e-SELLER

NATIONAL e-RETAIL REPORT
Greece

KAINOTOMIA
κέντρο **διά βίου μάθησης**

STHEV
Association of Thessalian
Enterprises and Industries

Introduction

The e-SELLER project aims to foster the retail sector's digital transformation, focusing on the EU's rural areas, where the retail workforce lacks the needed digital skills and competences to meet the emerging e-retail demands. The project objectives are:

- to equip VET providers/trainers with an effective and attractive education and training program in line with the rural retail workforce's individual needs and expectations, through the use of digital and inclusive educational content
- to prepare and aware the Chambers/Associations staff in order to adjust their policies and approaches with the aim to better support competitiveness and employment at their local and regional level
- to link the rural labor market demands with the VET sector, through synergies and cooperation with partners from other countries
- to increase the knowledge capacity of the participating partner organizations
- to disseminate the project results and activities at local/regional, national, and EU level

The purpose of this report is to identify and confirm the existing digital skills and gaps needed from the workforce to make use of the digital technologies. This will also lay the ground for the development of effective, qualitative, and attractive education and training results.

For this national report were conducted 10 interviews with VET providers/trainers and Chambers/Associations staff and a survey with 84 with retail workforce representatives.

The interviews took place between 21.12.2022 and 03.02.2023. The interviews were conducted online, mostly one - to - one with the trainers and staff, using the ZOOM platform, as it was difficult to arrange a common time for all the participants due to their different working hours.

According to the interviews, most of the participants were men, six (6) out of ten (10), while four (4) were women. In the age range 25 to 45 years old were eight (8) participants, while one (1) was included in the age range of 46 to 60 and one (1) in the age over 60. Seven (7) out of ten (10) were VET trainers, one (1) was Chamber/Association staff and one (1) other.

According to the survey, most of the participants were women, (54.76%), while (45.24%) were men. In the age range 25 to 45 years old were (51.19%) participants, while (35.71%) were included in the age range of 46 to 60 and (11.9%) in the age below 25 years and (1) over 60 years old.

(63.1%) of the participants live in cities over 100.000 residents and (22.62%) live in cities between 50-100 thousand residents.

Half of the participants were Small and medium-sized entrepreneurs and the almost the other half were employees.

(38.1%) of the participants stated their position as store managers and (17.86%) as customer representatives, while both cashiers and advertising & marketing directors were (7.14%) and social media managers were (3.57%).

Chapter 1: e-retail technologies and practices

According to the trainers and staff:

1. Most of the participants were aware of training contents that deal with e-retail. Answers included:

- *"training programmes for the creation and promotion of online shops"*
- *"e-commerce from Eltrun"*
- *"social media marketing"*
- *"e-commerce"*

2. Regarding the digital tools considered important to survive in the future retail sector included:

- *Live commerce*
- *Digital Marketing*
- *Virtual Reality (VR) and 3D product models*

3. Regarding the processes they would like to see in e-retail included:

- *better customer services and updated websites with no shortcomings.*
- *more offers to "capture" customer interest.*
- *products to arrive safely*
- *to enable small, local businesses to take a competitive position in the marketplace through e-commerce.*
- *provide incentives to build more e-shops*
- *enriched content and search techniques on all sites*

4. *Most of the participants in the question "how they imagine e-Retail to be" answered:*

- *digital online stores that simulate the physical store. Customers to be able to enter a virtual reality environment and be able to chat with the merchant as if they were in the store.*
- *virtual reality stores to be able to try out or view the products*
- *no long waits in shipping and no duty fees*
- *artificial intelligence to be used*

- *combining AI with AR*
- *an integrated user experience that gets as close to information as if we were seeing the product in person*
- *metaverse e-shops*
- *tailor-made e-shops*

5. Regarding the question how they think the retail sector will look like in 5 years, most of the participants stated that the sales coming from online channels and e-retail will increase, with more companies promoting their products over the internet and social media, improved e-commerce capabilities and less companies offering only in person retail.

6. Participant's recommendations to the retailers included:

- *accept the reality of e-commerce and proceed (if they have not yet done so) to the creation, e-marketing and engagement with the digital way of selling their products*
- *keep up to date with new technologies*
- *promote products through online channels and e-shops to expand their customers*
- *invest not only in the imports of products but also in their digital promotion*
- *intensify their digital switchover*

According to the survey on each question we gathered the results accordingly:

1. Do you know the meaning of "e-retail"?

Yes: 77 / 84 (91.67%)
No: 7 / 84 (8.33%)
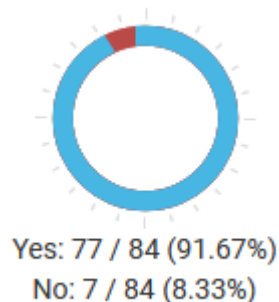
2. Are you using digital tools in your retail business?

Yes: 59 / 84 (70.24%)
No: 25 / 84 (29.76%)

If yes, which digital tools do you already use in your professional life?

- *POS*
- *Facebook*
- *Tik Tok*
- *Instagram*
- *e-shop*
- *LinkedIn*
- *Google ads*
- *Outlook*
- *CRM*
- *e-ticket*
- *Digital marketing*
- *AdSense*
- *Google Analytics*
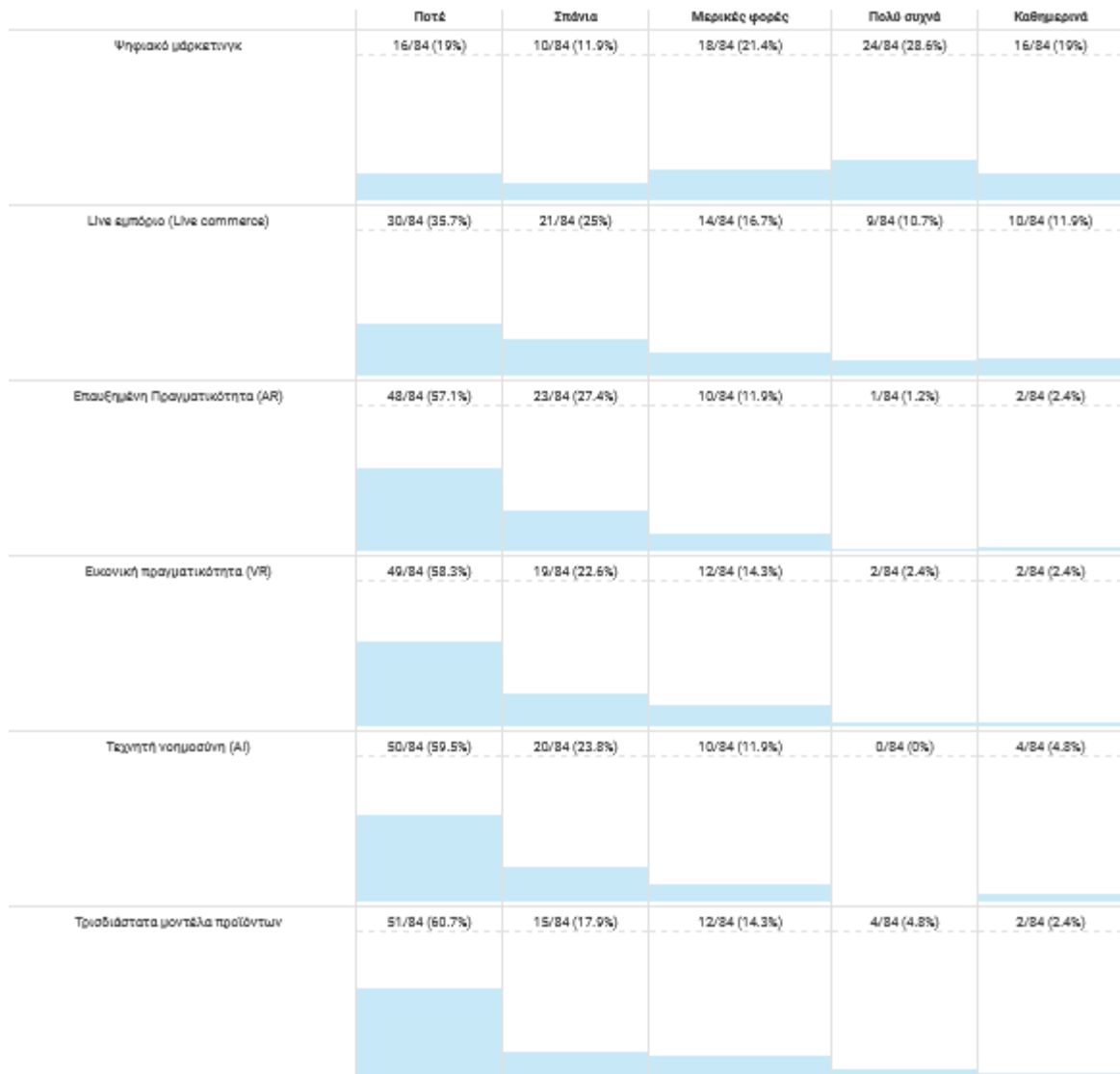- *WordPress*
- *AdWords*
- *Pda*

