NGOs), Products of MS Office 365, Basecamp), they were mostly suggestions made by business and the academia instead of the NGO participants themselves, who admit that they feel the lack of expertise and its effect on the activities of their NGOs.
- **Advocacy** - None of the focus group respondents were particularly aware about the nature of advocacy aside from Amnesty International's efforts.
- **Project work** - design a project, quality assessment, project evaluation, risk management – Participants mentioned that some programme institutions in Bulgaria still don't offer online proposals' submission which makes the process slower and more difficult as all proposal documentation has to be sent over the mail. A different identified issue is that it is very challenging to for a Bulgarian NGO to join a multinational consortium and

participate in a large pan-European projects because of various reasons, which should be identified.

It can be summarized that the focus groups confirmed the results from the questionnaire and delved deeper into the causes of identified issues and shortcomings.

The combined results and implications will be discussed further in the conclusion of the report.

2.4 Romania

a) Questionnaire results

The 70 respondents from the questionnaire identified strong and weak skills for themselves, as well high and low areas in terms of needs for training.

Existing skills:

The following table shows the average level of confidence for the skills (where 4 is the maximum level of confidence) mentioned in the questionnaire, as well as the number of respondents (as percentage), who gave one of the two extreme answers – that they are either not confident at all or very confident in the particular skill.

	Not confident at all	Average level of confidence	Very confident
Grant Proposal Writing	1%	3.49	59%
Project life cycle	5%	3.14	40%
Needs assessment	1%	3.49	60%
Design a project	8%	3.3	48%
Prepare a logical framework	0%	3.14	45%
Prepare a timeplan	1%	3.88	88%
Budgeting/cost monitoring	0%	3.45	49%
Project implementation	1%	3.69	70%
Project Monitoring Techniques	6%	2.9	34%
Provide financial reports to donors, gov. and public	4%	2.49	45%
Risk management	1%	2.93	23%
Quality assessment	0%	3.09	32%
Project evaluation	3%	3.41	53%
Sustainability and long-term impact	3%	3.13	35%
Project dissemination and exploitation	6%	3.13	35%
Funding sources	16%	2.79	22%
Set up crowdfunding campaigns	12%	2.43	15%
Find institutional donors (Private foundations)	17%	2.68	26%
Apply for structural funds	10%	2.51	13%
Apply for European funds	14%	2.8	29%
Find international donors	14%	2.43	10%
Apply for state funds	18%	2.81	33%

Receive individual funding	17%	2.53	16%
Corporate social responsibility	4%	2.55	16%
Human resource management	0%	3.28	41%
Project team management	1%	3.58	61%
Volunteer management	1%	3.29	50%
Time management and multitasking	6%	3.28	47%
Marketing techniques	0%	3.06	35%
Presentation skills	16%	3.32	52%
Web design and creation	6%	2.54	18%
Use of social media	21%	3.12	38%
Create video	16%	2.51	18%
Use free apps & online tools for NGOs	8%	2.71	24%
Prepare newsletters/press releases/flyers	5%	3.18	37%
Networking	0%	3.18	37%
Communication/Negotiation with partners	9%	3.24	40%
Advocacy	1%	2.76	31%
Strategic planning	2%	3.24	42%
Identifying strategic challenges	6%	3.03	36%
Implementing strategic thinking	6%	3.04	36%
Event management	0%	3.41	62%
Average	6%	3.05	38%

Highlighted are the numbers above, which are above the set threshold of the **average** of the data. In this case, the highlighted numbers are respectively the: skills, which have received the most “not confident at all” from respondents (in the first column), the skills with a higher than average overall level of confidence (in the second column) and finally – the skills, which have been pointed out by the most respondents as ones, in which they feel very confident (in the last column).

The two extremes are taken into consideration to show a more holistic picture of the answers, instead of just the averages.

The already noticeable dispersity, which was observed in results before can be seen here as well, albeit to a smaller extent. Here, three skills have both above-average reports of workers not confident at all, and very confident (Design a project, Presentation skills, Communication/negotiation with partners). Aside from them, the skills, identified with the most respondents claiming they are not confident at all and with below-average overall levels of confidence are:

- Funding sources
- Set up crowdfunding campaigns
- Find institutional donors (Private foundations)
- Apply for structural funds
- Apply for European funds
- Find international donors
- Apply for state funds
- Receive individual funding
- Use of social media
- Create video
- Use free apps & online tools for NGOs

Need for training:

Further, the next table shows the results from the questionnaire regarding the strength of need of training (where 4 is high need for training) mentioned in the questionnaire, as well as the number of respondents (as percentage), who gave one of the two extreme answers – that they either have no need for training in the specific skill or they have a high need for training.

