

# ADLAB PRO – a snapshot of audio description training practices in Europe

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[www.adlabproject.eu](http://www.adlabproject.eu)

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# Study objectives

- IO1: Assessment of Current AD Training Practices
  - to create a snapshot of the current AD training situation in Europe
  - to study the problematic areas involved in the definition of the professional profile and in the development of a curriculum
  - 2 stages: quantitative and qualitative



# The quantitative stage: a questionnaire



# Questionnaire design

- Instructions
- General questions about the teacher
- Questions for academic courses
- Questions for non-academic courses
- General questions: competences and soft skills



# Questionnaire distribution

- Online via Instant.ly (English version)
- Translations into the respondents' mother tongue provided where necessary
- Accessible version provided where necessary

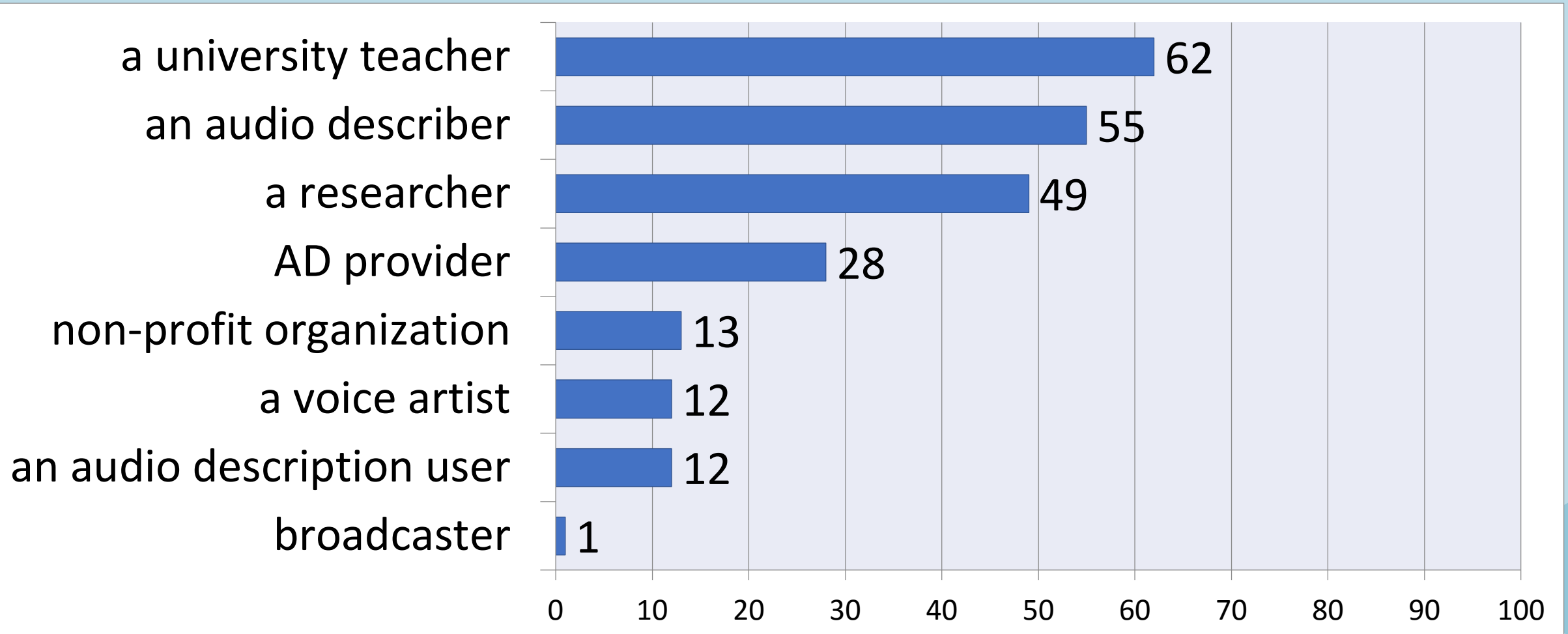


# Responses

- 86 respondents
- 192 courses sampled
  - 93 academic courses (>2000 participants)
  - 99 non-academic courses (>1600 participants)