3. Indicate the level of knowledge for the following digital technologies usage in the retail sector:

	Not at all aware	Slightly aware	Somewhat aware	Moderately aware	Extremely aware
Digital Marketing	5/84 (6%)	16/84 (19%)	26/84 (31%)	27/84 (32.1%)	10/84 (11.9%)
Live commerce	14/84 (16.7%)	21/84 (25%)	28/84 (33.3%)	12/84 (14.3%)	9/84 (10.7%
Augmented Reality (AR)	33/84 (39.3%)	21/84 (25%)	19/84 (22.6%)	7/84 (8.3%)	4/84 (4.8%)
Virtual Reality (VR)	23/84 (27.4%)	22/84 (26.2%)	27/84 (32.1%)	8/84 (9.5%)	4/84 (4.8%)
Artificial Intelligence (AI)	26/84 (31%)	26/84 (31%)	23/84 (27.4%)	4/84 (4.8%)	5/84 (6%)
3D product models	28/84 (33.3%)	25/84 (29.8%)	16/84 (19%)	10/84 (11.9%)	5/84 (6%)

	Καθόλου ενήμερος/η	Λίγο ενήμερος/η	Μέτρια ενήμερος/η	Πολύ ενήμερος/η	Εξαιρετικά ενήμερος/η
Ψηφιακό μάρκετινγκ	5/84 (6%)	16/84 (19%)	26/84 (31%)	27/84 (32.1%)	10/84 (11.9%)
Live εμπόριο (Live commerce)	14/84 (16.7%)	21/84 (25%)	28/84 (33.3%)	12/84 (14.3%)	9/84 (10.7%)
Επαυξημένη Πραγματικότητα (AR)	33/84 (39.3%)	21/84 (25%)	19/84 (22.6%)	7/84 (8.3%)	4/84 (4.8%)
Εικονική πραγματικότητα (VR)	23/84 (27.4%)	22/84 (26.2%)	27/84 (32.1%)	8/84 (9.5%)	4/84 (4.8%)
Τεχνητή νοημοσύνη (AI)	26/84 (31%)	26/84 (31%)	23/84 (27.4%)	4/84 (4.8%)	5/84 (6%)
Τρισδιάστατα μοντέλα προϊόντων	28/84 (33.3%)	25/84 (29.8%)	16/84 (19%)	10/84 (11.9%)	5/84 (6%)

4. How often do you use the following digital technologies in your professional life?

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Very Often	Everyday
Digital Marketing	16/84 (19%)	10/84 (11.9%)	18/84 (21.4%)	24/84 (28.6%)	16/84 (19%)
Live commerce	30/84 (35.7%)	21/84 (25%)	14/84 (16.7%)	9/84 (10.7%)	10/84 (11.9%)
Augmented Reality (AR)	48/84 (57.1%)	23/84 (27.4%)	10/84 (11.9%)	1/84 (1.2%)	2/84 (2.4%)
Virtual Reality (VR)	49/84 (58.3%)	19/84 (22.6%)	12/84 (14.3%)	2/84 (2.4%)	2/84 (2.4%)
Artificial Intelligence (AI)	50/84 (59.5%)	20/84 (23.8%)	10/84 (11.9%)	0/84 (0%)	4/84 (4.8%)
3D product models	51/84 (60.7%)	15/84 (17.9%)	12/84 (14.3%)	4/84 (4.8%)	2/84 (2.4%)

	Ποτέ	Σπάνια	Μερικές φορές	Πολύ συχνά	Καθημερινά
Ψηφιακό μάρκετινγκ	16/84 (19%)	10/84 (11.9%)	18/84 (21.4%)	24/84 (28.6%)	16/84 (19%)
Live εμπόριο (Live commerce)	30/84 (35.7%)	21/84 (25%)	14/84 (16.7%)	9/84 (10.7%)	10/84 (11.9%)
Επαυξημένη Πραγματικότητα (AR)	48/84 (57.1%)	23/84 (27.4%)	10/84 (11.9%)	1/84 (1.2%)	2/84 (2.4%)
Εικονική πραγματικότητα (VR)	49/84 (58.3%)	19/84 (22.6%)	12/84 (14.3%)	2/84 (2.4%)	2/84 (2.4%)
Τεχνητή νοημοσύνη (AI)	50/84 (59.5%)	20/84 (23.8%)	10/84 (11.9%)	0/84 (0%)	4/84 (4.8%)
Τρισδιάστατα μοντέλα προϊόντων	51/84 (60.7%)	15/84 (17.9%)	12/84 (14.3%)	4/84 (4.8%)	2/84 (2.4%)

5. If applicable, provide an example of the use of the abovementioned technologies in the retail settings:

- Google ads
- Digital storefront
- 3D new products
- Google Merchant center
- Facebook
- Instagram
- Snapchat
- Online shopping
- E-shop
- Shopping
- Presentation of new products
- E-sales

6. Please indicate the level of importance of the following technologies to be visible in the retail sector

	Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Important	Very Important
Digital Marketing	1/84 (1.2%)	1/84 (1.2%)	7/84 (8.3%)	33/84 (39.3%)	42/84 (50%)
Live commerce	0/84 (0%)	5/84 (6%)	14/84 (16.7%)	41/84 (48.8%)	24/84 (28.6%)
Augmented Reality (AR)	/84 (3.6%)	10/84 (11.9%)	29/84 (34.5%)	30/84 (35.7%)	12/84 (14.3%)
Virtual Reality (VR)	5/84 (6%)	11/84 (13.1%)	26/84 (31%)	29/84 (34.5%)	13/84 (15.5%)
Artificial Intelligence (AI)	6/84 (7.1%)	7/84 (8.3%)	24/84 (28.6%)	26/84 (31%)	21/84 (25%)
3D product models	3/84 (3.6%)	10/84 (11.9%)	23/84 (27.4%)	30/84 (35.7%)	18/84 (21.4%)

