D5.3 – Evaluation Report 1 (First Training Programme)

Version 3.1 (*Final*)

September 30, 2022
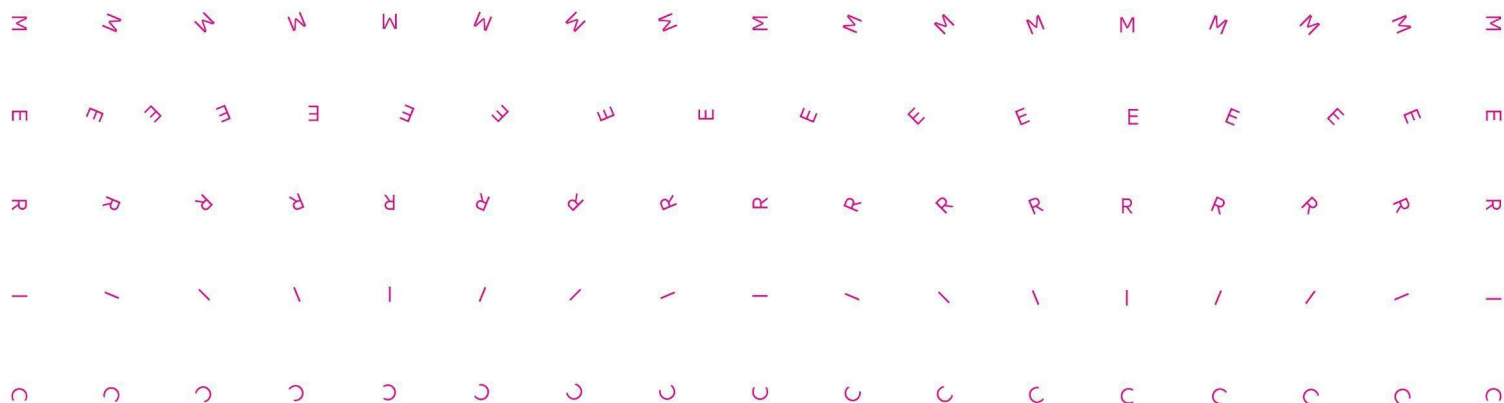
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Revisions

Version	Date	Author	Reviewer(s)	Changes
V 0.1	July 12, 2022	Clément Malherbe	Marie Tanché	First draft
V 1	July 21, 2022		Mirosław Filiciak, Barbara Giza	First review
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V3.1	September 30, 2022	Clément Malherbe		Small grammatical edits. Converting links to PDF documents for ease of use. Final version

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1. Executive Summary

This deliverable presents the evaluation report of the MediaNumeric first training session, which took place at INA's training centre in Issy-les-Moulineaux (France), from 21st to 26th February, 2022.

This document describes the two main steps of the evaluation:
- The assessment of participant satisfaction ('on-the-spot' evaluation and delayed-evaluation).
- The internal evaluation led by the consortium during and after the training course.

Strong points of the training course that arose from the assessment:
1. MediaNumeric provides a relevant overview of all the topics related to data-journalism, creative storytelling and fact-checking;
2. The content of the training course is up-to-date, diverse and in-line with market trends;
3. MediaNumeric is a very good opportunity for networking;
4. The organisation was good and the students felt it was well arranged, although the students would have liked to have had more practice time, especially on the case study.

2. Assessment of Participant Satisfaction

2.1. On-the-Spot Evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation is to collect 'on-the-spot' comments and suggestions from participants regarding the content and conditions of the training session, in order to help the MediaNumeric consortium better understand their expectations and thus improve the next on-site sessions. The Evaluation questionnaire (D5.2) was designed by INA, with the support of the MediaNumeric consortium and offered via Google Forms. The responses were anonymised so as not to restrict participants' freedom of expression.

Because of an internet breakdown on February 26 at INA's headquarters, the students were unable to fill in the questionnaire in the classroom between 12:00h and 12.30h as it was initially planned in the programme. Consequently, the questionnaire was sent to the students by email the week after the training course. 79% of participants (15 students out of 19) completed the evaluation questionnaire.

The figures presented below are based on the analysis of these 15 responses. To be completely transparent and exhaustive, we have chosen to quote the answers of the students in their entirety, verbatim.

The students' detailed answers to the on-the-spot evaluation questionnaire are all copied below.

The charts below show an overall good level of satisfaction from the participants and the feedback provided by the trainers and co-organisers is generally very encouraging, although some weaknesses have been pointed out as well.

