

# Physiotherapy Education & Regulation Survey

Fields marked with \* are mandatory.

## Physiotherapy Survey - Regulation and Education

We are pleased to invite you to participate in a mapping project led by the European Commission's Directorate General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship, and SMEs (DG GROW), Unit D.1. As identified representatives from your national administration, professional associations, competent authorities, or educational institutions offering entry-level education in the field of physiotherapy, your expertise is crucial for this project.

This questionnaire is part of a comprehensive mapping project aimed at identifying commonalities in the regulation, education, and training of physiotherapists across the European Union and European Economic Area countries. The insights gathered will be used in assessing the feasibility of establishing a common training framework, thereby facilitating the cross-border recognition of professional qualifications for physiotherapists.

Please complete the questionnaire **by 27 September**, using the e-survey tool provided. Your responses will greatly contribute to the development of a cohesive and effective approach to physiotherapy regulation and education within the EU and EEA.

Thank you for your time and valuable input.

\* Country

Croatia

\* Which type of organisation do you represent?

Competent authority

\* Name of organisation

Ministry of Health

\* Email

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## 1. Physiotherapy profession - general

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\* 1.1 Title of the profession in (an) official language(s) of your country

1. sveučilišni/sveučilišna prvostupnik/prvostupnica (baccalaureus/baccalaurea) fizioterapije (univ. bacc. physioth.)
2. prvostupnik/prvostupnica (baccalaureus/baccalaurea) fizioterapije (bacc. physioth.)
3. sveučilišni magistar/magistra fizioterapije (univ. mag. physioth.)
4. magistar/magistra fizioterapije (mag. physioth.)

\* 1.2 Title of physiotherapy profession in English

University bachelor of physiotherapy  
Bachelor of physiotherapy  
University master of physiotherapy  
Master of physiotherapy

\* 1.3 Is the profession included under the ESCO (European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations) occupational profile 'Physiotherapy' [ISCO-08 2264](https://esco.ec.europa.eu/en/classification/occupation?uri=http%3A%2F%2Fdata.europa.eu%2Fesco%2Fisco%2FC2264) ?

The link takes a while to open. If the link is not working, please copy the following URL into a web browser: <https://esco.ec.europa.eu/en/classification/occupation?uri=http%3A%2F%2Fdata.europa.eu%2Fesco%2Fisco%2FC2264>

- Yes  
 No

\* 1.4 In case you answered 'yes' to the previous question, are there multiple regulated professions in your country that fall under the ISCO-08 2264 Physiotherapy occupational profile? Please describe them below.

A regulated profession is a profession that requires specific professional qualifications as prescribed by law or regulations. This includes any job where the use of the professional title is restricted to those who have the necessary qualifications.

- Geriatric physical therapist
- Manipulative therapist
- Orthopaedic physical therapist
- Paediatric physical therapist
- Physical therapist
- Physiotherapist

Related occupations:

- Occupational therapist -2269
- Physiotherapy technician -3255
  
- Advanced physiotherapist

## 2. Regulation

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### 2.1. Regulation - general

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\* 2.1.1 Is a specific qualification required in your country to exercise the professional activities of physiotherapists?

- Yes  
 No

\* 2.1.2 Does the law reserve the use of the title of the physiotherapist profession to holders of specific professional qualifications?

- Yes  
 No

Please provide a link to the relevant legal/executive/administrative provisions in English. If an English version is not available, please provide a link to the document in the original language.

1. Healthcare Act (OG 100/18, 125/19, 147/20,119/22, 156/22, 33/23, 36/24)  
[https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2018\\_11\\_100\\_1929.html](https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2018_11_100_1929.html)  
[https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2022\\_10\\_119\\_1838.html](https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2022_10_119_1838.html)  
[https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2023\\_03\\_33\\_582.html](https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2023_03_33_582.html)  
[https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2024\\_03\\_36\\_579.html](https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2024_03_36_579.html)
2. Zakon o fizioterapuetskoj djelatnosti (OG 120/08)  
[https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2008\\_10\\_120\\_3437.html](https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2008_10_120_3437.html)

\* 2.1.3 Please describe below the professional activities which are reserved to holders of specific qualifications for physiotherapists in your country.