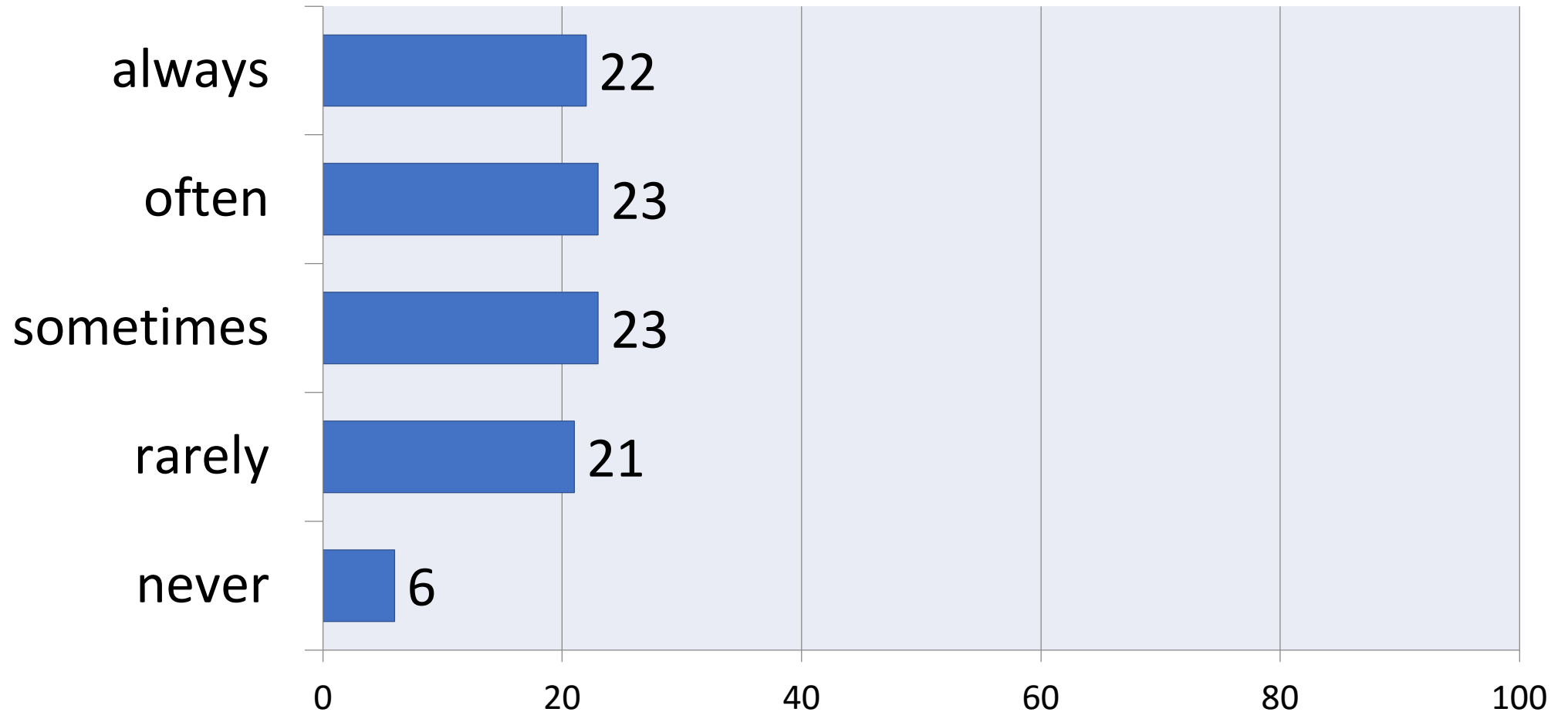


# Respondent profile: teachers are practitioners





