

PROJECT

PRO-MOTION. Sensitive career management

Erasmus+ Program, KA3: Social inclusion and common values: the contribution in
the field of education and training

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TITLE OF DOCUMENT: WP3 – PREPARATORY PHASE

**NATIONAL REPORT – FOCUS GROUPS/INTERVIEWS & QUESTIONNAIRE
RESEARCH (EMPLOYEE)**

PARTNER ORGANISATION:

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Poland

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Introductory information – WSEI University WP3

The purpose of this preparatory phase of the project was to actively involve end users on the labor market - employees, with experience in working with highly sensitive persons (HSPs) in a need analysis. This phase was to assure that the results of the project are based on real needs and real life situations and useful for the stakeholders on the labor market.. To gather relevant information about HSP two exploratory studies were conducted:

- a qualitative analysis based on the information elicited through focus groups and interviews. Within this work package, focus groups and interviews with employees were conducted in order to obtain perspective about the characteristics and functioning of a HSP
- quantitative analysis based on questionnaire research with the use of 3 questionnaires, as follows: High Sensitivity Scale – short Version – HSP-10, Maslach Burnout Inventory Human Services Survey – MBI HSS, Satisfaction with Life Scale - SWLS.

1. QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

The main objective of this task from the WP3 was to explore the functioning of highly sensitive people in the workplace, both from the perspective of a highly sensitive employee of various sectors. For that purpose a series of focus groups and individual interviews were performed. In the case of the WSEI we selected professionals from the various economic sectors administration and local government.

After collecting the data an inductive qualitative analysis was performed based on the previous codes identified in the qualitative analysis that took place. Atlas.ti was used to develop the codes. The areas (themes) relating to professional satisfaction were distinguished and formulated.

The areas /themes for category employees are as follows:

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- The beliefs of high sensitivity
- Targeting management style
- Motivating
- Relations
- Physical working conditions
- Implications for employee management

Overall, the results are in line with the main themes and codes identified in the initial analysis and no substantial modification was made to the initial codification proposal. In the report of the qualitative part we outline the main characteristics of the participants and we attach the excel file with the most important codes identified in the analysis.

1.1. Dates of focus groups/interviews

The interviews and the focus groups were conducted from October 2021 to March 2022.

Focus Group 1 (Employees): 02.03.2022

Focus Group 2 (Employees): 29.10.2021

Focus Group 3 (Employees): 28.01.2022

Interview 1 (Employee): 09.02.2022

Interview 2 (Employee): 26.01.2022

Interview 3 (Employee): 26.01.2022

The attachment of excel file includes the information of each participant.

1.2. Place of focus groups/interviews

Considering the COVID-19 situation majority of the focus groups and interviews were performed online through the Google Meet platform and using the WSEI e-learning platform in Lublin; some at the Education Development Center in Warsaw. All of them were recorded in audio and in video to make the verbatim transcripts.

1.3. Number of participants per each of focus groups/interviews:

Focus Group 1

2 (Employees): N=8

Focus Group 3 (Empl (Employees): N=11

Focus Group yees): N=7

Interview 1 (Employee): 1 participant

Interview 2 (Employee): 1 participant

Interview 3 (Employee): 1 participant

1.4. Type of participants

Below is a description of the focus groups and participants of individual interviews in terms of professional profile. The specific characteristics of each group are described with their numbers.

Employee/Focus groups

The participants of the focus groups were employees, i.e. people employed under an employment contract, appointment, election or appointment. The employees were selected based on their highly sensitive characteristics. The awareness of their own high sensitivity was different in each of them. They also differed in the degree to which they experienced high sensitivity as a negative or positive resource.

Focus Group 1 (Employees) was comprised of employees from the categories of technicians and other mid-level personnel, as well as services and sales. There was also an office worker, a specialist and an employee doing simple work.

Focus Group 2 (Employees) was comprised of public administration employees from Warsaw. They are all highly sensitive people. Most of them are employees who are aware of their own high sensitivity. They also differed in the degree to which they experienced high sensitivity as a burden or as a positive resource.

Focus Group 3 (Employees) participants were clergy from three dioceses: Lublin, Radom and Przemyśl. The selection was purposeful to avoid focusing on the experiences of highly sensitive priests in only one diocese. The clergy were selected based on their highly sensitive qualities. The awareness of their own high sensitivity was different in each of them. They also differed in the degree to which they experienced high sensitivity as a burden or as a positive resource.