By the Law on Physiotherapy (OG 120/08) basic qualification for physiotherapists is study of physiotherapy, level 6 EQF.

Physiotherapists share activities with physiotherapy technicians, health workers educated at vocational school for health professionals, level 4.2. EQF.

Reserved activities for physiotherapy are skills for specific area of practice, education, research and professional management, physiotherapy assessment, setting specific goals for physiotherapy treatment, safe and effective application of physiotherapy interventions.

\* 2.1.4 Are there educational pathways for physiotherapists to specialise or obtain advanced certifications in certain areas of practice? If yes, please describe below.

Yes, physiotherapists may finish additional training in Bobath, Vojta, PNF, DNS, Schroth, Kaltenborn, Maithland.

\* 2.1.5 Which body can regulate the profession of physiotherapist in your Member State (i.e. defines the requirements to access and practice the profession and to use the professional title)? Please explain.

Ministry of Health as part of the Government proposes laws to the Parliament by regulating the profession and bringing bylaws for law enforcement.

The Ministry of Health regulates the requirements and standards for performing activities, the educational level of physiotherapists and mandatory membership in the Chamber for those physiotherapists that provide physical therapy in the health care system.

Chamber may only give professional opinion on laws and bylaws in legislative procedure before a Law is being proposed to the Government and Parliament. In legislative procedure competent ministries participate in regulation of profession by intersectoral cooperation.

\* 2.1.6 Is there an entrance exam to access the profession after graduation?

- Yes  
 No

- \* 2.1.7 Is there a legal obligation for continuous professional development for physiotherapists in your country (e.g. in order to maintain one's license to practice)?
- Yes
  - No

## 2.2. Professional autonomy

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- \* 2.2.1 Do physiotherapists have clinical autonomy stated by the law, regulations or rules governing the scope of practice in your country?

Clinical autonomy is defined as the responsibility of the practitioner to decide the programme of intervention and its modalities based on the diagnosis that he/she makes. (Source: [European Network of Physiotherapy in Higher Education \(ENPHE\), Physiotherapy competencies for autonomous practice. Recommendations for educational frameworks, September 2022](#)).

- Yes
- No

If possible, please provide a link to the relevant legal/executive/administrative provisions in English. If an English version is not available, please provide a link to the document in the original language.

[https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2008\\_10\\_120\\_3437.html](https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2008_10_120_3437.html)

Article 16 of Law on Physiotherapy activities (OG 120/08) prescribes that the physiotherapist is obliged to take the patient into the physiotherapeutic procedure according to the indication for physical therapy made by a medical doctor and create a plan and programme of physical therapy in accordance with the referring doctor's diagnosis.

A Physiotherapist is a healthcare worker who performs physical therapy procedures and who manages physical therapy process.

Implementation of physical therapy procedures according to established programmes, rules and protocols in teamwork,

- the application of scientifically evaluated methods and techniques in terms of effectiveness, permanent and safe use based on evidence from the field of physiotherapy,

- the application of problem-solving methods in the implementation of physical therapy procedures that require the skill of an analytical and critical approach

- \* 2.2.2 Does your country's legislation or health system allow patients to directly access physiotherapy services without a referral from a doctor or other healthcare professionals?

- Yes
- No

- \* 2.2.3 Based on laws, regulations or rules governing the scope of practice of physiotherapist in your country, to which of the following interventions or actions do physiotherapists have access to:

- Referring patients to other healthcare providers
- Ordering diagnostic tests
- Prescribing medication
- Administering drug injections, such as steroids (e.g. cortisone)
- Medical records which are reported to a national health register system

\*2.2.4 Are there specific regulations or restrictions regarding procedures or interventions that physiotherapists can only do under supervision of another healthcare provider (e.g. physician)? Please describe the procedures or interventions below.