	Ασήμαντη	Λίγο σημαντική	Μέτρια σημαντική	Σημαντική	Πολύ σημαντική
Ψηφιακό μάρκετινγκ	1/84 (1.2%)	1/84 (1.2%)	7/84 (8.3%)	33/84 (39.3%)	42/84 (50%)
Live εμπόριο (Live commerce)	0/84 (0%)	5/84 (6%)	14/84 (16.7%)	41/84 (48.8%)	24/84 (28.6%)
Επαυξημένη Πραγματικότητα (AR)	3/84 (3.6%)	10/84 (11.9%)	29/84 (34.5%)	30/84 (35.7%)	12/84 (14.3%)
Εικονική πραγματικότητα (VR)	5/84 (6%)	11/84 (13.1%)	26/84 (31%)	29/84 (34.5%)	13/84 (15.5%)
Τεχνητή νοημοσύνη (AI)	6/84 (7.1%)	7/84 (8.3%)	24/84 (28.6%)	26/84 (31%)	21/84 (25%)
Τρισδιάστατα μοντέλα προϊόντων	3/84 (3.6%)	10/84 (11.9%)	23/84 (27.4%)	30/84 (35.7%)	18/84 (21.4%)

7. What steps do you think that need to be taken to stimulate or accelerate the digital transformation of the retail sector?

   The answers included:
   - subsidize devices and software that enable stores to upload digital ads in-store or on social.
   - digital Marketing training
   - training in the new Live Commerce and other technologies
   - state subsidy
   - education and training
   - seminars in salespeople
   - new technologies courses in schools - students
   - continuous information

- support tools from the state
- subsidized seminars
- training and free seminars for professionals in the sector
- equal opportunities in funding for digital transformation for all enterprises
- specialization in all fields

Chapter 2: e-retail soft skills

<u>According to the interviewers:</u>

1. The most important soft skills for retail are:

- *acceptance of change and customer swift to online shopping*
- *emotional intelligence*
- *communication skills for better customer service*
- *conflict management – ability to resolve any customer dissatisfaction/complaints*
- *flexibility*
- *organizational skills*

2. In question which soft skills are becoming more important for the digital transformation, answers included:

- *adaptation with the new technologies*
- *time management*
- *flexibility*
- *Communication skills*

3. Almost all the participants stated that digitalization changes soft skills in a high extend.

4. Almost all the participants stated that a company can improve the soft skills of its employees, with:

- *continuous training*
- *seminars*
- *training programmes*
- *changes the culture of the working environment*

5. In question "which soft skills are taught in vocational training and how" trainers answered:

- *communication skills*
- *time management skills*
- *complaint/ conflict management*
- *teamwork*
- *participation in groups*
- *leadership of groups*

6. In question "which soft skills should be taught in vocational training, but are missing so far" included:

- *empathy*
- *active listening*
- *communication skills*

7. Regarding the question "to what extent is it important to continuously improve the soft skills of employees" 8% of participants stated that it is very important and 2% that it is important.

8. Most of the participants stated that ideally they adapt to changes through:

- *encouragement and reward*
- *adaptation to change*
- *continuous training*
- *development of digital skills*
- *continuous updating*

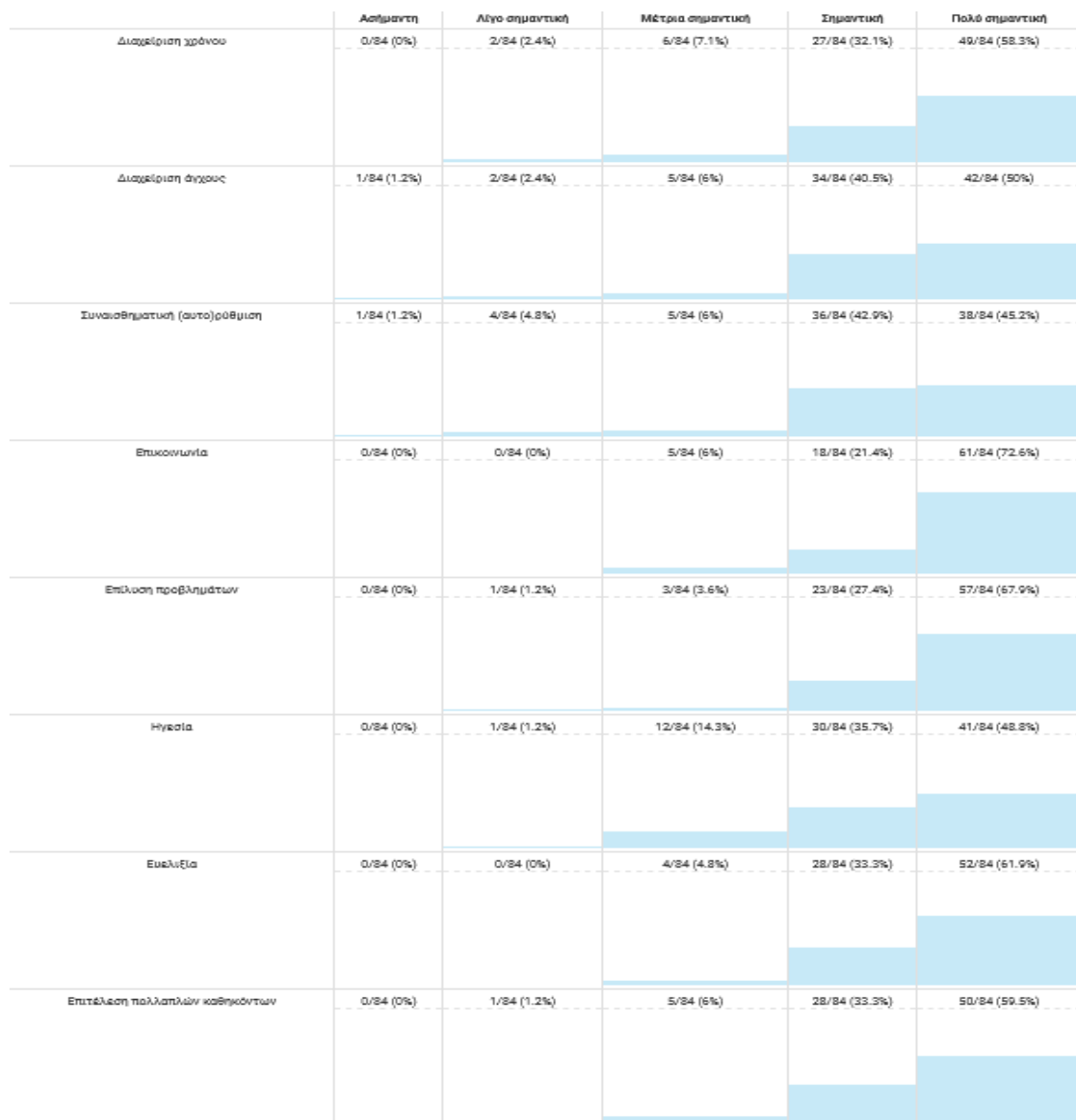<u>According to the survey on each question we gathered the results accordingly:</u>