Employee/Interviews

The participants for individual interviews were employees, i.e. people employed under an employment contract, appointment, election or appointment. The employees were selected based on their highly sensitive characteristics. The awareness of their own high sensitivity was

different in each of them. They also differed in the degree to which they experienced high sensitivity as a negative or positive resource

Interview 1 (Employee): technical sales advisor

Interview 2 (Employee): deputy director of education center development

Interview 3 (Employee): clergy person

1.5. Information about participants (from the recruitment form) - *sociodemographic characteristics of the respondents*

Sociodemographic Characteristics of Employees

Regarding the Employees that took part in the focus groups and in the individual interviews, a total of 23 participants were recruited. The majority were female (n=16) with a mean age of 38,2 years old (Minimum= 22 and Maximum= 60). There were n=13 male participants with a mean age of 35,6 years old (Minimum = 23 and Maximum= 54).

1.6. Categories from the results (based on the categories sent by the leader)

The Excel file with the results of the codification for employees is included as an additional file.

1.7. Transcripts (as an attachment)

All the transcriptions of the focus groups and the individual interviews are included as an attachment. The transcripts are in their original language (Polish).

2 QUANTITATIVE DATA

2.1 Sample and data - characteristics of the research group-

Descriptive statistics of the sample.

Descriptive statistics for the participants who took part in the quantitative phase of the project are given below.

Table 1. Sociodemographic data of the sample

Sociodemographic variables	Total sample N=179 n (%) / Mean (DT)
Age	35.63 (5.02)
Gender	
<i>Male</i>	34 (19)
<i>Female</i>	145 (81)
Level of education	
<i>Post-secondary</i>	10 (5.6)
<i>Secondary vocational</i>	16 (8.9)
<i>Secondary general education</i>	14 (7.8)
<i>Basic vocational</i>	1 (0.6)
<i>Higher education below PhD</i>	131 (73.2)
<i>Higher education including or above PhD</i>	7 (3.9)
Marital status	
<i>Single</i>	47 (26.3)
<i>In a partnership (cohabitation)</i>	47 (26.3)
<i>Married</i>	81 (45,2)
<i>Divorced</i>	3 (1.7)

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Sociodemographic variables	Total sample N=179 n (%) / Mean (DT)
<i>Separation</i>	1 (0.6)
Size of the place of residence	
<i>Village</i>	52 (29.1)
<i>Until 20,000 inhabitants</i>	18 (10.1)
<i>From 20,001 to 100,000 inhabitants</i>	36 (20.1)
<i>100,001 inhabitants or more</i>	73 (40.8)
Formal background	
<i>Psychology</i>	14 (7.8)
<i>Political studies</i>	4 (2.2)
<i>Physiotherapy</i>	4 (2.2)
<i>Nursing</i>	2 (1.1)
<i>Engineering</i>	5 (2.8)
<i>Food and food service technician</i>	4 (2.2)
<i>Cosmetic and hairdressing services technician</i>	6 (3.4)
<i>Medical doctor and paramedic</i>	4 (2.2)
<i>Advertising organization technician</i>	2 (1.1)
<i>Logistics</i>	2 (1.1)
<i>Pedagogy</i>	6 (3.4)
<i>Tailor</i>	2 (1.1)
<i>Economy</i>	30 (16.8)
<i>Philology</i>	6 (3.4)
<i>Administration</i>	16 (8.9)
<i>Student</i>	5 (2.8)
<i>Management</i>	23 (12.8)
<i>Teacher</i>	13 (7.3)
<i>Sociology</i>	4 (2.2)

Sociodemographic variables	Total sample N=179 n (%) / Mean (DT)
<i>Other</i>	22 (12.3)
<i>No data</i>	5 (2.8)
Current professional field	
<i>Service workers and sales staff</i>	23 (12.8)
<i>Operators and assemblers of machinery and equipment</i>	1 (0.6)
<i>Teachers</i>	8 (4.5)
<i>Skilled farmers, forestry workers and fishermen</i>	1 (0.6)
<i>Specialists</i>	68 (38)
<i>Armed forces</i>	3 (1.7)
<i>Technicians and other medium personnel</i>	9 (5)
<i>Office workers</i>	30 (16.8)
<i>Managers</i>	27 (15.1)
<i>Administration</i>	1 (0.6)
<i>Workers in simple jobs</i>	5 (2.8)
<i>Industrial and craft workers</i>	2 (1.1)
<i>No data</i>	1 (0.6)

2.2 Measures

The characteristics of the instruments employed in the quantitative phase of the project are described below.

