

SONAR Training Program – Piloting Report

NATIONAL PILOT REPORT – ITALY

1. Introduction

With regard to the Italian pilot training, the partners UNITUS, AUSRU, and TUCEP worked in close collaboration to complete the preparatory phases, including the recruitment of learners and teaching staff, and the logistical aspects in terms of the training schedule and delivery methods.

In October 2024, the University of Tuscia (UNITUS) launched an internal call addressed to its academic community, inviting expressions of interest from both teaching staff and technical-administrative personnel. Particular priority was given to the involvement of administrative staff, with the aim of ensuring they could acquire essential foundational skills and knowledge to support and enhance the hospitality and reception services required by the project. This strategic decision was made to strengthen the institutional capacity to welcome deaf students effectively. Furthermore, in order to promote broad and inclusive participation across the university, efforts were made to allocate available positions fairly among the various departments as well as the main administrative offices of the Rectorate. This approach was intended to ensure a balanced representation of the university's internal structures and to foster interdepartmental collaboration. In addition, in line with the cooperation agreement signed with the associated partners of the project, UNITUS also made provisions to include up to three individuals external to the core partnership, thereby extending the benefits of the initiative beyond the immediate academic network and reinforcing its commitment to openness and wider community engagement. A total of 21 participants, 18 from UNITUS and 3 from associate partners, were involved. At the end of the course, 14 participants from UNITUS and 3 from the associate partners effectively attended the course with less than 10% of absence from the classes.

TUCEP, responsible for delivering the training in collaboration with AUSRU, has planned a schedule of lessons to be held online via the Zoom platform, following the methodology based on synchronous online lessons consolidated in the training for learning Italian Sign Language provided by TUCEP in recent years.

The lessons were held by deaf teachers, and hearing teachers qualified as Italian/LIS/Italian interpreters, regularly recognized by the Ministry of Economic and Social Development as Interpreters, with many years of experience in both teaching and interpreting. Specifically, the following trainers were involved:

- Daniele Caputi: deaf trainer for the Italian sign language practice
- Mauro Santacroce: hearing trainer qualified to teach sign language practice

- Massimiliano Mondello and Maria Milo: hearing trainers skilled in Deaf Culture, communication strategies to use with deaf people, and Italian sign language theory.

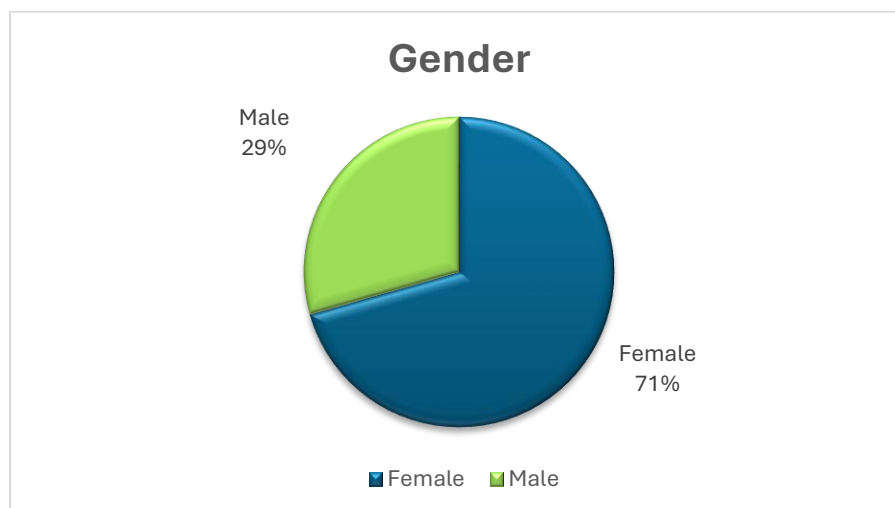
The training, lasting 30 hours according to the project, began on 10 January 2025 and ended on 14 March 2025, as shown in the calendar below:

DATE	TIME	MODULE	TRAINER
10 January 2025	15.00 – 18.00	Mod.3 Italian Sign Language basics	Mauro Santacroce
17 January 2025	15.00 – 18.00	Mod.3 Italian Sign Language basics	Daniele Caputi
24 January 2025	15.00 – 18.00	Mod.3 Italian Sign Language basics	Daniele Caputi
31 January 2025	15.00 – 18.00	Mod.3 Italian Sign Language basics	Mauro Santacroce
7 February 2025	15.00 – 18.00	Mod.3 Italian Sign Language basics	Daniele Caputi
14 February 2025	15.00 – 18.00	Mod.3 Italian Sign Language basics	Daniele Caputi
21 February 2025	15.00 – 18.00	Mod. 1 Deaf Culture and Diversity Management	Massimiliano Mondello
28 February 2025	15.00 – 18.00	Mod.3 Nozioni base di Lingua dei Segni Italiana	Daniele Caputi
7 March 2025	15.00 – 18.00	Mod. 1 Deaf Culture and Diversity Management	Maria Milo
14 March 2025	15.00 – 18.00	Mod.2 Skills and strategies for communicating with deaf people	Maria Milo

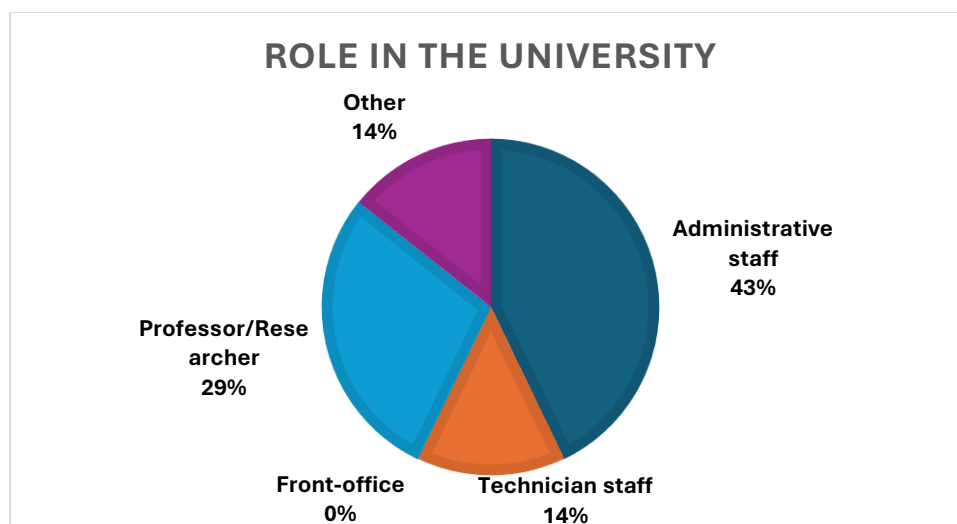
Interactive and engaging teaching methodologies were adopted, rich in simulations, manual exercises, group exercises, and assisted dialogues. During the lessons, trainers used online teaching tools, such as bilingual dictionaries and videos in Italian Sign Language, and provided the necessary materials to achieve the minimum learning objectives set for this course. As for the evaluation process, trainers assessed students' learning through classroom observation and role-play activities to test the level achieved.

2. General participants' information

A total of 17 participants completed the training, including 12 women and 5 men.

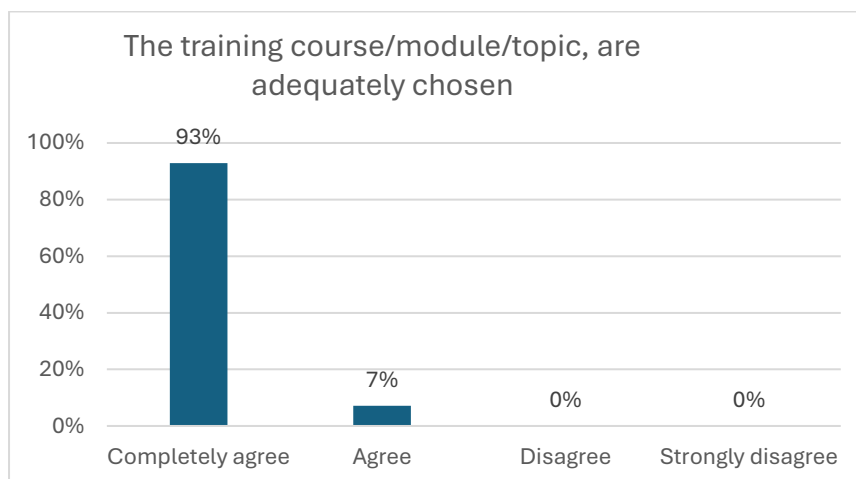


The roles of participants within the university are presented below:



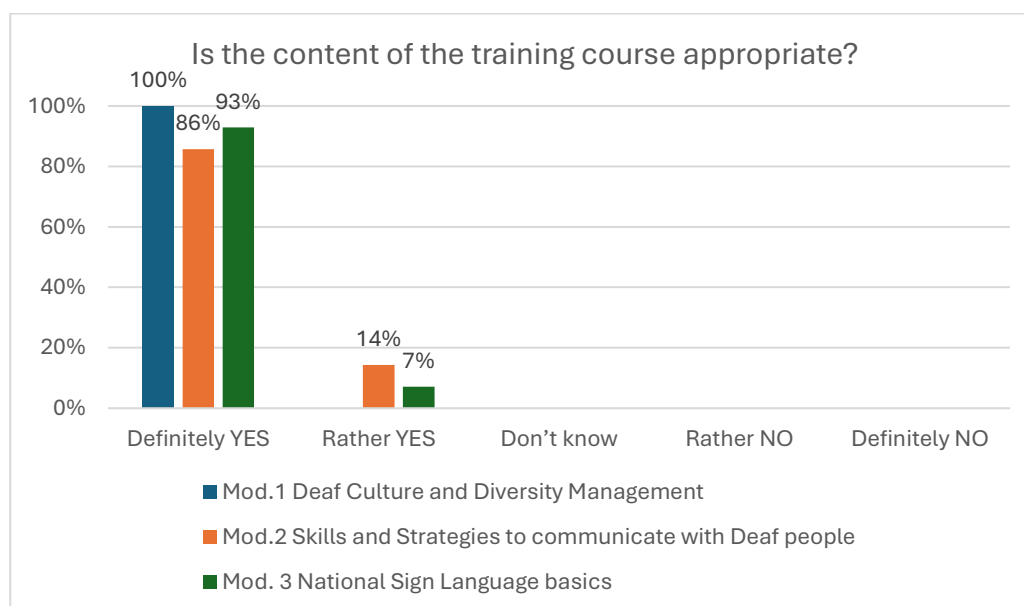
3. Evaluation of the training course/module

Q2.1: overview of the participants' opinion about the **adequacy of the training**.



The vast majority of participants (93%) **completely agreed** that the training course, module, and topics were **adequately chosen**, indicating a strong consensus on the relevance and appropriateness of the content. Importantly, **no participants expressed any disagreement**, suggesting that the training was thoroughly well-planned and effectively addressed the intended objectives. This feedback reflects a clear endorsement of the training's relevance, structure, and practical value.

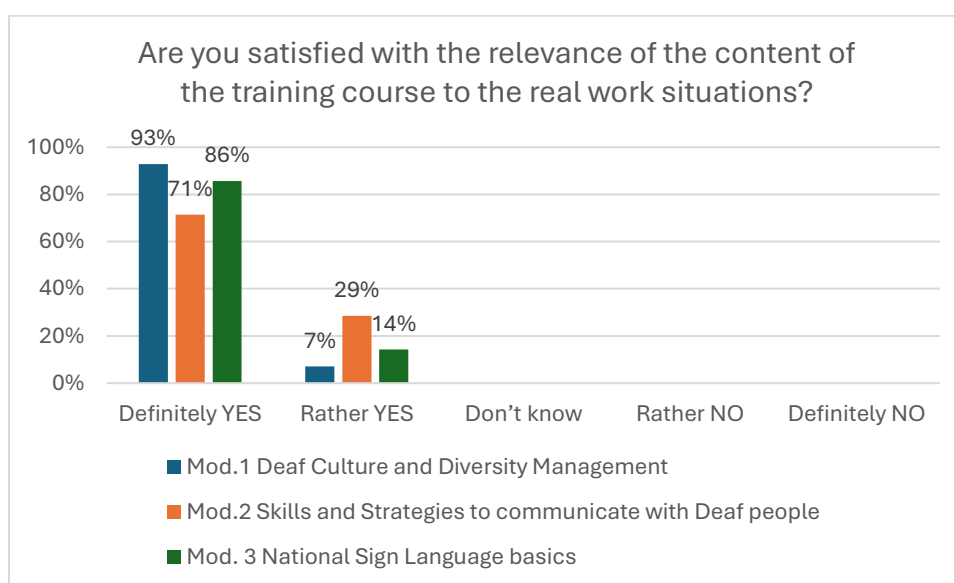
Q2.2: overview of the participants' opinion about the **appropriateness**.