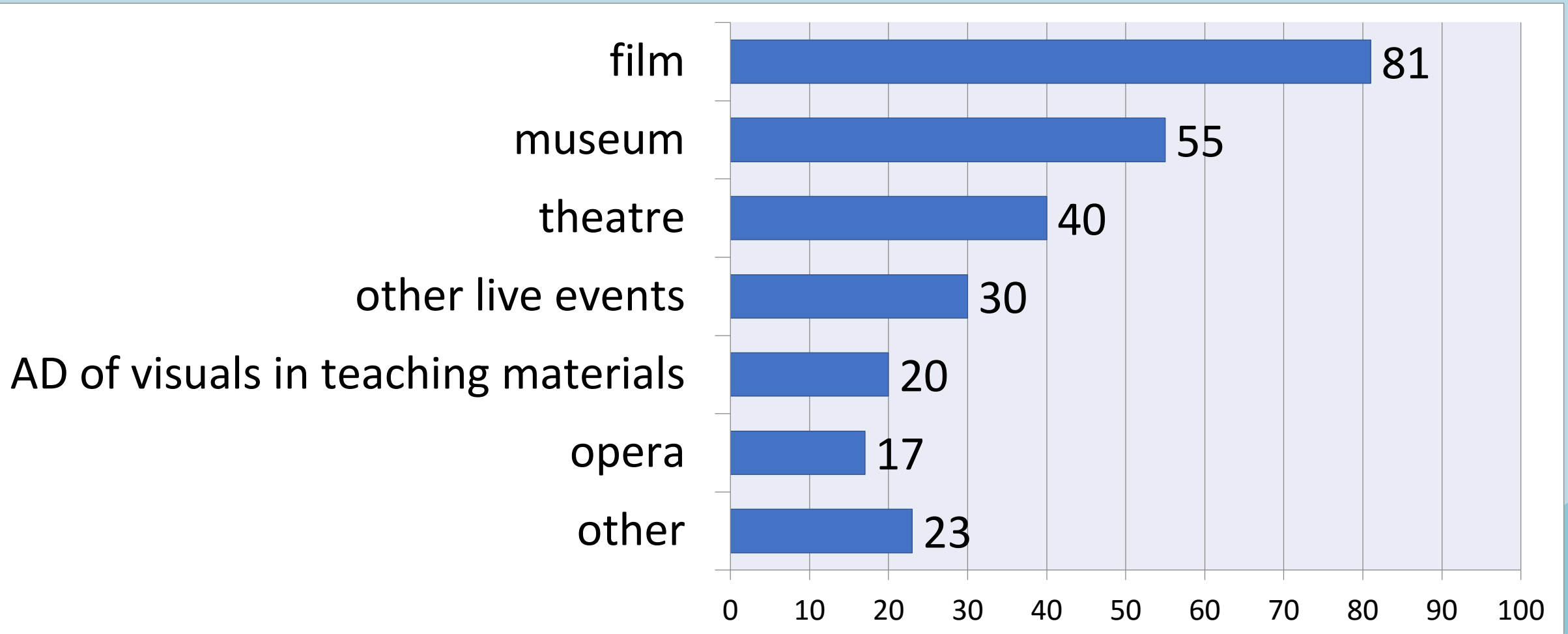
# Cooperation with VIPs: AD training is inclusive