Scope of practise of physiotherapists: neurological rehabilitation, orthopaedics and posttraumatic rehabilitation, cardiology, respiratory medicine, rheumatology and child rehabilitation, sports rehabilitation and preparation for athletes, assisting during EMNG, EMG specialist physical examination, ergometry in team with cardiologists, holter monitor test, physiotherapy assessment based on which needed treatments are performed (not all because certain treatments are prescribed by Physical medicine and rehabilitation medical specialist or Orthopedics Surgeon).

2.2.5 Can physiotherapists establish and operate their own independent practices in your country, i.e. do they have professional autonomy?

Professional autonomy means the responsibility of the professional to make decisions regarding the management of a patient/client based on one's own professional knowledge and expertise to manage his/her practice independently and to act according to the rules of ethics and the code of professional conduct within the framework of health legislation. (Source: [European Network of Physiotherapy in Higher Education \(ENPHE\), Physiotherapy competencies for autonomous practice. Recommendations for educational frameworks, September 2022](#)).

- Yes
- No

### 3. Education

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#### 3.1. Regulation of education

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\*3.1.1 Is the minimum entry-level education based on a law, regulation or administrative provisions?

Minimum entry-level education for physiotherapists refers to the minimum educational qualification required to enter the profession and practice legally.

Law, regulation, or administrative provisions collectively refer to legally binding rules and directives established by governmental bodies or authorities.

- Yes
- No

If applicable, please provide a link to the relevant legal/executive/administrative provisions in English. If an English version is not available, please provide a link to the document in the original language.

[https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2008\\_10\\_120\\_3437.html](https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2008_10_120_3437.html)

There is a plan to abolish both the internship and professional exam and to integrate them into education so that healthcare workers acquire a professional qualification upon completion of their education.

According to the Article 168 Paragraph 1 of Healthcare Act health workers obtain professional qualification by finishing study.

\* 3.1.2 What elements of the minimum entry-level education are regulated by a law, regulation or administrative provision?

- Knowledge, skills or competences (outcome)
- Training curriculum or subjects
- Duration of education (either in hours, years, ECTS,...)
- Numbers of theoretical education or practical/clinical education hours
- Traineeship modalities
- Access requirements to education
- Modalities for organisation of education for physiotherapy (e.g. accreditation system for educational institutions)
- Other elements (please specify below)

\* 3.1.3 Which organisation, body or institution acts as a regulator of the education?

- Government (ministry of health, education...)
- Professional association
- Competent authority
- Professional chamber
- Other

\* 3.1.4 Is the educational curriculum (subjects and courses) or are the educational outcomes (knowledge, skills, competences) of the entry-level education defined by law, regulation or administrative provisions?

- Yes
- No

\* 3.1.5 If the training curriculum or the training outcomes are defined by law, regulation or administrative provisions, please provide (a) hyperlink(s) or attach it below. Please also include a short description in English and specify the relevant provisions/sections.

If not, then please describe how the curriculum is defined or established in your Member State.

Higher education institutions independently define study programme and learning outcomes.

Please upload your file(s) in case there is a training curriculum or if there are training outcomes defined by law, regulation or administrative provisions, for which no online link is available.

## 3.2. Minimum entry-level education

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**Minimum entry-level education for physiotherapists refers to the minimum educational qualification required to enter the profession and practice legally.**

\* 3.2.1 Name of qualification (as it appears on diplomas), for minimum entry-level education in the **original language(s)**.

1. sveučilišni/sveučilišna prvostupnik/prvostupnica (baccalaureus/baccalaurea) fizioterapije (univ. bacc. physioth.)



2. prvostupnik/prvostupnica (baccalaureus/baccalaurea) fizioterapije (bacc. physioth.)
3. sveučilišni magistar/magistra fizioterapije (univ. mag. physioth.)
4. magistar/magistra fizioterapije (mag. physioth.)

\* 3.2.1 Name of qualification (as it appears on diplomas), for minimum entry-level education in **English**.

