



CORRECTIONS CAREERS



EUROPEAN CAREER COUNSELLING GUIDELINES **FOR STAFF WORKING** IN CRIMINAL CORRECTIONAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

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European Career Counselling Guidelines for Staff Working in Criminal Correctional Justice Systems – CCJ4C

Introduction

Education: In Portugal, when applying for the prison officer's competition, candidates must have high school education completed (at least), have Portuguese nationality, have 21 years old and have no criminal record. Candidates undertake several tests and evaluations to enter the Prison Officers Initial Training Course, namely: physical and theoretical knowledge tests, medical examinations and Psychological assessments (Decree-Law no. 3/2014, article 36^o)¹.

Training: In Portugal, the initial training provided to prison officers has a nine-months duration: six months training comprising theoretical and practical contents on penal and prison legislation, human rights, English, communication, interaction with inmates, ICT, security, video surveillance and telecommunications, personal defence, health, communicable diseases and first aid, psychopathology, criminology, criminal profiling, among others; and three months training comprising the real work context component, allowing trainees to contact with the requirements and demands of the job and the application of knowledge to specific situations for solving problems, within the scope of professional activity (Ordinance n^o. 159/2017)².

Prison officer status: There are two careers within the scope of Prison Officers legislation, one incorporates management functions/roles, and the other a more operational dimension. With public security functions, prison officers are arranged in a hierarchical order. This division and the definition of the functional contents of the different categories are essential for the Prison Officer to be able to respond more adequately and effectively to the requirements of the current prison system. The prison officers with public security functions are grouped in a descending hierarchy order. (Decree-law no. 3/2014)³.

¹ Decree-Law no. 3/2014. Accesible here: <https://dre.pt/web/guest/pesquisa/-/search/606115/details/maximized>

² Ordinance n^o159/2017. Accesible here: <https://data.dre.pt/eli/port/159/2017/05/15/p/dre/pt/html>

³ Decree-law n^o3/2014. Accesible here: <https://data.dre.pt/eli/dec-lei/3/2014/01/09/p/dre/pt/html>

Overview of career guidance policy developments: The Portuguese Legislation foresees that one unit is responsible for training and professional development within the Portuguese Prison and Probation Services: The Directorate of Human Resources. This Directorate encompasses three divisions: 1) Human Resources Management Division; 2) Personnel Administration and Remuneration Processing Division; 3) Training Division. The Human Resources Management Division, among other duties, is responsible for promoting, monitorisation and implementing performance evaluation systems and preparing internal training contents. On the other hand, the Training Division is responsible: for the identification of the training needs and professional improvement; to propose and implement human resources development policies concerning initial and continuing training, namely those resulting from activity plans or change processes; to define and assess the of training methodologies and professional development actions on staff's productivity and services provided, also promoting the use of alternative training methods (e.g., e-learning); to disseminate training actions and to ensure the procedures related to registration, attendance control and certification; to prepare the annual training activity report, among others (Order no. 8140-B/2019⁴). This training plan is developed biannually and distributes training in nine main areas⁵:

- **Area 1: Execution of Sentences and custodial measures** – within this first area, training is more focused on penitentiary legislation and inmate's processes management (aiming a better systematisation of procedures within this area);
- **Area 2: Execution of Sentences and Alternative Measures and Electronic Monitoring** – within this second area, training aims to enhance the case management model followed by The Portuguese Prison and Probation Services, based on the RNR principles, LS/CMI and Motivational Interview. Concerning electronic monitoring teams, training focuses on communication skills, and relationship management with the offender to prevent conflict and the escalation of violence;
- **Area 3: Execution of punitive-educational measures**, where training focuses on three essential aspects: the need to update both on the regulations of the Educational Centres; the used assessment tools and the promotion of the general improvement and consistency of technical intervention;

⁴ Order no. 8140-B/2019. Accessible here: <https://dre.pt/home/-/dre/124716436/details/maximized>

⁵ Retrieved from The Portuguese Prison and Probation Services 2018-2019 Training Plan. Accessible here: <https://dre.pt/application/conteudo/124716436>

- **Area 4: Security and prison behaviour** – where training focuses on tackling the prison officer's training needs;
- **Area 5: Prison Treatment, Rehabilitation, Health and Programmes** – where training focuses on the qualification of deputies and senior technical staff on penitentiary treatment, the application of risk assessment tools and methodologies in prison settings;
- **Area 6: Criminology and Law** – where training focuses on the promotion of a training offer with an academic profile, with two main objectives: 1) to tackle the needs of developing and updating knowledge in the legal and criminological fields; 2) to disseminate and to promote the exchange of knowledge and experiences resulting from their academic or research path;
- **Area 7: Administration and Management of Human and Financial Resources** – where training focuses on public administration, staff management, public employment, and HR/personnel development;
- **Area 8: ITC and Communication Systems** – where training focuses on tackling the needs regarding the user's automation of information;
- **Area 9: Initial Training and Admission** – where training focuses on two brief courses to new Probation Officers and an Initial training course for prison officers.