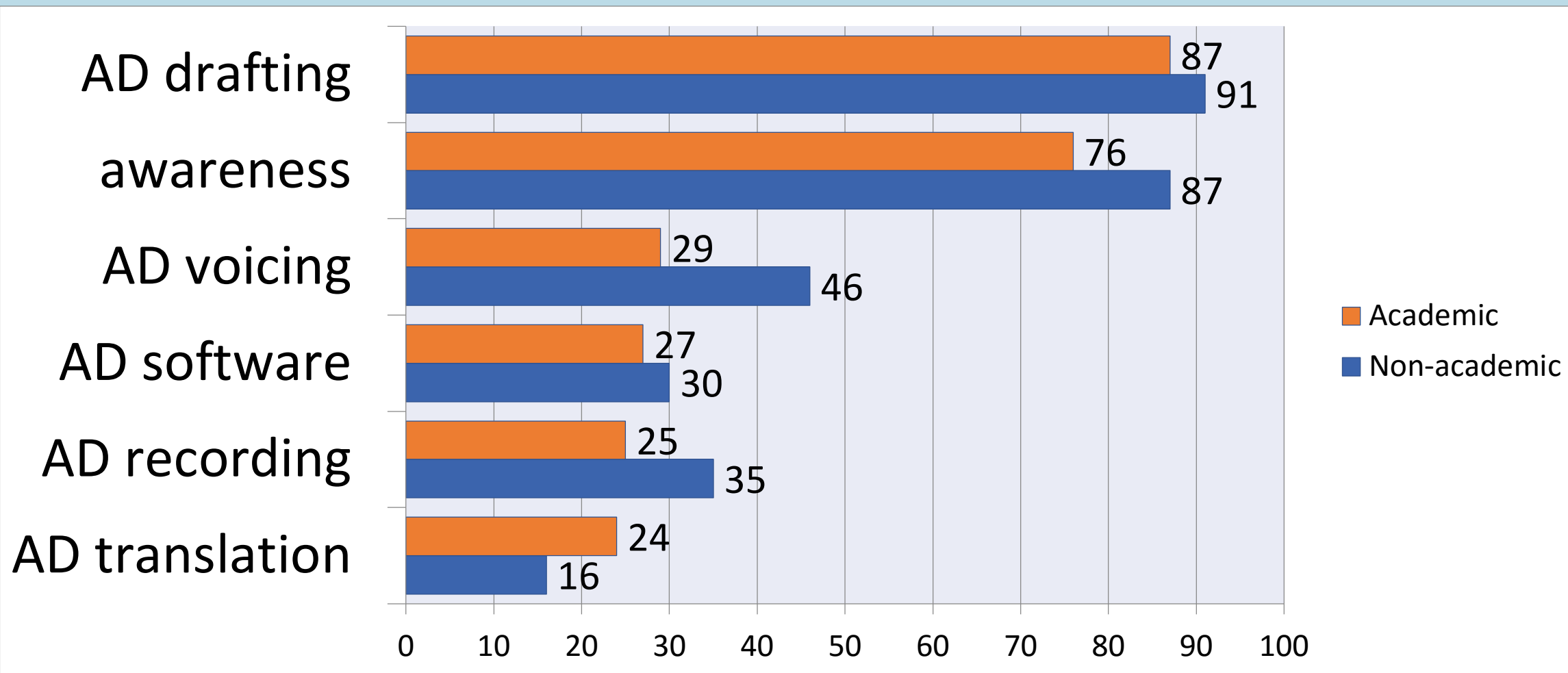


# AD teaching by type: film is the king