Participants gave highly positive feedback on the appropriateness of the training content across all three modules:

- **Module 1 – Deaf Culture and Diversity Management** received **100% “Definitely YES”**, showing unanimous agreement on the relevance and quality of the content.
- **Module 2 – Skills and Strategies to Communicate with Deaf People** was rated “Definitely YES” by **86%** of participants, and “Rather YES” by the remaining **14%**, indicating strong satisfaction with a slight margin for further improvement or adaptation.
- **Module 3 – National Sign Language Basics** also received very high approval, with **93% “Definitely YES”** and **7% “Rather YES”**, confirming that the module was broadly seen as appropriate and useful.

*Q2.3: Overview of the participants’ opinion about **relevance of the content to the real work situations**.*



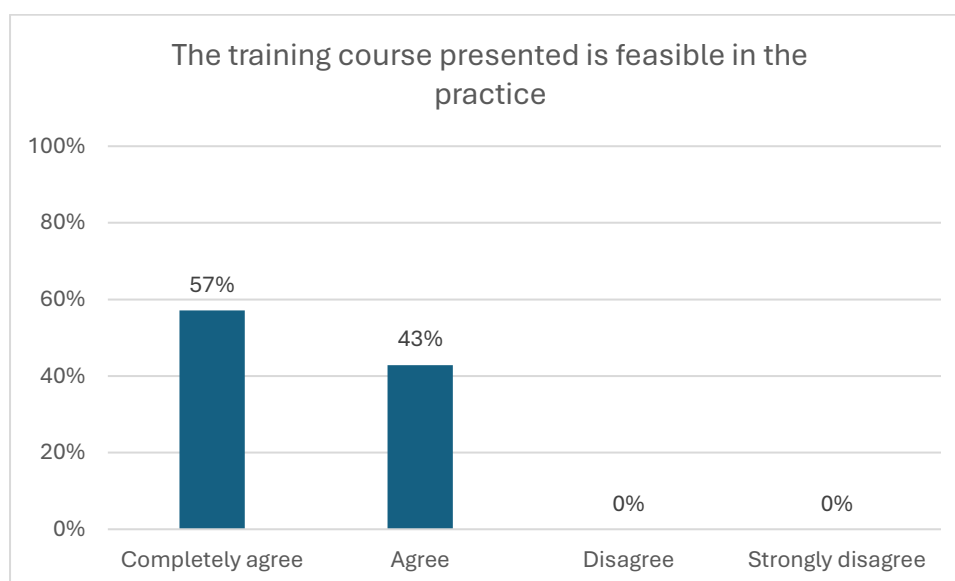
Participants expressed a high level of satisfaction with the relevance of the training content to real work situations. Module 1, focusing on Deaf Culture and Diversity Management, was rated “Definitely YES” by 93% of participants and “Rather YES” by 7%, indicating near-universal agreement on its applicability. Module 2, which addressed communication skills with Deaf people, received 71% “Definitely YES” and 29% “Rather YES,” reflecting strong relevance with slightly more variation in perception. Module 3, covering National Sign Language basics, was also well received, with 86% selecting “Definitely YES” and 14% “Rather YES.” No participants indicated uncertainty or disagreement, confirming the overall practical value of the training content.

Q2.4: summary of the recommendations for improvement provided by participants

While many participants expressed high levels of satisfaction with the course, several suggestions were made to further enhance its effectiveness. Key recommendations include:

- **Increase practical sessions:** More hours dedicated to hands-on practice, exercises, and conversational activities were frequently requested.
- **Record all lessons:** Participants suggested recording both theoretical and practical sessions to allow for review and accommodate those unable to attend live.
- **Supplemental materials:** Providing additional study resources, such as reference texts, videos, and useful links, was recommended to support independent learning.
- **Video content for revision and exercises:** Follow-up videos and video-based exercises were seen as helpful tools for reinforcing learning.
- **Homework assignments:** Including more practical homework to consolidate skills outside of class time.
- **In-person option:** just one participant expressed interest in having the course offered in a face-to-face format as well.