	No need for training	Average need for training	High need for training
Grant Proposal Writing	16%	3.01	46%
Project life cycle	11%	3	39%
Needs assessment	9%	2.89	26%
Design a project	15%	2.96	37%
Prepare a logical framework	12%	3.06	43%
Prepare a timeplan	17%	2.61	17%
Budgeting/cost monitoring	10%	2.86	30%
Project implementation	19%	2.59	20%
Project Monitoring Techniques	10%	2.94	34%
Provide financial reports to donors, gov. and public	11%	2.91	31%
Risk management	1%	3.16	40%
Quality assessment	6%	3.1	38%
Project evaluation	9%	2.91	26%

Sustainability and long-term impact	7%	3.24	48%
Project dissemination and exploitation	11%	2.86	27%
Funding sources	1%	3.43	54%
Set up crowdfunding campaigns	1%	3.52	63%
Find institutional donors (Private foundations)	4%	3.47	62%
Apply for structural funds	5%	3.26	53%
Apply for European funds	6%	3.21	49%
Find international donors	3%	3.51	66%
Apply for state funds	10%	3.06	40%
Receive individual funding	3%	3.27	42%
Corporate social responsibility	0%	3.41	54%
Human resource management	6%	2.82	21%
Project team management	12%	2.72	19%
Volunteer management	9%	2.71	23%
Time management and multitasking	10%	2.84	29%
Marketing techniques	9%	3.01	39%
Presentation skills	14%	2.7	27%
Web design and creation	7%	3.23	51%
Use of social media	13%	2.86	29%
Create video	9%	3.24	51%
Use free apps & online tools for NGOs	7%	3.16	46%
Prepare newsletters/press releases/flyers	15%	2.73	28%
Networking	12%	2.89	29%
Communication/Negotiation with partners	10%	2.87	28%
Advocacy	7%	3.13	41%
Strategic planning	7%	3.16	46%
Identifying strategic challenges	7%	3.17	46%
Implementing strategic thinking	9%	3.23	49%
Event management	10%	2.87	30%
Average	9%	3.04	39%

Highlighted are the numbers above, which are above the set threshold of the **average** of the data. In this case, the highlighted numbers are respectively the: skills with a higher than average overall need for training (in the second column) and the skills, which have been pointed out by the most respondents as ones, in which they feel a high need for training (in the last column).

Although respondents consider they have rather high skills, they are also interested in additional training. Project management seems to have the lowest interest. The most valuable new additions considered are funding, marketing & social media, as well as some soft skills necessary for relationship development.

The most recognized skills are:

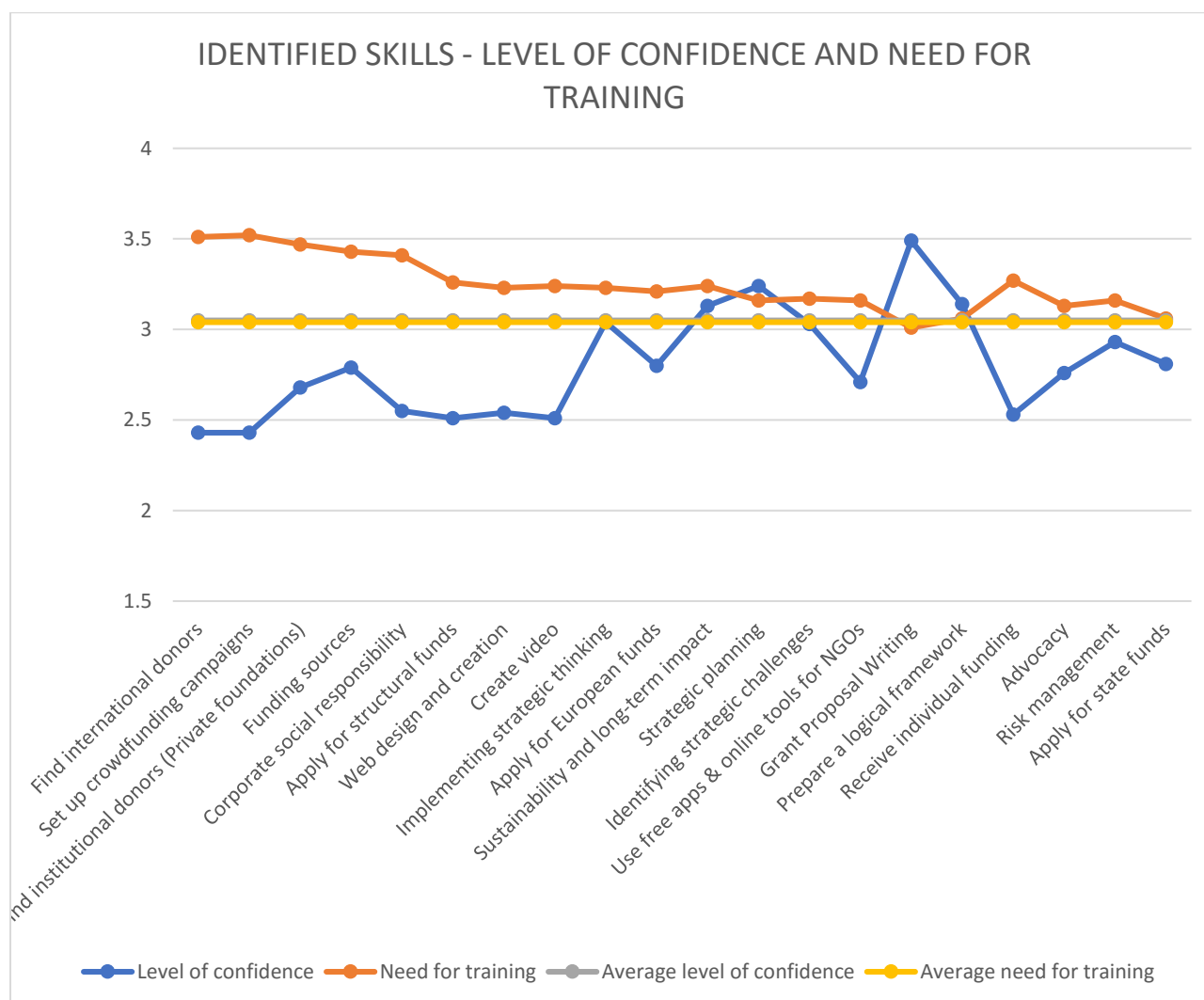
- Find international donors
- Set up crowdfunding campaigns
- Find institutional donors (Private foundations)
- Funding sources
- Corporate social responsibility
- Apply for structural funds
- Web design and creation
- Create video
- Implementing strategic thinking
- Apply for European funds
- Sustainability and long-term impact
- Strategic planning
- Identifying strategic challenges
- Use free apps & online tools for NGOs
- Grant Proposal Writing
- Prepare a logical framework
- Receive individual funding
- Advocacy
- Risk management
- Apply for state funds

Ranked from highest need to average score.

When compared to the list above of skills with lowest level of confidence, the skills which emerge as both with a high need for training and low confidence, or the ones recognized as lacking and very important skills, are:

- Find international donors
- Set up crowdfunding campaigns
- Find institutional donors (Private foundations)
- Funding sources
- Apply for structural funds
- Create video
- Apply for European funds

- Use free apps & online tools for NGOs
- Receive individual funding
- Apply for state funds



* Average level of confidence and average need for training are nearly the same

The only skill, which has a low level of confidence but is not identified with a high need for training is **Use of social media** - it could be identified as lacking in the organizations but not identified as crucial for their operations and development (by the organizations themselves).

This information will be further discussed on the one hand together with similar data from the other researched countries, and on the other – with the results from the focus groups in Romania.

b) Focus group results

In 6 focus groups in Romania, 26 participants expressed their opinions on the topics of ATSIV and shared their experience and outlooks for the situation of the Third sector in Romania. The participants came from strongly varying age, education and background, from interns and volunteers to upper management.