2.1.1. Global Satisfaction

Are you satisfied with the training course?
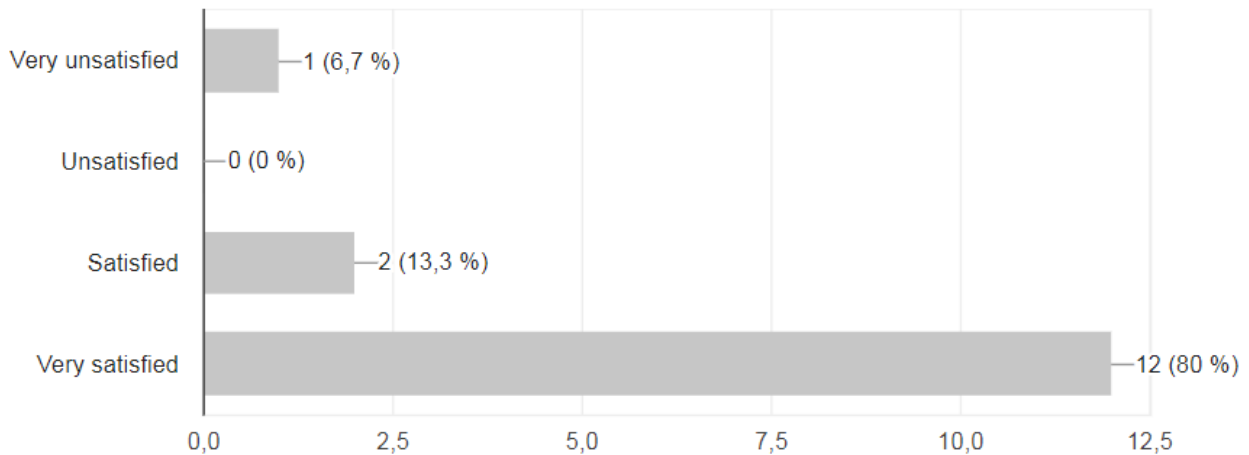
What were the strengths of the course?

Students praised the programme and its diversity, presenters, networking events, and study visit, as illustrated by the following quotes:

- *The quality of the intervenants, the relevance of the program.*
- *The fact of working with several experts from all over but with the same ideas was one of the strengths of the training. In one week, we learned very interesting and very relevant things.*
- *I gained so much new knowledge. (Almost) all the lecturers were great. Very informative. Very professional. Everyone involved was very nice and also helped with other things such as train tickets. The networking events. Networking in general.*
- *The choice of topics, tutors, study visit, the very idea of a project we should work on.*
- *The diversity of the program.*
- *The teachers and the institutions that organize it.*
- *A lot of new, important, very well prepared knowledge and inspiring people.*
- *The speakers were so interesting and open to discussion. A lot of interaction. A lot of useful tools.*
- *The great teaching skills of all the speakers. The determination of the organizers. The diversity of activities. The day 0 session. The HUGE amount of tools we discovered. The various things we now know how to do. The visit at AFP, especially on this particular day. The number of students. The fact that everything is made for us to know each other. The fact that some students and speakers came from abroad. The English language. The work on the case study. The constructive comments on our presentations. The Eurosport canteen.*

The meetings at the Loft. The fact that, now, we all know better what data-journalism consists in.

- *Learning about the possibilities that coding and working with data bring to research and investigation was truly eye opening. I also considered knowing how to debunk misinformation/disinformation is crucial, and I am very glad I was given these precious tools. Meeting all these bright and kind professionals was also very inspiring.*
- *I already had fact-checking classes.*
- *All the tools, Internet extensions, tips and the teachers, the visit at AFP.*
- *The speakers and content.*
- *Diversity of courses, practical and theoretical dimensions, workshop times, meeting with AFP's workers.*

What were the weaknesses of the course?

In addition to minor technical problems, the intensity of the course was repeatedly mentioned among the weaknesses - including such intensive activities in a relatively short period of time:

- *The fact that there is really a lot to tell in a very short time but I don't think this could be done otherwise and still keep its so complete program.*
- *I will say that the time was a bit short. With all that we have learned, if we had had more time, we could have performed better.*
- *I didn't like the course "Techniques and tools adapted to multimedia storytelling" as much... I did like the trainer! But I couldn't take notes. I also felt like she wanted to put too much information in too little time. I recommend either trying to limit the subjects she wants to talk about or give her more time. Sometimes too intense... There were days when the classes ended at "17:00" but then actually ended at 18:15 and then we had to be somewhere at 19:00. That is honestly not doable. No time for dinner, no time for a nap. But the days were really long and intense.*
- *Too much time spent in class, it was way more than I could handle and plus because of it sometimes we didn't have enough time just to work on the project or socialize. I'm not a big fan of tests either. I felt like the agenda was changing or sth was going slightly differently than planned and we wouldn't find out until the last moment.*
- *It's a very intensive course and we did not have time to integrate the materials.*
- *The lack of time.*
- *The organization- the short free time was usually even shorter because of organization problems.*
- *Sometimes they seemed too short.*
- *It is very dense (it is also a strength actually), we were all a bit frustrated at the end because we wanted more time to work on the case study. The camera and the plexiglas partitions were hiding the presentations for some students and inadequate for group work.*