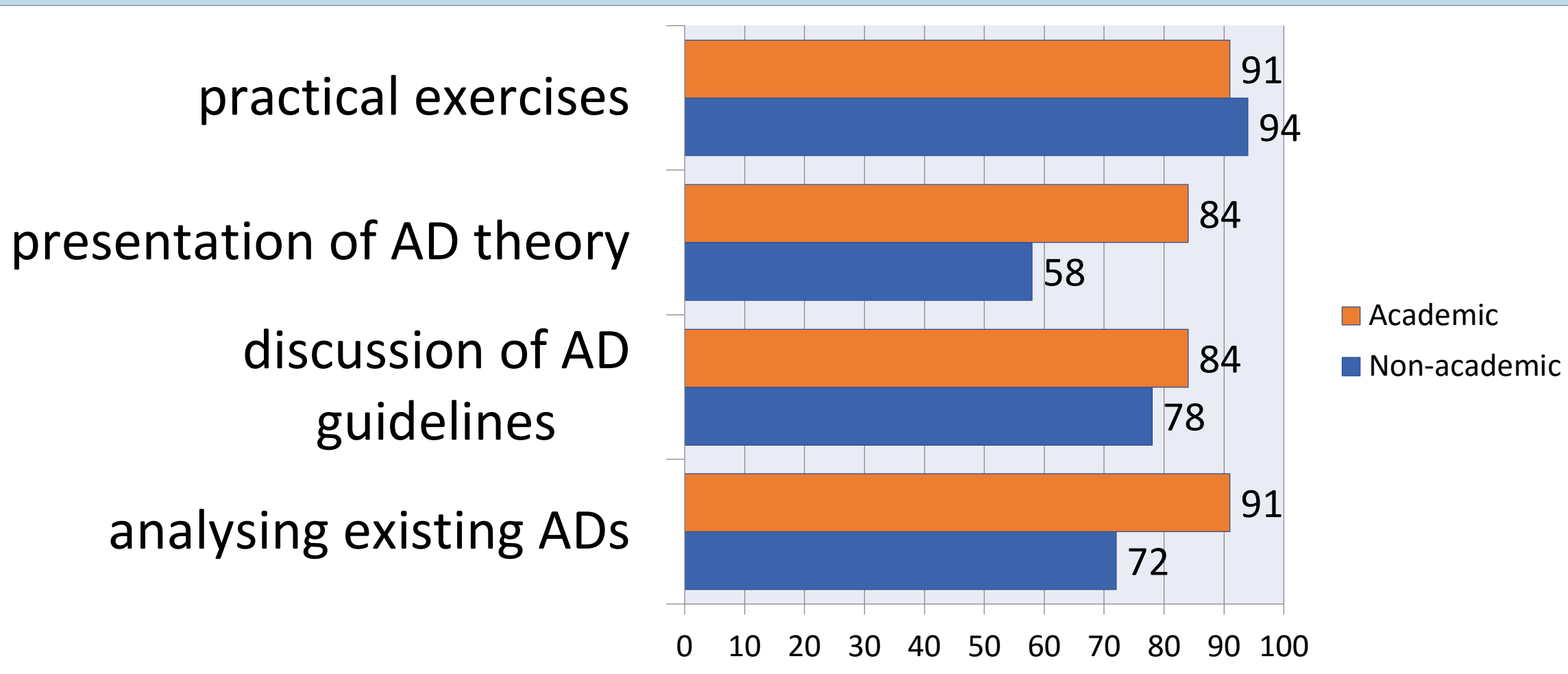


# Academic vs. non-academic courses: skills