Q2.5: Overview of the participants' opinion about the **feasibility of the training course in the practice**.

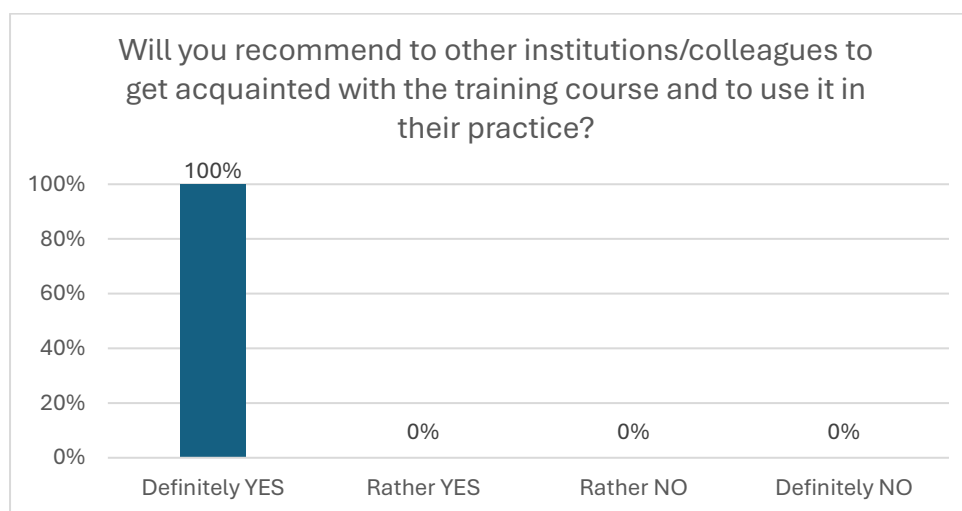


The participants' responses show a clearly positive perception of the practical feasibility of the training course. Over half of the participants (57%) stated that they

strongly agreed that the course could be realistically implemented in real-life contexts. The remaining 43% also responded positively, indicating that they agreed with the statement.

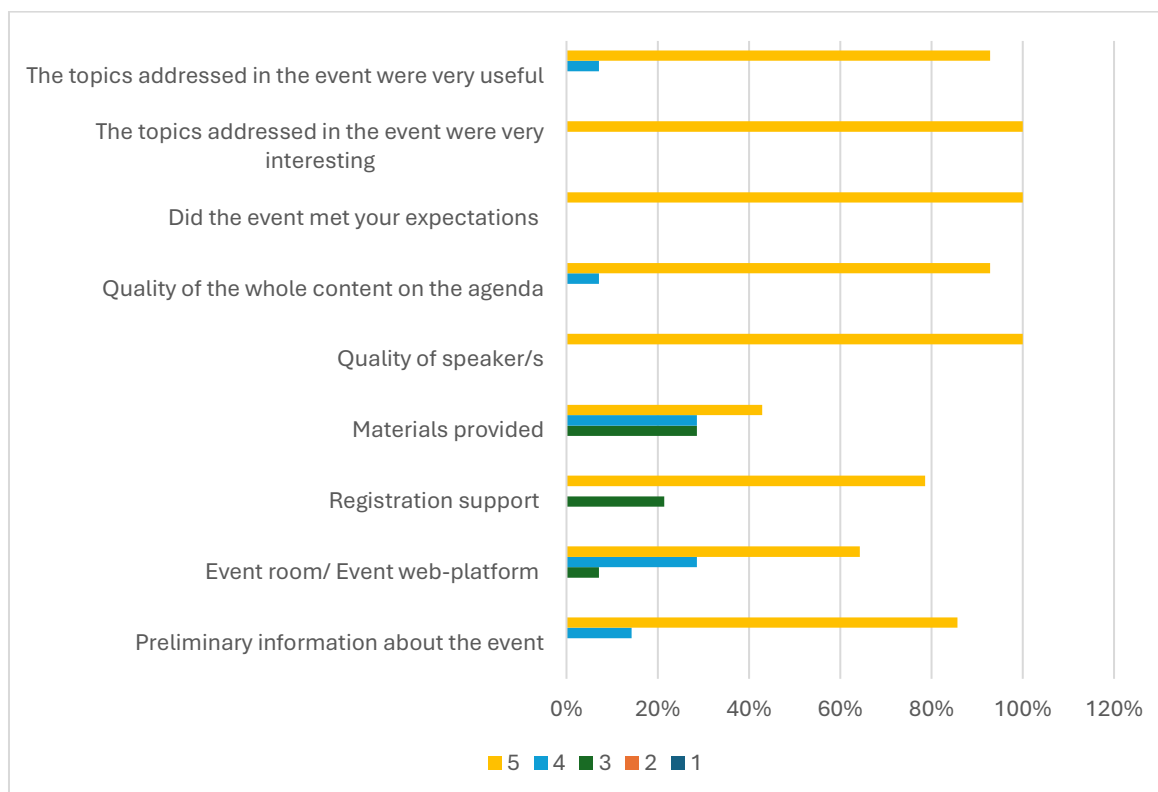
It is worth noting that there were no negative responses, which highlights a unanimous consensus among participants regarding the practical applicability of the course. This strong agreement reflects the relevance and usability of the training content in the participants' professional environments.