1. How do you rate your adaptability to changing work situations?

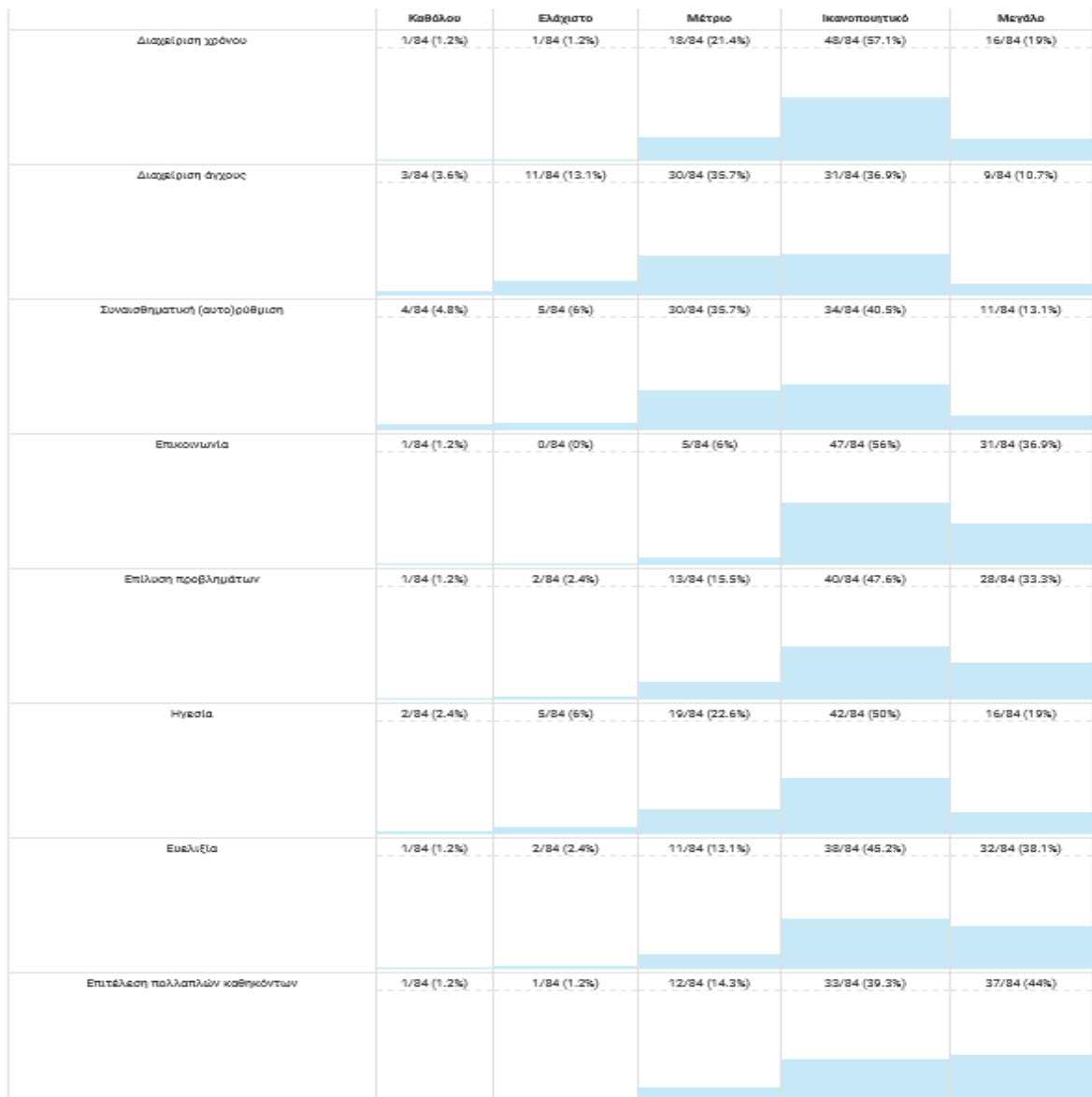| Very low	0 / 84 (0%)
Low	6 / 84 (7.14%)
Moderate	27 / 84 (32.14%)
Good	40 / 84 (47.62%)
Very Good	11 / 84 (13.1%)
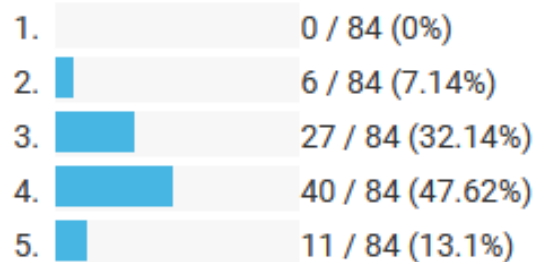
2. Please, indicate the level of importance of the following soft skills in the retail sector:

	Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Important	Very Important
Time Management	0/84 (0%)	2/84 (2.4%)	6/84 (7.1%)	27/84 (32.1%)	49/84 (58.3%)
Stress Management	1/84 (1.2%)	2/84 (2.4%)	5/84 (6%)	34/84 (40.5%)	42/84 (50%)
Emotional (self - regulation	1/84 (1.2%)	4/84 (4.8%)	5/84 (6%)	36/84 (42.9%)	38/84 (45.2%)
Communication	0/84 (0%)	0/84 (0%)	5/84 (6%)	18/84 (21.4%)	61/84 (72.6%)
Problem-solving	0/84 (0%)	1/84 (1.2%)	3/84 (3.6%)	23/84 (27.4%)	57/84 (67.9%)
Leadership	0/84 (0%)	1/84 (1.2%)	12/84 (14.3%)	30/84 (35.7%)	41/84 (48.8%)
Flexibility	0/84 (0%)	0/84 (0%)	4/84 (4.8%)	28/84 (33.3%)	52/84 (61.9%)
Multi-tasking	0/84 (0%)	1/84 (1.2%)	5/84 (6%)	28/84 (33.3%)	50/84 (59.5%)

	Ασήμαντη	Λίγο σημαντική	Μέτρια σημαντική	Σημαντική	Πολύ σημαντική
Διαχείριση χρόνου	0/84 (0%)	2/84 (2.4%)	6/84 (7.1%)	27/84 (32.1%)	49/84 (58.3%)
Διαχείριση άγχους	1/84 (1.2%)	2/84 (2.4%)	5/84 (6%)	34/84 (40.5%)	42/84 (50%)
Συναισθηματική (αυτο)ρύθμιση	1/84 (1.2%)	4/84 (4.8%)	5/84 (6%)	36/84 (42.9%)	38/84 (45.2%)
Επικοινωνία	0/84 (0%)	0/84 (0%)	5/84 (6%)	18/84 (21.4%)	61/84 (72.6%)
Επίλυση προβλημάτων	0/84 (0%)	1/84 (1.2%)	3/84 (3.6%)	23/84 (27.4%)	57/84 (67.9%)
Ηγεσία	0/84 (0%)	1/84 (1.2%)	12/84 (14.3%)	30/84 (35.7%)	41/84 (48.8%)
Ευελιξία	0/84 (0%)	0/84 (0%)	4/84 (4.8%)	28/84 (33.3%)	52/84 (61.9%)
Επιτέλεση πολλαπλών καθηκόντων	0/84 (0%)	1/84 (1.2%)	5/84 (6%)	28/84 (33.3%)	50/84 (59.5%)