Furthermore, a mandatory performance evaluation (i.e. self-assessment and hetero-assessment) occurs for the following categories: 1) public services, 2) public administration directors and 3) public administration workers, by using the Integrated Management and Performance Evaluation System in Public Administration (SIADAP)⁶. This evaluation system encompasses three subsystems that are directly related to the abovementioned categories. Thus, every year, SIADAP 1 is applied to evaluate the performance of the public services. SIADAP 2 aims to assess the performance of the public administration directors and is applied every three or five years (five years for senior managers and three years for middle managers) according to the service commission's duration. Lastly, SIADAP 3, which is the one most relevant for our research object, is applied to public administration workers every two years (concerning the performance of the two preceding years) and encompasses the following elements: 1)

⁶ Law nº66-B/2007. Accessible here: <https://dre.pt/web/guest/legislacao-consolidada/-/lc/34446375/view?w=2012-12-31>

academic and professional qualifications; 2) Professional experience; 3) Curricular valorisation; 4) Performance of managerial positions/coordination or other positions or functions or recognised public interest or relevant social interest (Law nº 66-B/2007)⁷. According to the article 52º of the Law nº 66-B/2007 this performance assessment aims the following: 1) to identify the worker's personal and professional skills that need development, 2) to perform a training needs diagnosis, 3) to identify the professional competencies, skills and behaviours that need improvement; 4) to improve the workplace and associated processes; 5) to revise the worker's adjustments regarding career progression and salary positioning, and to assign performance bonuses, under the terms of the applicable legislation. Thus, and based on the article 54º of aforementioned Law, this performance evaluation system should allow the identification of the worker's potential for evolution and development, as well as the diagnosis of the respective training needs, that should be considered in each service's annual training plan.

According to the Law nº 66-B/2007, the SIADAP (and its subsystems) articulates with the Ministry's planning system, being an evaluation tool for each Directorate multi-annual strategic objectives, annual objectives, activity plans and training plan. Despite the annual development of objectives and plans for each Directorate, and as mentioned before, the correspondent assessment, in terms of periodicity, varies from, SIADAP 1, SIADAP 2 and SIADAP 3. However, this preconised assessment is not focused on the correspondent current year, but in the preceding years.

⁷ Law nº66-B/2007. Accessible here: <https://dre.pt/web/guest/legislacao-consolidada/-/lc/34446375/view?w=2012-12-31>

Report from Portuguese Survey

Methodology

To prepare to gather the survey information, the IPS team translated and revised the survey and sent the survey form to invite potential participants to collaborate with the data collection.

The interested respondents from prison system fill out the questionnaire prepared by the project partner on the [link](#).

The project team analysed the preliminary questionnaire results, and this report was prepared to deliver the initial data to all partners.

Participants

The participants were a total of 118. 90,68% of the participants were prison officers ($n=107$), and 9,32% were probation officers ($n=10$). They worked on that job between 0 years to 15 years or more, as shown in figure 1.