Q2.6: Overview of the participants' opinion about *their enthusiasm to recommend the trainings to other institutions or trainees using graphs.*



The results show unanimous and enthusiastic support for the training course. This result indicates **a strong level of satisfaction and perceived value**, with all participants expressing full confidence in promoting the course to others. Such unanimous endorsement suggests that the training was not only well-received but also considered highly beneficial and worth replicating in other contexts.

4. Evaluation of the training sessions



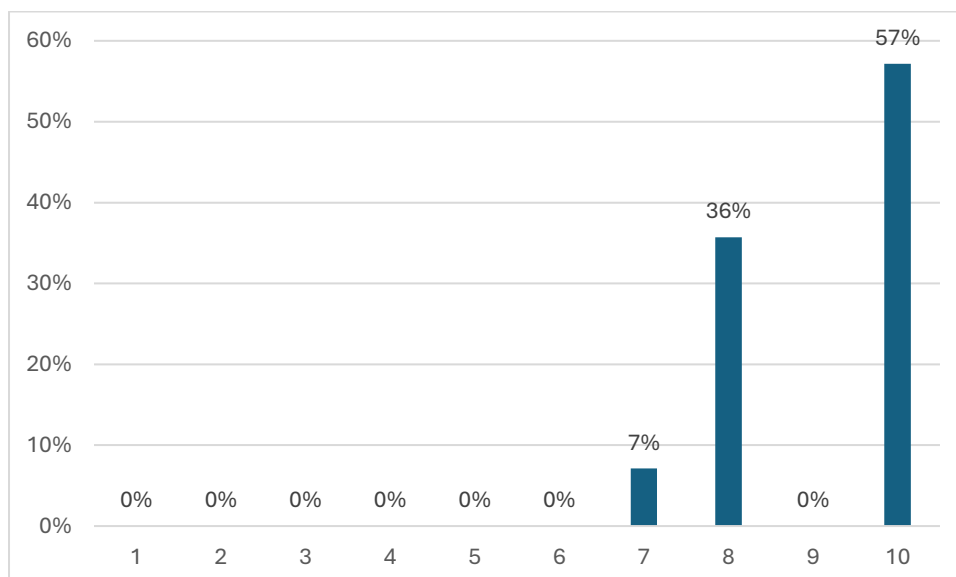
Based on the ratings provided by the participants, their feedback is summarized below:

1. **Preliminary information about the event:** The majority of participants (86%) found the event information clear and comprehensive.
2. **Event room/event Web-Platform:** The web platform hosting the virtual room received mostly positive feedback, with 64% rating it a 5 and 29% rating it a 4. This shows that most participants were satisfied with the online platform. A small portion (7%) rated it a 3, indicating there may have been some areas for improvement in accessibility or usability.
3. **Registration support:** The registration process was highly rated indicating a very smooth and efficient experience.
4. **Materials provided:** The materials received mixed ratings, with 43% rating them a 5, 29% rating them a 4, and 29% rating them a 3. This indicates that while a significant portion of participants were satisfied, others felt that the materials could have been more comprehensive or useful.
5. **Quality of speaker(s):** The trainers received excellent feedback, with 100% of participants giving them the highest rating of 5. This reflects strong satisfaction with the quality and delivery of the trainers during the event.