3. To what extent do you acquire the following soft skills?

	Not at All	Very Little	Somewhat	Sufficiently	To a Great Extent
Time Management	1/84 (1.2%)	1/84 (1.2%)	18/84 (21.4%)	48/84 (57.1%)	16/84 (19%)
Stress Management	3/84 (3.6%)	11/84 (13.1%)	30/84 (35.7%)	31/84 (36.9%)	9/84 (10.7%)
Emotional (self - regulation	4/84 (4.8%)	5/84 (6%)	30/84 (35.7%)	34/84 (40.5%)	11/84 (13.1%)
Communication	1/84 (1.2%)	0/84 (0%)	5/84 (6%)	47/84 (56%)	31/84 (36.9%)
Problem-solving	1/84 (1.2%)	2/84 (2.4%)	13/84 (15.5%)	40/84 (47.6%)	28/84 (33.3%)
Leadership	2/84 (2.4%)	5/84 (6%)	19/84 (22.6%)	42/84 (50%)	16/84 (19%)
Flexibility	1/84 (1.2%)	2/84 (2.4%)	11/84 (13.1%)	38/84 (45.2%)	32/84 (38.1%)
Multi-tasking	1/84 (1.2%)	1/84 (1.2%)	12/84 (14.3%)	33/84 (39.3%)	37/84 (44%)

	Καθόλου	Ελάχιστο	Μέτριο	Ικανοποιητικό	Μεγάλο
Διαχείριση χρόνου	1/84 (1.2%)	1/84 (1.2%)	18/84 (21.4%)	48/84 (57.1%)	16/84 (19%)
Διαχείριση άγχους	3/84 (3.6%)	11/84 (13.1%)	30/84 (35.7%)	31/84 (36.9%)	9/84 (10.7%)
Συναισθηματική (αυτο)ρύθμιση	4/84 (4.8%)	5/84 (6%)	30/84 (35.7%)	34/84 (40.5%)	11/84 (13.1%)
Επικοινωνία	1/84 (1.2%)	0/84 (0%)	5/84 (6%)	47/84 (56%)	31/84 (36.9%)
Επίλυση προβλημάτων	1/84 (1.2%)	2/84 (2.4%)	13/84 (15.5%)	40/84 (47.6%)	28/84 (33.3%)
Ηγεσία	2/84 (2.4%)	5/84 (6%)	19/84 (22.6%)	42/84 (50%)	16/84 (19%)
Ευελιξία	1/84 (1.2%)	2/84 (2.4%)	11/84 (13.1%)	38/84 (45.2%)	32/84 (38.1%)
Επιτέλεση πολλαπλών καθηκόντων	1/84 (1.2%)	1/84 (1.2%)	12/84 (14.3%)	33/84 (39.3%)	37/84 (44%)

3. If applicable provide an example of how you practice those skills on your professional life.

Answers of the participants included:

- problem solving - understanding of problems of clients
- preparing gift sets to avoid wasting time at the time of sales
- using project management programs
- constant communication with employees
- attempting to function as a role model for employees
- getting most of the work done earlier than necessary
- quick response in information
- flexibility of activity change and adaptability
- more direct communication
- good decision-making
- good conflict management
- good customer service
- multi-tasking / serving several customers at the same time/ involvement in all the above soft skills/
- positivity
- good time management
- simultaneous

4. In your opinion, which soft skills are becoming more important for the digital transformation?

- time management
- communication a
- problem solving
- flexibility
- multi-tasking
- entrepreneurship
- stress management
- leadership

5. In your opinion, how important is the separation of your professional and private life?

| Not Important	0 / 84 (0%)
Slightly Important	1 / 84 (1.19%)
Somewhat Important	6 / 84 (7.14%)
Important	24 / 84 (28.57%)
Very Important	53 / 84 (63.1%)

1.	0 / 84 (0%)
2.	1 / 84 (1.19%)
3.	6 / 84 (7.14%)
4.	24 / 84 (28.57%)
5.	53 / 84 (63.1%)
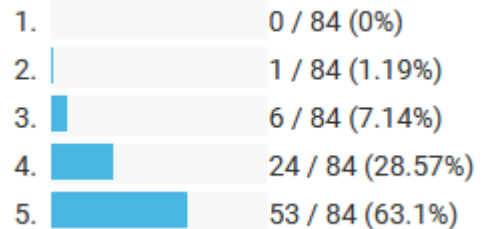
6. To what extent can you separate your professional and private life?

None	1 / 84 (1.19%)
Low	8 / 84 (9.52%)
Moderate	54 / 84 (64.29%)
High	21 / 84 (25%)

1.	1 / 84 (1.19%)
2.	8 / 84 (9.52%)
3.	54 / 84 (64.29%)
4.	21 / 84 (25%)
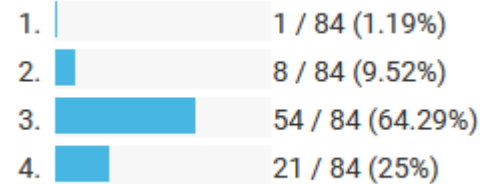
7. Do you believe that digitalisation negatively affects your work-life balance?

Yes: 36 / 84 (42.86%)
No: 48 / 84 (57.14%)
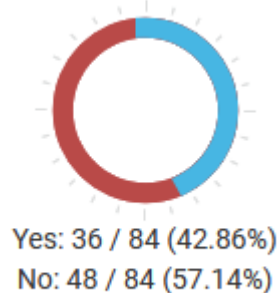
8. If yes, please justify your answer through an example

Some of the participants who answered "yes" in the above question stated:

- in digitalization, working hours are not separated from personal time because it works 24/7.
- isolation
- you transfer work at home / continuous work

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- no working hours - constant access via the internet
- constantly on line to respond to client requests and queries
- people nowadays are not able to separate these two lives giving more time, most of the time, to their professional life
- too often leave unfinished business at the expense of the personal life and personal time
- you carry work on your mobile phone and take it home
- you can do everything from anywhere. It makes work easier, but it takes time away from privacy
- work at home after hours

Chapter 3: e-retail challenges

According to the interviews:

1. In question "What steps are being taken to stimulate or accelerate the digital transformation of the retail sector" the participants stated though:

- *training in digital technologies with state subsidies*
- *transformation of public education*
- *logistics infrastructure*
- *seminars*
- *business support programmes for digital transformation*
- *funding for e-shop creation*
- *training on website needs and promotion strategies*
- *development of digital tools*

2. Almost all interviewers stated that it is easy to reach customers by digital tools in comparison to reaching customers in a traditional way.

3. About the opportunities for digital marketing the participants answered:

- *social media*
- *targeted online advertising and use of e.g. cookies*
- *fishing*
- *opportunities to reach customers of mobile phone users*
- *systematic promotion of products via emails / social media*
- *customisation of the offer*

4. All the participants agreed that their everyday working life will change because of digitalization.

5. And in continue to the previous question they also stated that digitalization has already changed their daily work routine into a great extent.