The **Highly Sensitive Person Scale** – short polish version (HSPS-10; Aron & Aron, 1997; Polish adaptation by Baryła-Matejczuk, Poleszak, & Porzak, 2021). The Polish short version of the HSP scale was created as an adaptation of the Highly Sensitive Person scale–HSPS (Aron

& Aron, 1997). Developed by Elaine N. Aron (1997) the tool consists of 27 questions. The scale has been translated into Polish (with the permission of the author of the scale and with the formal consent of American Psychological Association) using the back-translation procedure. At the first stage, the HSP scale was translated into Polish by two qualified psychologists with experience in psychometrics. The translation was then reviewed and translated back into English. The final version was translated again into Polish and then edited by a team of psychologists fluent in English so that the content of the test items was fully consistent with the Polish cultural context. The study participants answered questions using a 7-point Likert scale (Baryła-Matejczuk et al., 2021). The analysis of the results was based on the validation of the fit of the model developed based on the available data. For the short version of the Highly Sensitive Person scale, the internal consistency of the scales was also checked. In addition, a set of standardized sten scores (sten in short) has been developed to ensure the comparability of individual results. The confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) of the scale structure was performed using a model that allows for the grouping of the answers to the 10 questions of the questionnaire into 3 factors, with a second-order factor being the general result of the short version of the HSP scale (Baryła-Matejczuk et al., 2021) In order to assess the internal consistency of the factors, the Cronbach's α coefficient was used (Cronbach, 1951; Taber, 2018). The thresholds of the sten scores were determined through the use of a linear transformation of the standardized results (Neukrug & Fawcett, 2020). The divergence of the groups for which the score thresholds were required for the conversion into sten scores was established, and they were assessed using the Mann–Whitney U and Kruskal–Wallis H robust tests, independent of the shape of the distribution.

The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI; Maslach, 1996; Polish adaptation purchased from Mindgarden) is an instrument designed to assess Burnout syndrome. It consists of 22 items with a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (daily). It is distributed in 3 subscales: i) Emotional Exhaustion (EA), 9 items: 1,2,3,6,8,13,14,16,20. The maximum score is 54. High

scores correspond to high feelings of being emotionally exhausted by the demands of the job. ii) Depersonalization (DP), 5 items: 5,10,11,15,22. The maximum score is 30. High scores correspond to a high tendency of coldness and detachment attitudes. iii) Personal Accomplishment at work (PR), 8 items: 4,7,9,12,17,18,19,21. The maximum score is 48, The higher score, the greater feelings of self-efficacy and self-fulfillment at work. The syndrome can be observed when the person scores high on the first two subscales and low on the third. The internal consistency of the subscales is $\alpha = 0.82$ for AE, $\alpha = 0.80$ for DP and $\alpha = 0.85$ for RP (Manso-Pinto, 2006).

The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) (Diener et al., 1985) is an instrument designed to assess the global cognitive judgements of individuals' satisfaction with their life. It consists of 5 items with a Likert-type scale with 7 response possibilities in which participants indicate the degree of agreement with each statement (from 1=Strongly disagree to 7=Strongly agree). The internal consistency of the scale was $\alpha = 0.87$ (Diener et al., 1985). A score of between 5 and 35 is obtained. Scores are assigned in six categories: 31-35, very satisfied; 26-30, satisfied; 21-25, somewhat satisfied; 20, neutral; 15-19, somewhat dissatisfied; 10-14, dissatisfied; and 5-9, very dissatisfied (Pavot & Diener, 1993).

2.3 Process of research carried out

Prior to complete the research survey electronically via Google platform, participants were provided with the informed consent, and they were asked to accomplish the online questionnaire, which took 7 minutes roughly. Participation was voluntary anonymous, and no compensation of any kind was received for it. Participants could drop out of the study at any time. Appropriate measures were taken to safeguard the information in compliance with Organic Law 3/2018 on data protection and guarantee of digital rights. Here is the link used for the questionnaire:

<https://forms.gle/eh3AgrTfMSrE1Bkz8>

2.4 Data - as an attachment in Excel databases

The data of the quantitative phase of the Project has been attached.

2.5 Descriptive Statistics of the questionnaires

In the Table 2, the mean and standard deviation of the total score and the score obtained in each dimension of the Highly Sensitive Person Scale (HSPS) questionnaire have been included.

Table 2. Means and standard deviations of the HSPS total score and its dimensions.

Total score/dimensions	M (SD)
Aesthetic sensitivity	5 (1.41)
Low sensory threshold	4.54 (1.84)
Ease of excitation	4.25 (1.57)
HSPS total score	4.53 (1.31)

Table 3 includes means and standard deviations of the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) dimensions.

Table 3. Means and standard deviations of the MBI dimensions.

Dimensions	M (SD)
Emotional exhaustion	14.12 (7.7)
Despersonalization	12.36 (7.14)

Personal accomplishment at work 24.81 (7.28)

In the Table 4, means and standard deviations of the total score in the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS)

Table 4. Means and standard deviations of the SWLS total scores.

Items	M (SD)
SWLS	22.68 (6.66)

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