6. **Quality of the whole content on the agenda:** the majority of participants found the content to be highly relevant and of high quality, with only a small portion possibly desiring more depth or variation.
7. **Fulfilment of participants' expectations:** All participants found that the event fully met their expectations. This is a strong endorsement of the event's overall organization and delivery.
8. **The topics addressed in the event were very interesting:** 100% of participants found the topics addressed in the event to be very interesting, reflecting strong engagement with the subject matter.
9. **The topics addressed in the event were very useful:** Almost all participants (93%) rated this a 5, with 7% rating it a 4. This shows that the topics covered were not only engaging but also highly applicable and valuable to the attendees.

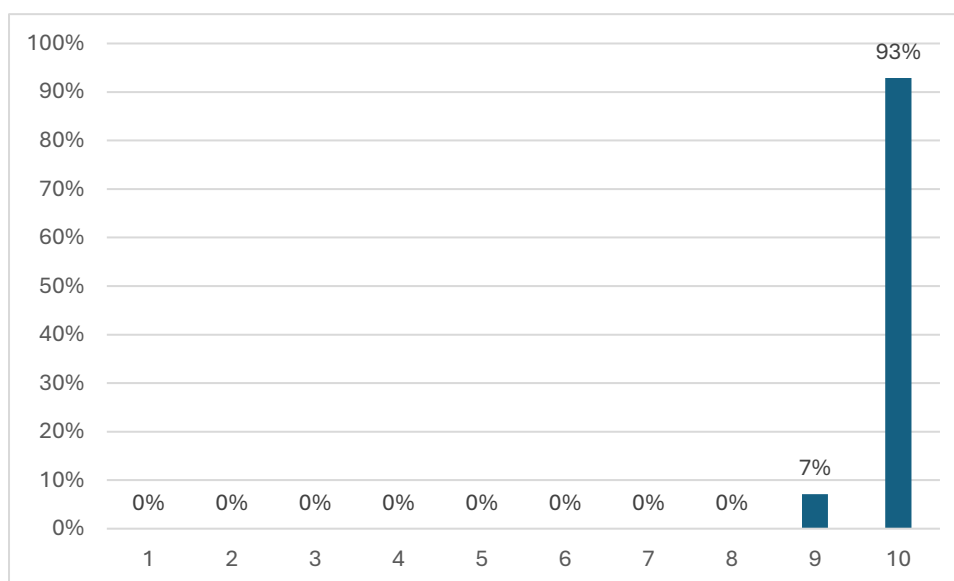
Overall, the feedback indicates that the event was well-organized and well-received, with participants expressing high satisfaction with the quality of the content, trainers, and overall experience. There were only minor areas, such as materials and web platform usability, that could be further improved to enhance the event's effectiveness.

How impactful do you think the ISENSE project is on university life?



The overall response has been extremely positive, with 93% of participants rating the project's impact at 7 or above. The largest group (57%) rated it a 10, indicating a very strong positive impact. However, there is still room for improvement, as a smaller portion (7%) gave it a 7, which might suggest that there are some aspects of the project that could be further enhanced for an even greater impact.

In conclusion, how satisfied are you with the course from a scale of 1 to 10?



The course received an outstanding evaluation from all participants, with 100% assigning it the highest possible rating of **10 out of 10**. This unanimous feedback reflects a deep level of satisfaction with the course content, delivery, organization, and overall learning experience. The results clearly demonstrate that the course successfully met — and even exceeded — the participants' expectations, providing valuable knowledge and meaningful engagement. Such a high level of satisfaction also highlights the course's strong relevance and impact, confirming its effectiveness in addressing participants' needs and interests.

All participants greatly appreciated the course, describing it as a unique and powerful learning experience. The trainers were praised for their exceptional quality and methodology. In particular, the silent LIS lessons were highly appreciated for their immersive approach, which allowed participants to truly connect with the Deaf culture.

There is strong interest in continuing this training program. Many expressed a desire to take further or advanced courses to learn more about Deaf culture and sign language. Suggestions included organizing the course on an annual basis, structuring it by level (e.g., beginner/advanced), and offering more opportunities for practice.

The course was considered not only informative, but also a significant step towards overcoming communication barriers with the Deaf community, both within and outside the university.

Overall, the experience was described as excellent, impactful, and highly rewarding, which participants would like to see expanded and repeated in the future.