6. All trainers stated that have encountered digital challenges and among which included:

- *many trainees refuse to follow digital practices*
- *new digital tools very often - is difficult to follow*

- *increased need to teach online*
- *lack of time to keep up with developments*

7. All the participants stated that digital tools can support them (also agreed that already are supported and are part of their work) in their everyday work by:

- *increasing their efficiency*
- *improving their organisation*
- *helping them with online courses*
- *manufacturing objects by electronic means (e.g. 3D printing) rather than manually*
- *the possibilities they provide*

<u>According to the survey on each question we gathered the results accordingly:</u>

1. How well do you rate your handling of work processes

Poor	1 / 84 (1.19%)
Not good	1 / 84 (1.19%)
Moderate	42 / 84 (50%)
Good	35 / 84 (41.67%)
Excellent	5 / 84 (5.95%)

1.	1 / 84 (1.19%)
2.	1 / 84 (1.19%)
3.	42 / 84 (50%)
4.	35 / 84 (41.67%)
5.	5 / 84 (5.95%)
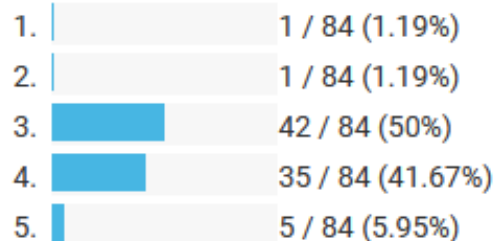
2. Do you often face challenges in your professional life?

Never	0 / 84 (0%)
Rarely	6 / 84 (7.14%)
Occasionally	17 / 84 (20.24%)
Frequently	41 / 84 (48.81%)
Very frequently	20 / 84 (23.81%)

|	
1.	0 / 84 (0%)
2.	6 / 84 (7.14%)
3.	17 / 84 (20.24%)
4.	41 / 84 (48.81%)
5.	20 / 84 (23.81%)
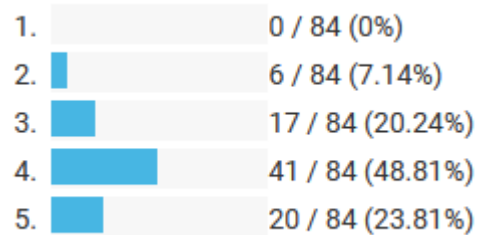
3. To what extend do digital tools pose challenges for you in a professional setting?

Not at All	0 / 84 (0%)
Very Little	7 / 84 (8.33%)
Somewhat	26 / 84 (30.95%)
Frequently	29 / 84 (34.52%)
To a Great Extent	22 / 84 (26.19%)

1.	0 / 84 (0%)
2.	7 / 84 (8.33%)
3.	26 / 84 (30.95%)
4.	29 / 84 (34.52%)
5.	22 / 84 (26.19%)
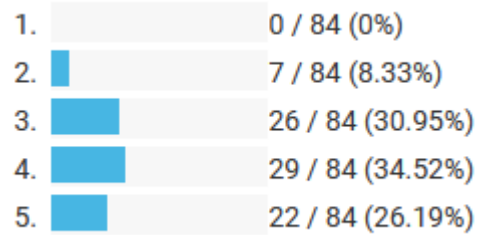
4. To what extend has digitalization changed your work routine?

Not at All	5 / 84 (5.95%)
Very Little	7 / 84 (8.33%)
Somewhat	21 / 84 (25%)
Frequently	23 / 84 (27.38%)
To a Great Extent	28 / 84 (33.33%)

1.	5 / 84 (5.95%)
2.	7 / 84 (8.33%)
3.	21 / 84 (25%)
4.	23 / 84 (27.38%)
5.	28 / 84 (33.33%)
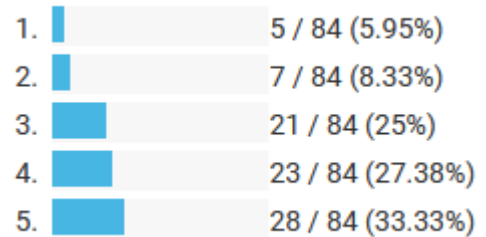
5. If relevant, provide an example of a digital challenge you encounter in your everyday working life.

Some of the participants who answered "to a great extend" in the above question stated:

- everything is done electronically
- the daily update operations from the headquarters
- competition
- constant updating and control
- no more working hours
- large number of applications that come out
- constant evolution of technologies so that you are often out of date with what you use yourself
- digital marketing is more demanding and requires study
- immediate service
- uploading products online

6. Do you think that your everyday working life will further change as a result of digitalization?

Yes: 58 / 84 (69.05%)
No: 26 / 84 (30.95%)
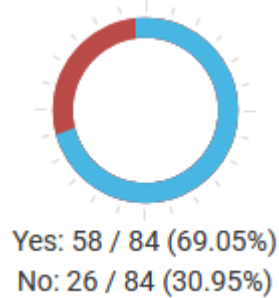
7. If yes, how?

As most of the participants answered "yes" in the above question they also stated:

- I have to make an effort to adapt to new data, different habits and methods
- update to the technological body and increase working hours
- new devices will be added within the system for digital experiences
- new technologies are entering e-commerce that I need to be aware of
- 100% computer-based work
- by automating many processes and saving time and money for several processes such as advertising.
- manage more platforms and warehouse than actual customers
- I need to spend more time
- New and big challenges
- Faster customer service and time management
- Telecommuting, communication
- Less direct contact with the customer

8. How easy is it to reach customers by digital tools in comparison to reaching customers in a traditional way?

Much more difficult	1 / 84 (1.19%)
More difficult	8 / 84 (9.52%)
Same	33 / 84 (39.29%)
Easier	31 / 84 (36.9%)
Much easier	11 / 84 (13.1%)

1. 1 / 84 (1.19%)
2. 8 / 84 (9.52%)
3. 33 / 84 (39.29%)
4. 31 / 84 (36.9%)
5. 11 / 84 (13.1%)
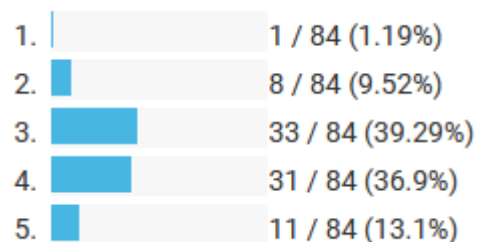
Chapter 4: e-retail work experience and work-based learning opportunities

<u>According to the interviews:</u>

1. The participants stated that new trainees already have digital skills, but in a medium to good level and mostly on communication (e-mail etc.) and social media.

2. In question "which digital competencies they consider important/indispensable for a business to survive in the future retail sector" participants included to their answers:

- *excellent computer skills*
- *internet use*
- *electronic mail*
- *database management*
- *digital marketing*
- *asynchronous learning*

3. Regarding the digital challenges in vocational training and how are they being handled, most of the interviewers answered:

- *denial of familiarity with digitisation*
- *achieving high quality education/ training*
- *tackling the transition of education to the digital era*
- *the transferability of knowledge through electronic systems*
- *provision of e-learning programmes*

4. Most of the participants were not aware in which retail/commercial fields are further digital training courses offered, while a few answers included:
   - *social media marketing*
   - *e-commerce and e-marketing*
   - *agri-food sector*
   - *pharmaceutical sector*
   - *e-commerce sector*
   - *training in the SMEs sector*

5. In question "where do you perceive deficiency in VET related to digitalization in the retail sector and where is there potential for improvement" the interviewers stated:

- *the quality of the material is low*
- *the low level of exploitation of the potential of e-commerce and e-procurement*
- *the low level of investment in digital transformation*

While improvements in the development of digital innovation in retail is suggested.