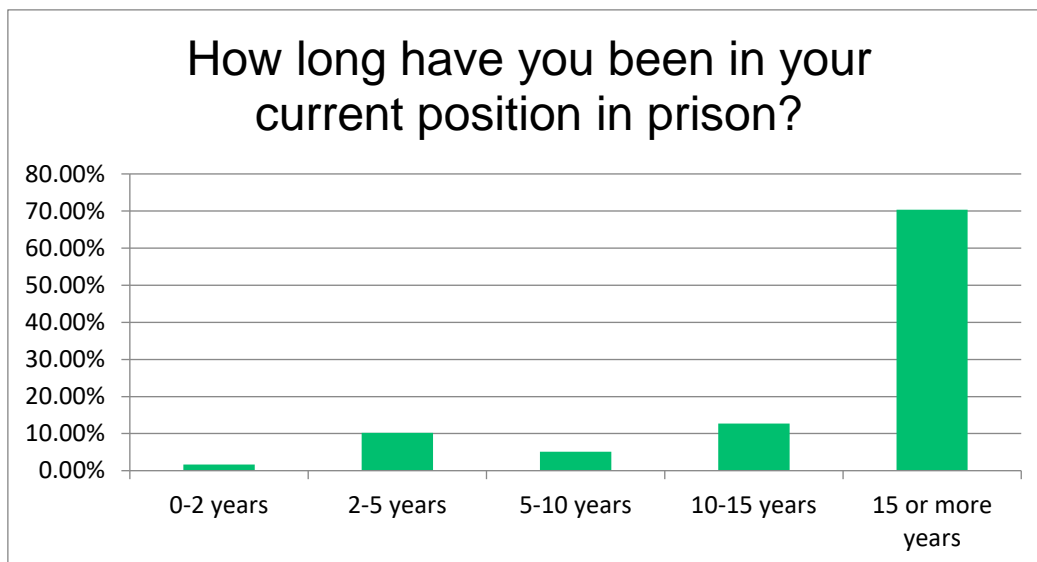


Figure 1. Years of work on the current position

Results

For most participants, 64,41% ($n=76$), this is the only career they had with 71 participants (60,17%) mentioning not being satisfied with the work. Also, and in line with the expressed, 96,

52% of the participants ($n=111$), considers that their salary is not fair (pondering the type, the time and intensity of work that needs to be done). We can see that in the barometer in figure 2.

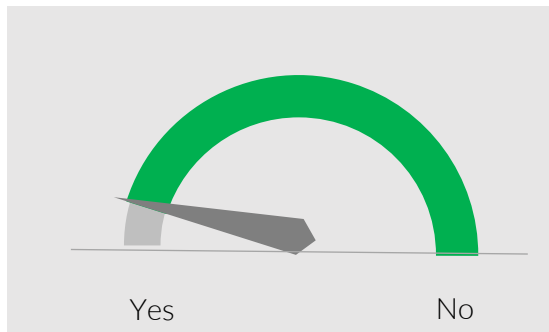


Figure 2. Is your salary consistent with your duties? ($n=111$)

The participants present high demotivation levels when performing their roles and jobs, as shown in figure 3.