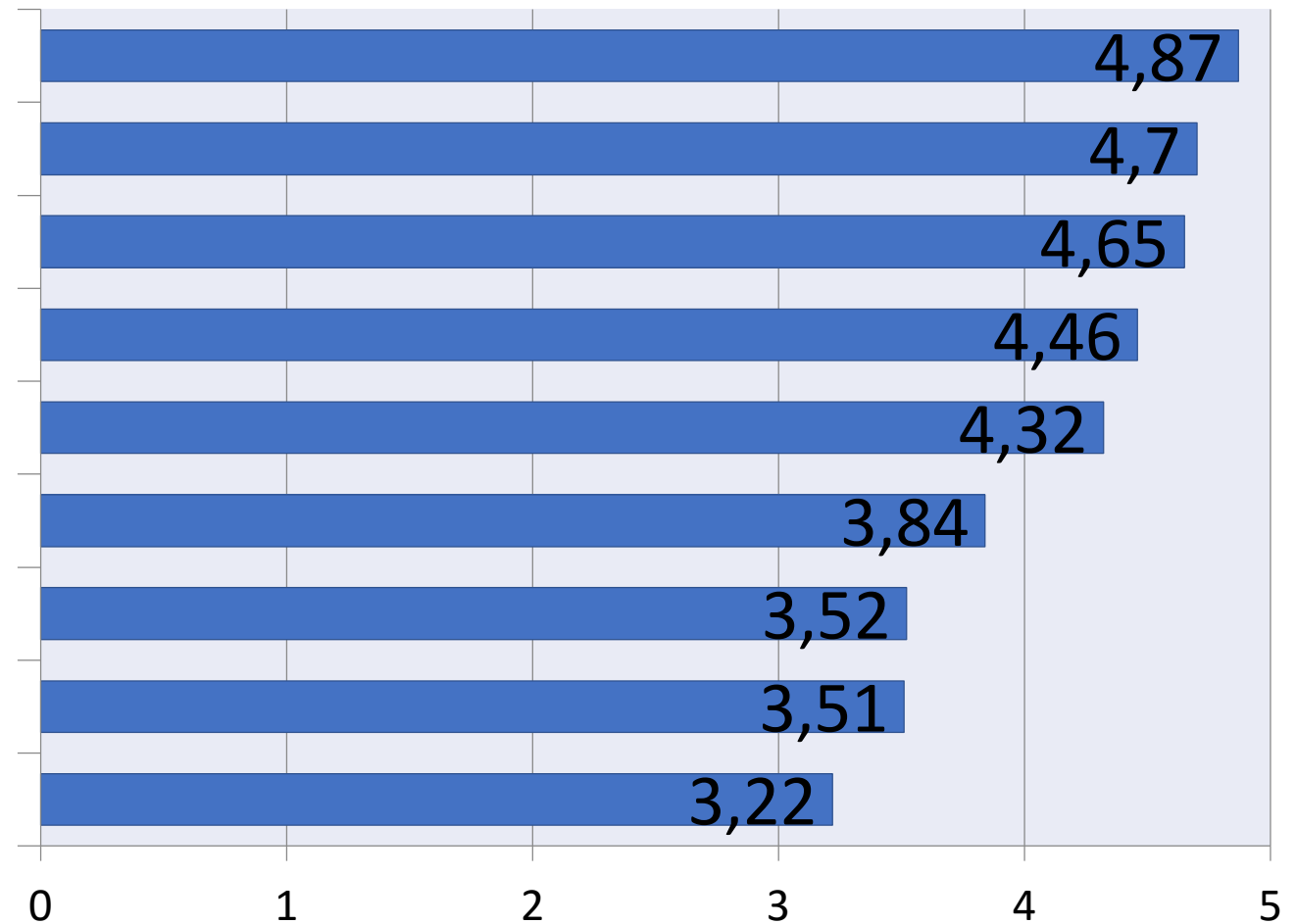
# Academic vs. non-academic courses: activities