6. All participants agreed that digitalization has changed in high extend the everyday working life in the retail sector.

7. Almost all participants stated that "social marketing" and "operation of e-shop" is the one the most developing field in the retail sector in the last 5 years.

According to the survey on each question we gathered the results accordingly:
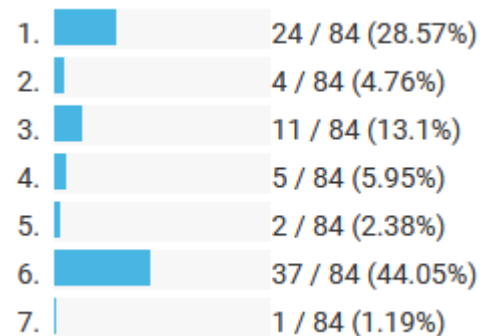
1. How do you rate your digital skills?

Poor	0 / 84 (0%)
Not good	1 / 84 (1.19%)
Moderate	32 / 84 (38.1%)
Good	42 / 84 (50%)
Excellent	9 / 84 (10.71%)

1.	0 / 84 (0%)
2.	1 / 84 (1.19%)
3.	32 / 84 (38.1%)
4.	42 / 84 (50%)
5.	9 / 84 (10.71%)
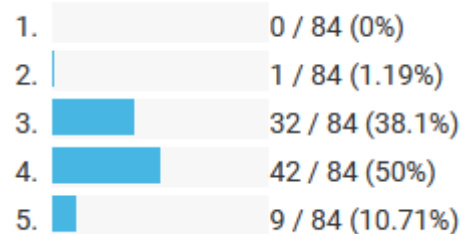
2. How did you acquire your so far gained digital skills?

| Self-learning (internet tutorials, handbooks...)	24 / 84 (28.57%)
Training e-courses/ MOOCS	4 / 84 (4.76%)
Formal education	11 / 84 (13.1%)
Videos and video tutorials	5 / 84 (5.95%)
Case studies and scenario based learning	2 / 84 (2.38%)
Work-based learning	37 / 84 (44.05%)
Other	1 / 84 (1.19%)

1.	24 / 84 (28.57%)
2.	4 / 84 (4.76%)
3.	11 / 84 (13.1%)
4.	5 / 84 (5.95%)
5.	2 / 84 (2.38%)
6.	37 / 84 (44.05%)
7.	1 / 84 (1.19%)

3. How familiar are you with digital content for your training?

Not at all familiar	1 / 84 (1.19%)
Slightly familiar	8 / 84 (9.52%)
Somewhat familiar	25 / 84 (29.76%)
Moderately familiar	41 / 84 (48.81%)
Extremely familiar	9 / 84 (10.71%)

1.	1 / 84 (1.19%)
2.	8 / 84 (9.52%)
3.	25 / 84 (29.76%)
4.	41 / 84 (48.81%)
5.	9 / 84 (10.71%)
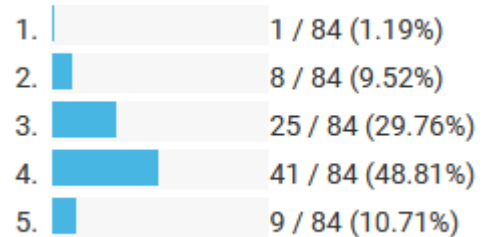
4. How often do you attend digital training courses offered?

Never	17 / 84 (20.24%)
Rarely	21 / 84 (25%)
Occasionally	27 / 84 (32.14%)
Frequently	14 / 84 (16.67%)
Very frequently	5 / 84 (5.95%)

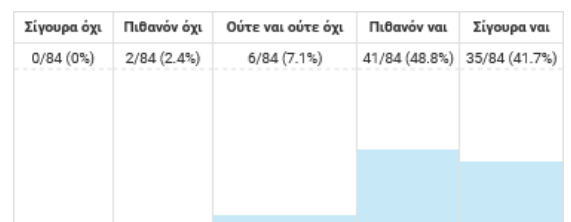|	
1.	17 / 84 (20.24%)
2.	21 / 84 (25%)
3.	27 / 84 (32.14%)
4.	14 / 84 (16.67%)
5.	5 / 84 (5.95%)
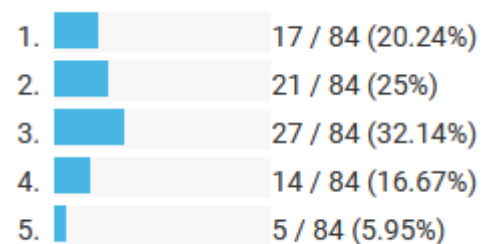
5. If applicable, in which fields?

Some of the participants who answered "is applicable" in the above question stated into the following fields:

- internet use /IT
- social media
- digital marketing
- e-commerce
- sales
- customer communication
- human resources management

6. Would you like to train your digital skills for e-retail in the future?

Definitely Not	0/84 (0%)
Probably Not	2/84 (2.4%)
Possibly	6/84 (7.1%)
Very Probably	41/84 (48.8%)
Definitely Yes	35/84 (41.7%

| Σίγουρα όχι	Πιθανόν όχι	Ούτε ναι ούτε όχι	Πιθανόν ναι	Σίγουρα ναι
0/84 (0%)	2/84 (2.4%)	6/84 (7.1%)	41/84 (48.8%)	35/84 (41.7%)

7. In your opinion, which of the following is the most suitable way for enhancing your e-retail skills?

Self-learning (internet tutorials, handbooks…)	11 / 84 (13.1%)
Training e-courses/ MOOCS	20 / 84 (23.81%)
Formal education	13 / 84 (15.48%)
Videos and video tutorials	16 / 84 (19.05%)
Case studies and scenario based learning	22 / 84 (26.19%)
Other	2 / 84 (2.38%)

1.	11 / 84 (13.1%)
2.	20 / 84 (23.81%)
3.	13 / 84 (15.48%)
4.	16 / 84 (19.05%)
5.	22 / 84 (26.19%)
6.	2 / 84 (2.38%)
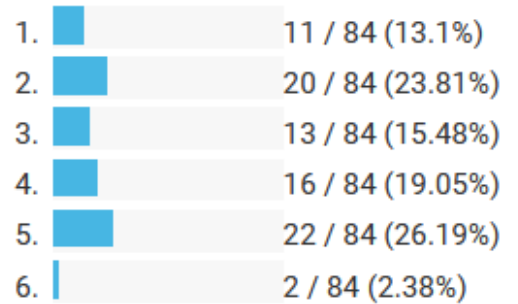
8. Do you perceive VET as an important tool to keep up with the digitalisation of the retail sector?