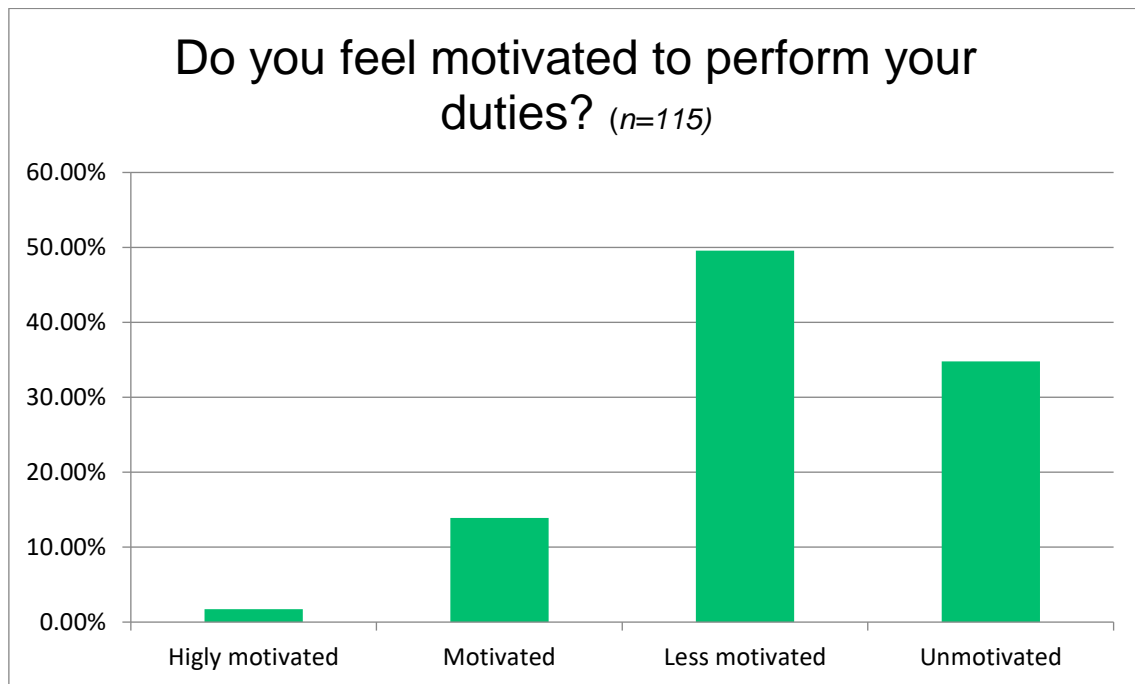


Figure 3. Motivation to perform duties

In accumulation with high levels of demotivation and wage satisfaction, the participants mentioned three main reasons prison officers quit their jobs; they are: lack of professional development; low income; and lack of training, followed by work in shifts, and insufficient vacations

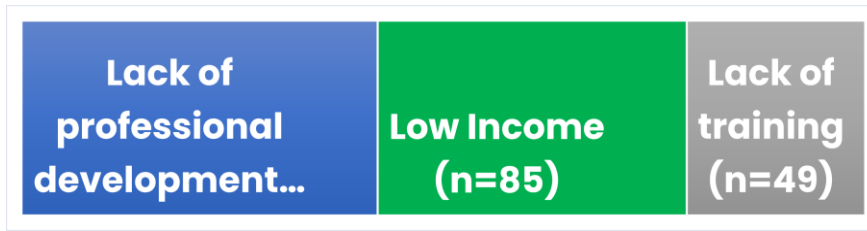


Figure 4. Main reasons prison officer quit (n=105)

When asked about their job's risk, the prison officers mentioned various risks. We decided to group them in terms of context and significance (figure 5): physical health/burnout; security risks, Attacks/Aggression; Lack of Staff; Bad leadership.

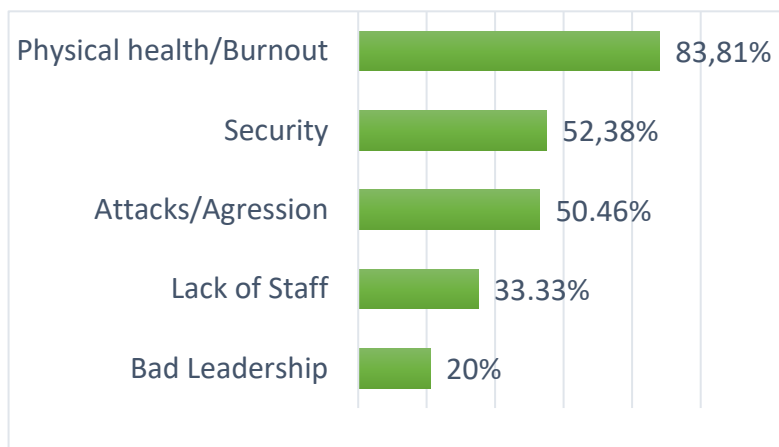


Figure 5. The most frequently mentioned main risks are (n=105)

Alongside this data, most participants think that their work does not provide enough training and education to perform the tasks and job (figure 6).

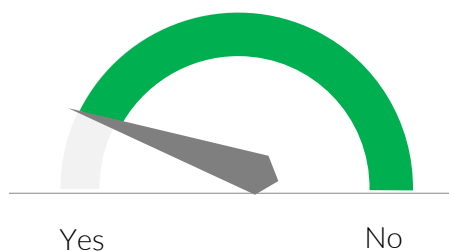


Figure 6. My organisation provides me with a good education and professional competences to perform my job (n=105).

And for this reason, career training is almost nonexistent, with annual reviews that don't translate into practical activities. There is no mentorship in the professional environment to help

the professional deal and cope with the difficulties encountered when performing the job. We can see this information on a visual level in figure 7, with a barometer of achievement and the number of participants who refer to the existence of those conditions.

