Bridging the skills gap in an evolving water job market

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Highly interconnected challenges
Need for systems thinking
Infrastructure for improving future resilience:
- environments to innovate at the interface of different disciplines
- environments to catalyze cooperation between different actors
- build capacity of new generation of water professionals
The aim of the survey was to understand:

1. youth’s perception on **employability in the water sector**
2. youth’s perception toward the **compatibility of their traditional academic training** with job market needs
3. **skill sets** necessary for emerging water job market demands
4. **key challenges** for employment in the Mediterranean region
Seeking jobs in

- Academia: 33.3%
- Government/Public sector: 20%
- Private sector: 20%
- Consultancy: 13.3%
- NGOs/International Organizations: 13.3%
- Own business/entrepreneur: 20%

- Water resources management: 58.8%
- Water diplomacy/policy: 11.8%
- WASH: 11.8%
- Water service provider: 11.8%
- Not seeking employment at the moment
- Water level, quality monitoring
- Water level, flow and quality monitoring
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am confident that I will <strong>find the job</strong> I am looking for shortly after I graduate</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am confident that I will find this job <strong>in my country of origin</strong></td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am confident that I will find this job <strong>in my country of current residence</strong></td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The <strong>skills</strong> I have acquired during my education equip me to understand the <strong>complexities of water challenges of the future</strong></td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My <strong>education and training</strong> are highly interdisciplinary</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future water jobs will require much more <strong>digital skills and literacy</strong></td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future water jobs will require a workforce with an <strong>interdisciplinary skill set</strong></td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Technical skills:
• spatial analysis
• big data analytics
• systems thinking
• machine learning
• literacy in digital platforms
• technical writing
• ability to publish

Soft skills:
• creativity
• critical thinking
• interpersonal skills
• international experience
• ability to work in groups
• remote working skills
• innovation
• management skills
• leadership
• communication
• languages
Key challenges

• demands for long years of experience for junior positions
• specific language requirements
• financial crises
• lack of political stability
• lack of connections within the water sector
• lack of necessary training
• Continuous learning is essential in a rapidly evolving water job market.

• Skill gaps represent opportunities for new training and apprenticeship programs for youth in the water sector.

• Soft skills are as important as technical skills.