University bachelor of physiotherapy  
Bachelor of physiotherapy  
University master of physiotherapy  
Master of physiotherapy

\* 3.2.2 What are the access requirements to enrol in the entry-level education in your country? (e.g. having completed 12 years of general education)

4-year secondary school, State Matura (defined by law – Act on Higher Education and Scientific Activity (OG 119/2022) - having completed 12 years of general education, primary education lasts 8 years  
4 year vocational school for physiotherapy technicians, Sate Matura - having completed 10 years of general education, primary education lasts 8 years, vocational school: 2 years general education, 2 years professional education

\* 3.2.3 What is the level of qualification required for the minimum entry level education for physiotherapists in your country?

- Bachelor degree
- Bachelor + Master degree
- Master degree
- Vocational level qualification
- Other

\* 3.2.4 At which level of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) is the minimum entry level education for physiotherapists in your country?

The [EQF](#) is an 8-level, learning outcomes-based framework for all types of qualifications that serves as a translation tool between different national qualifications frameworks. This framework helps improve transparency, comparability and portability of people's qualifications and makes it possible to compare qualifications from different countries and institutions.

EQF Level 6

\* 3.2.5 How many ECTS points are required to complete the minimum entry level education programme in your country?

180

3.2.6 What is the minimum number of hours in the minimum entry-level education that should be spent on theoretical education, if applicable. If not applicable, please leave the question open.

3.2.7 What is the minimum number of ECTS in the minimum entry-level education that should be spent on theoretical education, if applicable. If not applicable, please leave the question open.

\*3.2.8 To your knowledge, are there differences from one training institution to another across your country in relation to:

- Access to training
- Total number of hours
- Total number of ECTS points
- Total number of years of study
- Duration of the theoretical education
- Duration of the clinical education
- Training subjects included in the curriculum
- Knowledge, skills and competences
- Places where the clinical training can be followed
- Other

### 3.3 Clinical education

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\*3.3.1 Is clinical education integrated into the minimum entry-level education programme?

Clinical education refers to a formal supervised experiential learning, focused on development and application of patient/client-centered skills and professional behaviors. It is designed so that students gain substantial, relevant clinical experience and skills, engage in contemporary practice, and demonstrate competence before beginning independent practice. (Source: American Council of Academic Physical Therapy).

- Yes
- No

3.3.2 What is the total minimum number of hours of clinical education in your entry level education programme, if applicable? If not applicable, please leave the question open.

3.3.3 How many ECTS of the minimum entry level education programme are spent on clinical education ? If not applicable, please leave the question open.

\* 3.3.4 Where does the clinical education take place? (multiple choice)

- University/educational institution
- Hospital
- Private practitioners
- Simulation labs
- Training on/with students
- Community/primary healthcare centre
- Rehabilitation centre or tertiary care centre
- Sports centres
- Eldercare or nursing homes
- Childcare centres
- Palliative care centre
- Other (please describe below)

\* 3.3.5 Is clinical education in simulation labs counted as clinical education hours?

- Yes
- No

\* You responded 'yes' to the previous question. What maximum percentage of the total clinical education hours are permitted to take place in simulation labs?

%

\* 3.3.6 Which fields are minimally covered by the clinical education?

- Traumatology
- Neurology
- Geriatrics
- Paediatrics
- Sports
- Oncology
- Cardiovascular interventions

- Pulmonary interventions
- (Neuro) musculoskeletal conditions
- Rehabilitation
- Orthopaedics
- Mental health
- Palliative care
- Other

\* 3.3.7 Is there a mandatory traineeship to access the profession after completing the entry-level education?

- Yes
- No

\* You responded 'yes' to the previous question. What is the duration of this traineeship?

1 year. There is a plan to abolish both the internship and professional exam and to integrate them into education so that healthcare workers acquire a professional qualification upon completion of their education.

### 3.4. Entry-level education output: Knowledge, skills and competences

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Please select the knowledge, skills and competences which a professional in question acquires during the minimum entry-level education in your country. In case any elements are missing in this list, please include them under 'other'. In case you have any comments, e.g. to specify or clarify your selection, please also include such comments under 'other'.