Yes: 79 / 84 (94.05%)
No: 5 / 84 (5.95%)
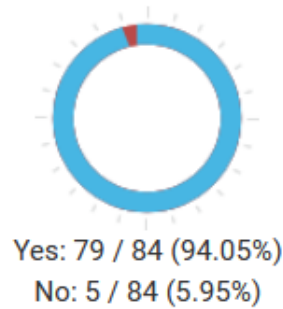
Conclusions

Chapter 1

Trainers and Staff

Concluding "Chapter 1: e-retail technologies and practices" and according to the trainers and staff, most of the participants stated that the sales coming from online channels and e-retail will increase, with more companies promoting their products over the internet and social media, improved e-commerce capabilities and less companies offering only in person retail.

Regarding the digital tools considered important to survive in the future retail sector most important findings were, live commerce, digital marketing, and virtual reality (VR) and 3D product models,

While their preference of the processes they would like to see in e-retail included, better customer services and updated websites, more offers to "capture" customer interest, products to arrive safely, to enable small, local businesses to take a competitive position in the marketplace through e-commerce, to provide incentives to build more e-shops and enriched content and search techniques on all sites.

Regarding the future in the e-retail sector key findings were, digital online stores that simulate the physical store. Customers to be able to enter a virtual reality environment and be able to chat with the merchant as if they were in the store, virtual reality stores to be able to try out or view the products, no long waits in shipping and no duty fees, combining AI with AR, metaverse e-shops and tailor-made e-shops.

Retail workforce representatives

According to the retail workforce representatives, 91.67% was aware of the "e-retail" and 70.21% is using already digital tools, like POS, Facebook, Tik Tok, Instagram, e-shop, LinkedIn, Google ads, CRM, AdSense, WordPress and AdWords.

Regarding the level of knowledge only 11.9% was extremely aware of digital marketing and 1.,7% of "live commerce", while 39.3% was not aware at all of the "augmented reality (AR)" and 31% of "artificial intelligence".

28.6% is using "digital marketing" very often but 35.7% never use "live commerce". They also have never used (AR), (VR) (AI) and 3D product models a in range of 57.1% to 60.7%.

According to their opinion 50% think that "Digital marketing" is very important and 28.6% important of the technologies to be visible in the retail sector, while "artificial intelligence" with 7.1% the less important digital tool.

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Finally, the steps they think needed to be taken to stimulate or accelerate the digital transformation of the retail sector are, digital marketing training, state subsidy of devices and software, education and training, free seminars, and new technologies courses in schools for students.

Chapter 2

Trainers and Staff

Concluding "Chapter 2: e-retail soft skills" and according to the trainers and staff, most of the participants stated that, the most important soft skills for retail are acceptance of change and customer swift to online shopping, emotional intelligence, communication skills for better customer service, conflict management – ability to resolve any customer dissatisfaction/complaints, flexibility and organizational skills. While adaptation with the new technologies, time management, flexibility and communication skills are included in the soft skills which are becoming more important for the digital transformation.

Almost all the participants stated that digitalization changes soft skills in a high extend.

Almost all the participants stated that a company can improve the soft skills of its employees, with continuous training, seminars, and training programmes while empathy, active listening and communication skills are the ones which are missing in vocational training.

Regarding the question "to what extent is it important to continuously improve the soft skills of employees" all of the were very positive that it is very important, and they stated that encouragement and reward, adaptation to change, continuous training and development of digital skills are the key aspects to adaptation to changes.

Retail workforce representatives

According to the retail workforce representatives, 47.62% rate "good" their adaptability to changing work situations with communication (72.6%) and problem solving (67.9) to be the most important soft skills in the retail sector, following by flexibility and multi-tasking with (61.9) and 59.5) respectively.

The soft skills Greek participants acquire sufficiently with 57.1% and 56% are time management and communication respectively and they practice those skills by preparing gift sets to avoid wasting time at the time of sales, using project management programs, with constant communication with employees, getting most of the work done earlier than necessary, with good conflict management and positive attitude.

Time management, communication, problem solving and flexibility are the soft skills which are important for the digital transformation.

According to 63.1% of the participants, it is very important to separate the professional and private life, while 75 out of 84 manage to separate their professional and private life.

Almost half of the participants believe that digitalization negatively affects their work-life balance.

Chapter 3

Trainers and Staff

Concluding "Chapter 3: e-retail challenges" and according to the trainers and staff, most of the participants stated that the steps being taken to stimulate or accelerate the digital transformation of the retail sector are "training in digital technologies with state subsidies", "transformation of public education", "logistics infrastructure", "funding for e-shop creation" and "training on website needs and promotion strategies".

Almost all interviewers stated that it is easy to reach customers by digital tools in comparison to reaching customers in a traditional way and also agreed that their everyday working life will change because of digitalization, while digitalization has already changed their daily work routine into a great extent.

All the participants stated that digital tools can support them (also agreed that already are supported and are part of their work) in their everyday work by increasing their efficiency, improving their organization, helping them with online course and manufacturing objects by electronic means (e.g., 3D printing) rather than manually.

Retail workforce representatives

48.8% and 23.8% of the participants stated that often and very often respectively face challenges in their professional life, with 34.52% to state that frequently digital tools pose challenges to them in a professional setting and 33.33% has digitization changed their work routine to a great extent.

Most of them (69.05%) also think that everyday working life will further change as a result of digitalization by making an effort to adapt to new data, increasing working hours, managing more platforms and warehouse than actual customers and have less direct contact with the customers.

Chapter 4

Trainers and Staff

Concluding "Chapter 4: e-retail work experience and work-based learning opportunities" and according to the trainers and staff, most of the participants stated that new trainees already have digital skills, but in a medium to good level and mostly on communication (e-mail etc.) and social media, while the most important digital competencies they consider for a business to survive in the future retail sector participants included answers like, excellent computer skills, internet use, electronic mail, database management, digital marketing and asynchronous learning.

According to the interviewers the digital challenges in vocational training are the "denial of familiarity with digitization", the "achievement of high-quality education/ training" the transition of education to the digital era", the transferability of knowledge through electronic systems and the provision of e-learning programmes.

Most of the participants were not aware in which retail/commercial fields are further digital training courses offered, while a few answers included social media marketing, e-commerce and e-marketing, agri-food sector, pharmaceutical sector, e-commerce sector, training in the SMEs sector.

All participants agreed that digitalization has changed in high extend the everyday working life in the retail sector.

Almost all participants stated that "social marketing" and "operation of e-shop" is the one the most developing field in the retail sector in the last 5 years.

Retail workforce representatives

According to the retail workforce representatives 50% rate themselves "good" in digital skills, while just (10.71%) with excellent rate.

The gained digital skills were gained mostly (44.05%) through case studies and scenario-based learning while (28.57%) stated through self-learning.

Most of the participants (48.81%) are quite familiar with the digital content for their training and only 32.14% attend digital training courses offered occasionally in fields like internet use/IT, social media, digital marketing, e-commerce, customer communication and human resources management.

48.8% and 41.7% stated that are keen and very keen respectively to enhance their digital skills for e-retail in the future, while in question "which are most suitable ways for enhancing them" 26.19% responded is by case studies and scenario based learning and 23.81% by training e-courses/ MOOCS.

Almost all the participants (94.05%) stated that VET is an important tool to keep up with the digitalisation of the retail sector.