# Competences in AD training

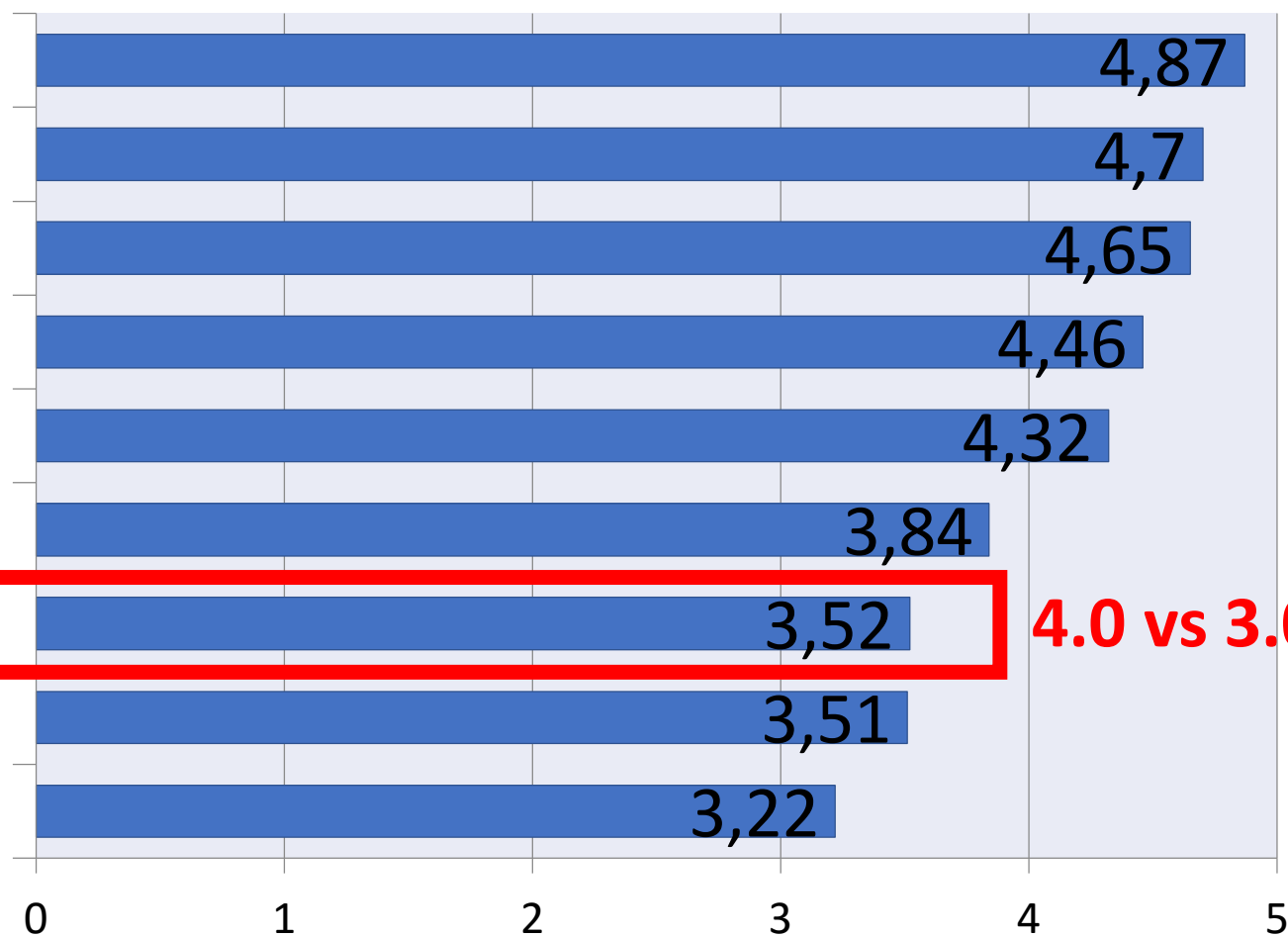
choosing information to describe  
perfect use of mother tongue  
needs of the visually impaired  
choosing AD strategies  
technical aspects  
knowledge of arts  
vocal skills  
IT related skills  
reflecting filmic language in AD