Through various discussions, related to the topics, the conclusions, which are related on the one hand to the training needs, identified from the questionnaire as both with a high need for training and a low level of confidence, and on the other – as strong discussion points in the focus groups, are as follows:

- **Funding** (international donors, individual funding, institutional donors) – There is sometimes conditioned sponsorship. Corruption and political influence is present in this field, not only related with public administration, but also connected with companies. Some other participants consider that obtaining sponsorship from an organization is impossible with no inside connection. Participants try to make sponsors loyal to their organizations, but they consider not to be very successful in this domain. Some aspects considered would be to permanent contact with them and being accountable. Moreover, direct contacts, visits from the sponsors' representatives to the NGO help. A point stressed by the representatives of the companies is the need of accountability from the part of NGOs. This would increase their access to funding. They consider that some NGOs take from granted their financial support and they consider there is no need to report and prove the way they used the money. Several stressed that NGOs rarely send reports on joint projects. Some organizations adapted and they ask for a formal and in advance-planned reporting scheme. Most of the funding of the international organizations participating in the focus-groups comes from other countries, more developed than Romania.
- **Corporate social responsibility** – Some representatives expect companies to care, and to support the mission of the NGOs they support. If sponsors could do more than giving money or products, they are expected to do this. In other words, a holistic approach from the part of sponsors is expected / considered desirable. Sponsors are expected to be compassionate, to participate and to assume a modern culture of sponsorship and corporate volunteering. Even if some participants represented companies, the discussions induced the idea that some companies are not really interested in the impact of CSR activities. In this context, NGOs should be not used for whitewashing but it happens. Participants

consider that many mistake CSR with PR – meaning that companies use the CSR frame to develop PR campaigns.

Primarily, companies should better design their CSR philosophy and approach. Only in such a situation, CSR would provide a stable and understandable framework, and NGOs could better cooperate and register positive outcomes. On the other hand, some NGOs are not able or open to understand the CSR philosophy and strategy of a company. They are not able to be flexible to adapt to the CSR requirements of companies.

- **Project work** - design a project, quality assessment, project evaluation, risk management – Strong debates and critics were related to the control of the Romanian OIs. Projects funded by various bodies are closer monitored and evaluated due to reporting obligations. In some organizations, there are some formal approaches to evaluation. For focus group participants, who were not part of NGOs, control in NGOs (and not only) has an important role in making individuals responsible regarding the outcomes of their work. Again, the need of personal responsibility is marked by the participants.

It can be summarized that the focus groups confirmed the results from the questionnaire and delved deeper into the causes of identified issues and shortcomings.

The combined results and implications will be discussed further in the conclusion of the report.

3. Conclusions, overall trends and implications for training needs

To start off, it is interesting to note all results from the partner countries together.

Level of confidence of skills:

	Average % of not confident at all	Average level of confidence (out of 4)	Average % of very confident
Greece	13%	2.57	15%
Poland	22%	2.45	16%
Bulgaria	13%	2.66	22%
Romania	6%	3.05	38%
Average	13.5%	2.68	22.75%

Need for training:

	Average % of no need for training	Average need for training (out of 4)	Average % of high need for training
Greece	4%	3.29	53%
Poland	7%	3.05	36%
Bulgaria	14%	2.58	17%
Romania	9%	3.04	39%
Average	8.5%	2.99	36.25%

As the tables suggest, even when questionnaires in countries show that NGO workers are very confident in their skills (on average and as a percentage of workers, who point to having the highest levels of confidence in skills), they still deem as necessary additional trainings (again, both on average and as a percentage pointing to the highest need of training).

This research solidifies the idea, though which the consortium was created – that NGO workers in the partner countries need additional training in many areas and the Third sector would benefit greatly from an intervention similar to the one ATSIV envisions.

The training needs analysis overall lead to two important conclusions, related to its contents:

- Results from questionnaires and focus groups matched in the countries to create a holistic picture of the current situation; the addition and inclusion of other stakeholders in the focus

groups (aside from NGO workers) provided an external viewpoint, which is crucial and will later be incorporated in the trainings;

- The results outlined in relative consistently among countries the most important training needs for the NGO workers, as was highlighted in the tables and graphs. In that manner, it can be concluded that NGOs in Eastern Europe (as the countries vary in economic and geographic positioning, however they are all situated in Eastern Europe) lack in similar fields. While this is not ideal for the sector, it means that the ATSIV outputs could be helpful to NGOs from across Eastern (and the whole) Europe, expanding the impact the project can have.

Both the questionnaires and the conducted focus groups, on the other hand, identify the skills, which are most needed and which would benefit most from additional trainings. As they vary from country to country, the collected information will be used as a basis for the following part of Output 1 – the skills matrix, which will be the main source of information for the topics and sub-topics, which need to be developed as training materials for NGOs by ATSIV.

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