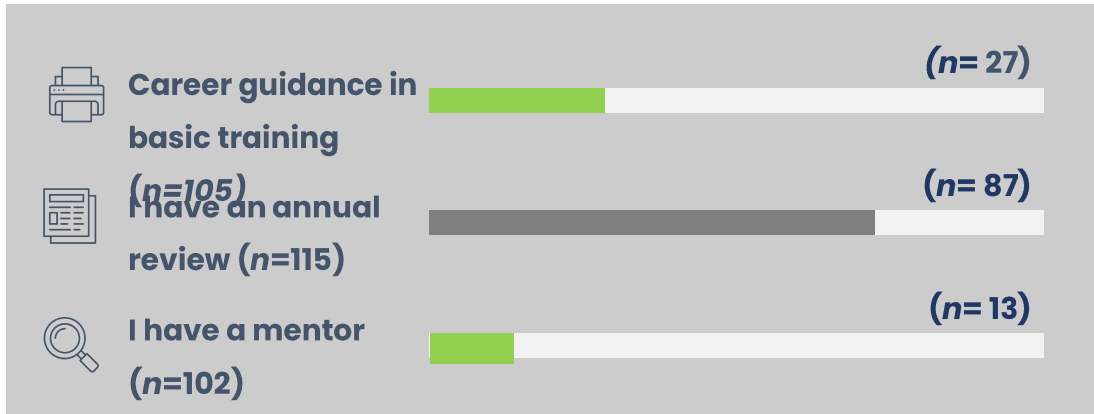


Figure 7. Visual barometer

Nonetheless, all the constraints, the participants consider their job a public role (with a mission to ensure society's safety) and a profession (like any other). Still, they do not consider their job a career, where they can progress and be stable professionally (figure 8).

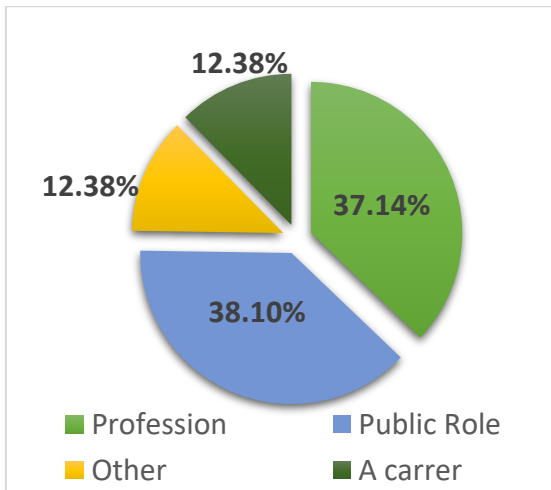


Figure 8. When I go to work, I consider it to be (n=105)

Conclusion

This survey's objective was to gather information about the future of CCJ careers and why/how guidance is needed and necessary to be set in place.

We were able to gather information on policy and strategy's critical issues are being considered for career guidance in CCJ careers (what a favourable and an unfavourable outcome is). The future workshops designed to be delivered this month (February) will shed light on the key operational, structural and cultural challenges that need to be made to deliver the expected outcome.

From this survey, we were able to identify the significant difficulties in assessing training and education to perform the tasks and job, and the problem in a proactive leadership between professionals, to better fulfil the job ahead of them.

We were also able to identify the need to manage a career in the learning prison context, mental awareness (when the participants mentioned stress, security issues and burnout), and difficulty communicating and dialogue in the multicultural context.

We were able to identify the inexistence of a tool for self-assessment of competencies, leading to a personal development planning tool.

Next steps

For this purpose, the public structure hearings (in the form of 2-hour workshops) will be highly relevant.

Suppose we want to compare how certain types of people talk about CCJ careers. In that case, we must separate them into different groups (guards and technical staff, probation officers, and research specialists in this field). That way, we can analyse across the correctional officers' group, the probation officer that work directly with the prisons and /or community and the research specialists, and then compare and contrast the findings. If we mix them in the same group, it would be more difficult to analyse based on experience on the subject.

We are dividing the groups based on characteristics to create a more comfortable environment for participants to share. Reinforce the 'information harvesting' results in WP2 to give us even more robust data to base the rest of our project. It will underline the input's importance to enhance the outcomes, especially the quality of careers for prison staff and their support. The questions to be discussed in the online meeting have been prepared with the questionnaires' results and the country reports (national policy context) in mind.