\* **Diagnosis and treatment plans**

- Ability to independently evaluate clients'/patients' symptoms and health conditions
- Proficiency in formulating physiotherapy diagnoses and prognoses
- Ability to consider and screen for differential diagnosis
- Ability to independently diagnose functional disorders of the musculoskeletal system
- Capacity to independently design tailored client/patient-centred treatment plans
- Ability to independently design, implement and evaluate physiotherapeutic exercises
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Capacity to design, implement and evaluate therapeutic exercise programmes for different population groups (e.g. children, older people, persons with disabilities, pregnant women)

### \* **Physiotherapy practice**

- Ability to implement various physiotherapy interventions safely and effectively, including exercise therapy, manual therapy and physical modalities
- Knowledge of the biological, physical and clinical sciences and ability to apply them to physiotherapy practice
- Knowledge and understanding of re-education and functional recovery, including methods, procedures and physiotherapeutic actions related to these fields
- Capacity to independently monitor and evaluate physiotherapy intervention outcomes, and making necessary modifications.
- Ability to implement the social and behavioural sciences relevant for physiotherapy practice
- Ability to consider socio-economic, personal and cultural factors in the physiotherapeutic assessment and examination of the client/patient
- Ability to incorporate psychological principles into physiotherapy practice
- Ability to incorporate the ICF (International Classification on Functioning, Disability and Health) model into physiotherapy practice

### \* **Ethics and professionalism**

- Understanding of professional ethics, standards of practice, and legal regulations
- Basic knowledge of healthcare systems, organizational structures, and healthcare policies
- Ability to manage a practice
- Ability to practice as an autonomous professional, exercising own professional judgement
- Ability to maintain client/patient records appropriately and in accordance with ethical and legal requirements
- Adequate digital skills, including in relation to practice management and E-health/telehealth
- Ability to incorporate healthcare technologies to enhance practice

### \* **Communication**

- Effective communication skills with clients/patients
- Effective communication skills with other healthcare providers
- Effective communication skills with clients'/patients' relatives and/or carers

**\* Social science and public health**

- Knowledge of preventive healthcare and health promotion work
- Ability to adapt to changes in healthcare and society
- Knowledge of public health concerns and of prevention activities to improve public health

**\* Professional collaboration and management**

- Ability to collaborate with clients/patients, caregivers, and healthcare team members
- Ability to collaborate with other members of interdisciplinary and multi-professional teams
- Knowledge of one's own role and the role and responsibility of others in an interdisciplinary team
- Knowing the need to refer to another relevant practitioner if the scope falls outside the physiotherapist's knowledge, experience or expertise
- Management skills
- Skills in organisation of healthcare
- Ability to apply theoretical knowledge in practice and employ clinical reasoning
- Ability to make decisions and act based on knowledge of evidence-based practice
- Research ability and capacity to analyse data effectively
- Ability to participate in systematic quality improvement processes
- Ability to plan and participate in professional development processes

**Other**

**3.5. Entry-level education input: Training programme**

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**[REGULATORS WILL BE ASKED TO BASE THEIR REPLIES ON THE LEGISLATION THAT REGULATES THE EDUCATION]**

**[EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS WILL BE ASKED TO BASE THEIR REPLIES ON THE CURRICULA OF THEIR ENTRY-LEVEL EDUCATION]**

Please select the training subjects which are part of the minimum entry-level education programme. In case any of the subjects are missing in this list, please include them under 'other'. In case you have any comments, e.g. to specify or clarify your selection, please also include such comments under 'other'.

**\* Biological and Physical Sciences**

- Anatomy
- Physical sciences (biophysics, biomechanics)
- Physiology
- Histology
- (Applied) Pathology
- Kinesiology and movement sciences
- (Applied) Biology
- Pathokinesiology
- Pharmacology
- General physiotherapy

**\* Social, Behavioural and Technical Sciences**

- Nutrition/food sciences
- Health Promotion
- (Applied) psychology
- Preventive healthcare
- (Applied) sociology
- Public health
- (Applied) anthropology
- Digital health
- (Applied) educational/pedagogical sciences
- Client/patient-centred care and community-centred care
- Behavioural theories