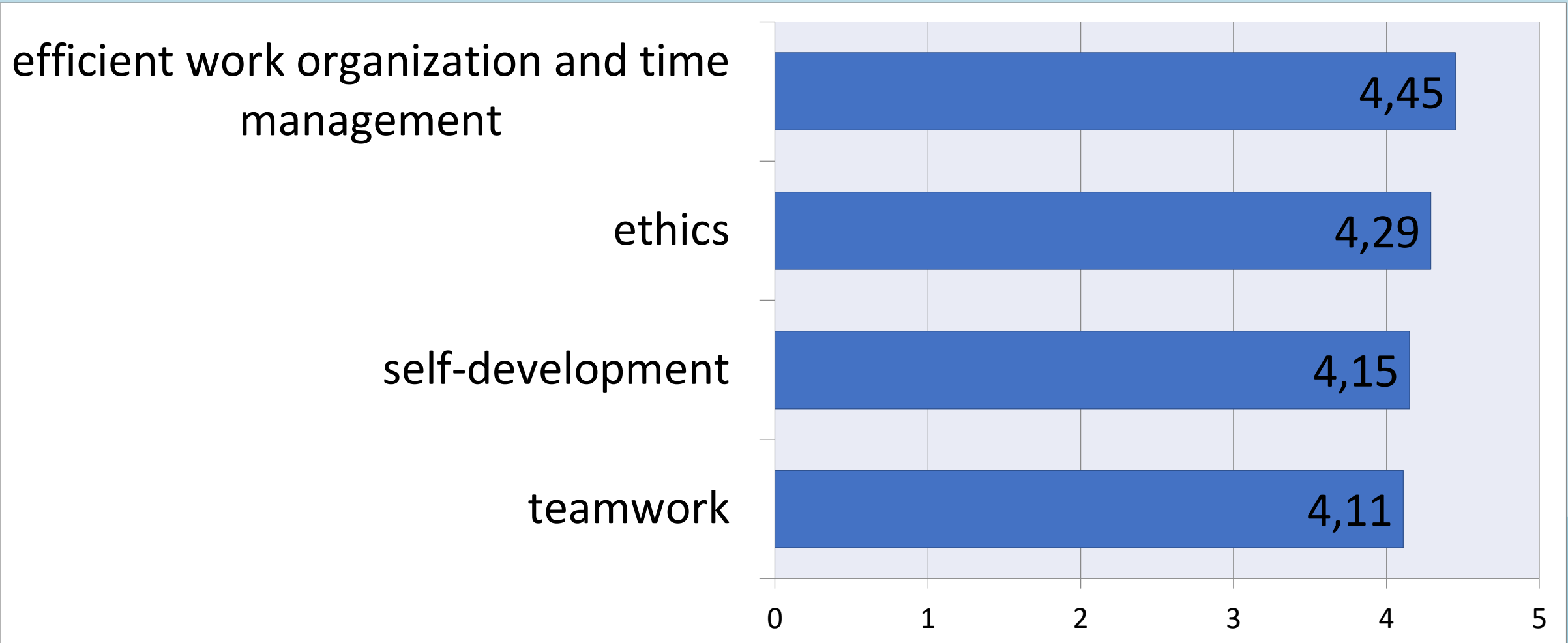
# Competences in AD training

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# Transferrable skills in AD training





# The qualitative stage: case studies



# The qualitative stage

- 5 courses (long and short, academic and non-academic)
- An in-depth analysis of course materials
- Semi-structured interviews





# Interview structure

- Information about the teacher
- Basic information about the course (type, duration, type of AD)
- Curriculum
- Materials
- Types of activities
- Skills
- Assessment



# Pedagogical approach

- Laurillard's (2012) list of components of a successful course
- Learning through:
  - acquisition (reading assignments, lectures)
  - inquiry (AD analysis, researching a problem)
  - discussion
  - practice (AD drafting, translation)
  - collaboration (teamwork, authentic projects)
- Student-centered, contextualised and situated learning – using knowledge and skills in action (Kiraly & Piotrowska 2014)



# Information about the teacher

- All researchers and university teachers, 3 audio describers
- Taught AD for over 6 years
- All but one teach film AD
- Rarely or sometimes cooperate with persons with visual impairments
- Altogether they have trained over 460 students



# Information about the course

- 1 online, 1 blended, 3 based on traditional in-class instruction
- 4 courses focus on film AD, 1 devoted exclusively to theatre AD
- At least 50% of the time is spent on practical exercises
- Most courses: AD history, types of visual impairment and AD legislation
- One course more theoretically-oriented (linguistics and discourse analysis approaches)



# Materials

- Audiovisual materials (movie clips and AD-related programmes)
- PowerPoint presentations
- Reading assignments (guidelines)
- One course book, one manual



# Activities and skills (1/2)

- Analysing existing ADs
- AD theory and guidelines (deductive learning)
- Learner-centred problem-based activities (inductive learning)
- Pair and group work
- Peer review
- Contextualised and situated learning



# Activities and skills (2/2)

- Practical AD exercises:
  - preparatory exercises (e.g. describing spaces or static images)
  - AD drafting exercises: content selection, prioritising information and using adequate language
  - 1 course (a non-academic one) focuses on AD voicing
- Presentation of subtitling software
- Transferrable skills: time management, self-development, work organisation, teamwork



# Assessment

- Both formative and summative assessment
- Summative assessment:
  - tests
  - exam
  - final project
- Peer assessment
- Homework





# Pedagogical approaches

- Teacher-centred and student-centred approaches
- Most ingredients of an effective course (Laurillard 2012) – learning through:
  - acquisition (reading assignments, lectures)
  - inquiry (analysing existing ADs, researching topics)
  - discussion (discussing issues and AD solutions with peers and the trainer)
  - practice (learners create ADs and do other AD-related exercises)
  - Collaboration (3 courses)
- Situated learning (2 courses)
- Reflective study



# Conclusions

- Teachers are practitioners who cooperate with VIPs
- Film AD taught most often
- Few differences between academic and non-academic courses
- Academic courses are practice-oriented
- Vocal skills more important in non-academic courses
- A variety of both teacher-led and student-centred activities
- Learning through putting skills into action (Kiraly's emergentist model)



# Acknowledgments

- ADLAB PRO Partners
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- Questionnaire respondents
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