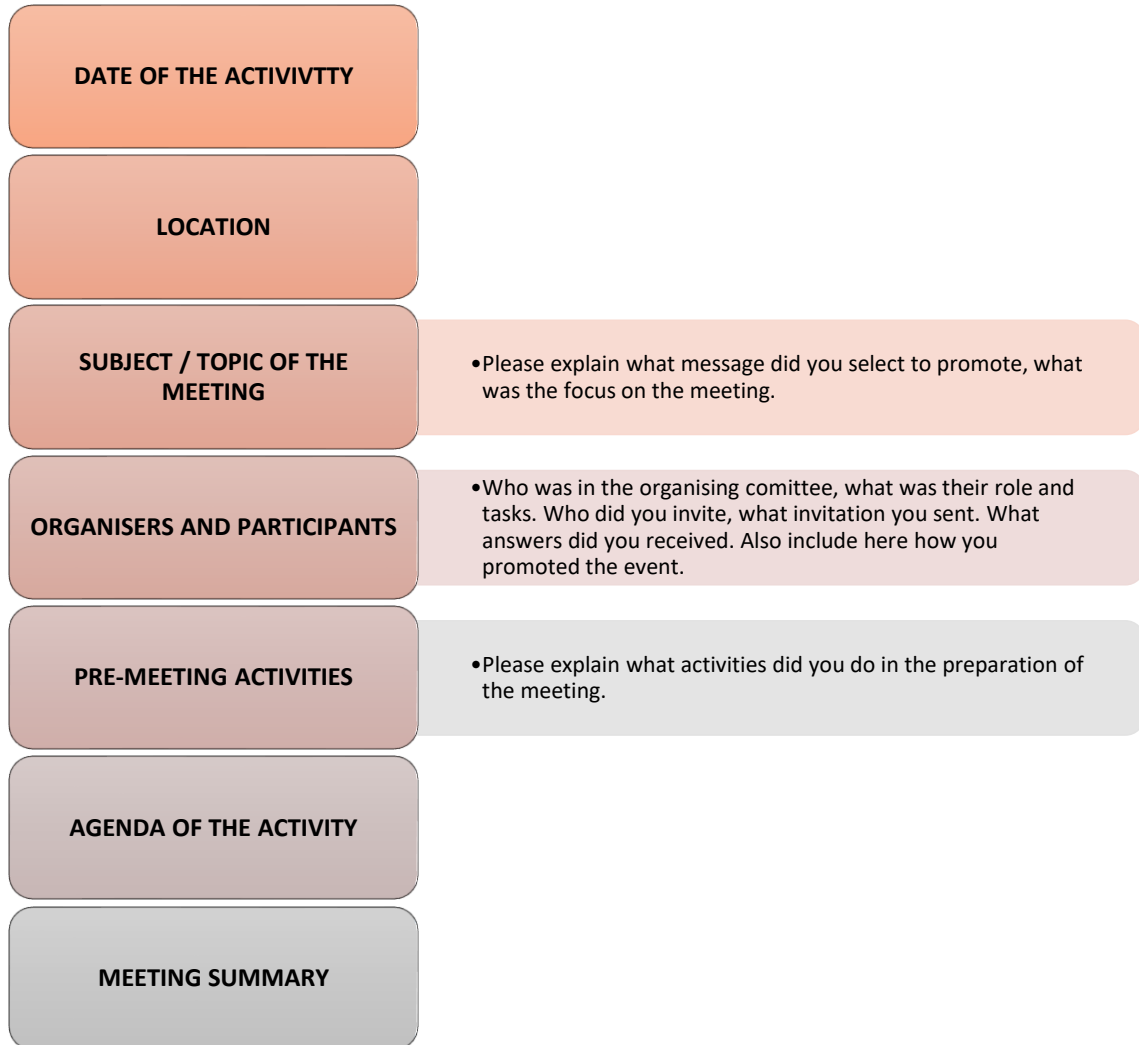
For this purpose, we are in the phase of conducting a Structured Public Hearing, to look for the range of opinions, perceptions, ideas, or feelings that people have about career guidance in CCJ careers. We understand that may differ in groups' perspectives (in this case, different correctional criminal justice professionals – guards and technical staff, probation officers and research specialists in this field). People in decision-making positions may see a situation or issue differently than those who are not, and top management often sees issues differently than frontline providers.

Develop a profile of competencies (complex cartography of skills, behaviours, and attitudes) needed to support career management, interactive tool to help users navigate the profile, self-assess, obtain development solutions and support personalised learning pathways to strengthen the competencies.

There will be held **three groups according to the participants' previous distributions**. Each group will last, at a **maximum of 2 hours**. This time definition concerns the participants' involvement, who can participate in a short workshop and provide input to the project, at the expense of more extended participation in which they could not attend. Also, the pandemic context that we live in does not allow a presential workshop, so the meeting will be held virtually through one platform (to be decided according to the participants' availability).

Products or deliverables expect and structure

The public hearing report will be prepared following the structure presented below:



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