**\* Clinical sciences**

- Musculoskeletal sciences
- Oncology
- Orthopaedics
- Mental health
- Rheumatology
- Paediatrics
- Sports injuries
- Women's health
- Pain theory/medicine
- Geriatrics and care of the elderly
- Traumatology
- Endocrinology
- Neurology
- Orthotics and prosthetics
- Cardiology
- Neuroanatomy/ Neurophysiology/Neuropathology
- Epidemiology
- Physiotherapy in clinical sciences
- Infectiology
- Intensive care medicine
- Pneumology/pulmonology
- Internal diseases
- Dermatology
- Haematology

Nephrology

Pelvic health

**\* Interventional skills**

- Physical agent modalities (thermal, sound, electrical and light)
- Manual techniques
- Massage techniques
- Therapeutic exercises
- Patient education and prophylactics
- Interdisciplinary practice
- Pain management
- Psychomotricity

Ergonomics

Pre-operative intervention

Postoperative recovery

Occupational therapy

Exercise physiotherapy

Rehabilitation

Hydro(thermos)therapy

**\* Interventional skills linked to specific fields:**

- Paediatrics
- Geriatrics and care of the elderly
- Musculoskeletal physiotherapy
- Sport therapy
- Intensive care
- Cardio-respiratory physiotherapy
- Internal diseases
- Neurological physiotherapy
- Pre- or post-operative intervention
- Oncology
- Women's health
- Physiotherapy for different population groups (e.g. children, older people, persons with disabilities, pregnant women)

**\* Evidence-based practice**

- Research Methods and Research application
- Theoretical foundations of research
- Elementary statistical theory

**\* Ethical and professional practice**

- Communication
- Ethics and legislation
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Health administration/management

- Leadership theories and principles
- Consultation and referral practices
- Clinical and reflective practice

**\*Clinical education**

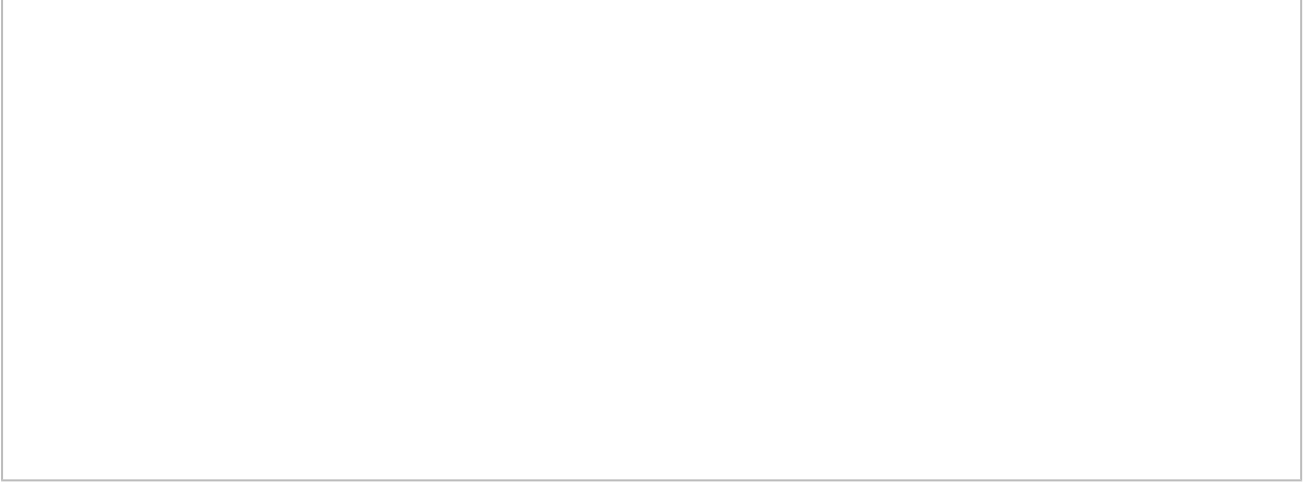
- Included in education programme
- Not included in education programme

**Other** (please list all other subjects in the curriculum that are not listed above)

**Other comments**

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Is there anything else you would like to add regarding the regulation or education of physiotherapists in your country or across the EU and EEA, or about this survey itself? Your additional insights and suggestions are highly valued.



## Contact

[Contact Form](#)