- *I found the sessions of 1h/1h30 too short, unfortunately. But the biggest weakness of the course, in my opinion, was the following : the case studies were hard to work through in groups, given that we didn't know each other and came from different academic fields and backgrounds. In the future, I believe the MediaNumeric students could truly benefit from introducing each other at the beginning of the course, because this would allow everyone to know who to ask on specific matters. For example : I come from media studies and I am majoring in media and social relations of class, race and gender. I wish the group that produced the problematic video on immigration had come to me. Also, some students from Nanterre university were much more literate on data visualization and coding than me, and they ended up in the same work group. Maybe we could have all benefited from their knowledge if they had been distributed among different groups, not to mention that I found out how literate they were on the subject when it was a bit too late to ask them for help.*
- *I am not an expert on spreadsheets.*
- *Maybe too much information in 6 days, the days were a little bit too long to assimilate the information.*
- *AV technical problems, introduction day, name tags for members and attendants.*
- *As I followed a master's degree in digital humanities, some courses were a bit repetitive for me, because they were introductory to data-related jobs.*
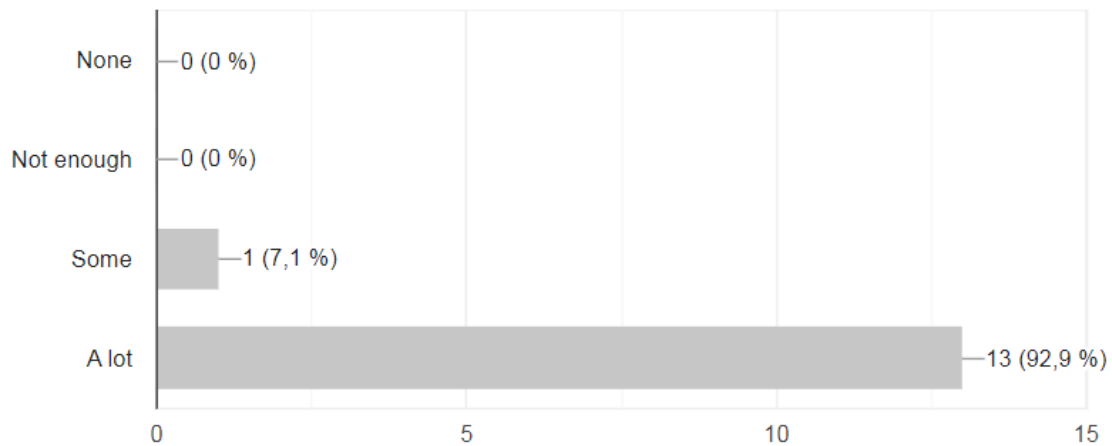
2.1.2. Objectives of the Course

All the students found that the training corresponded well with their expectations and their needs, providing them with a lot of new knowledge and that it was relevant to their professional objectives.

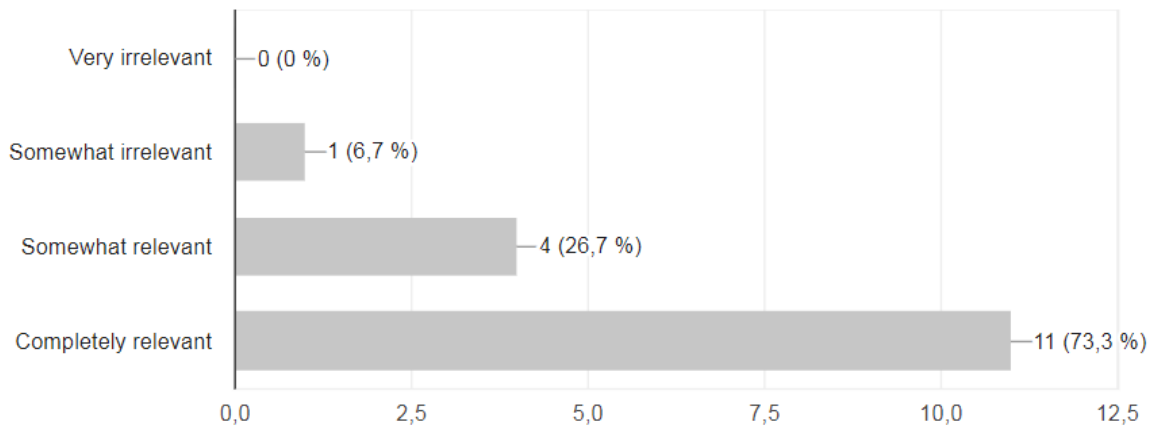*According to your needs and expectations, how would you rate this course:*
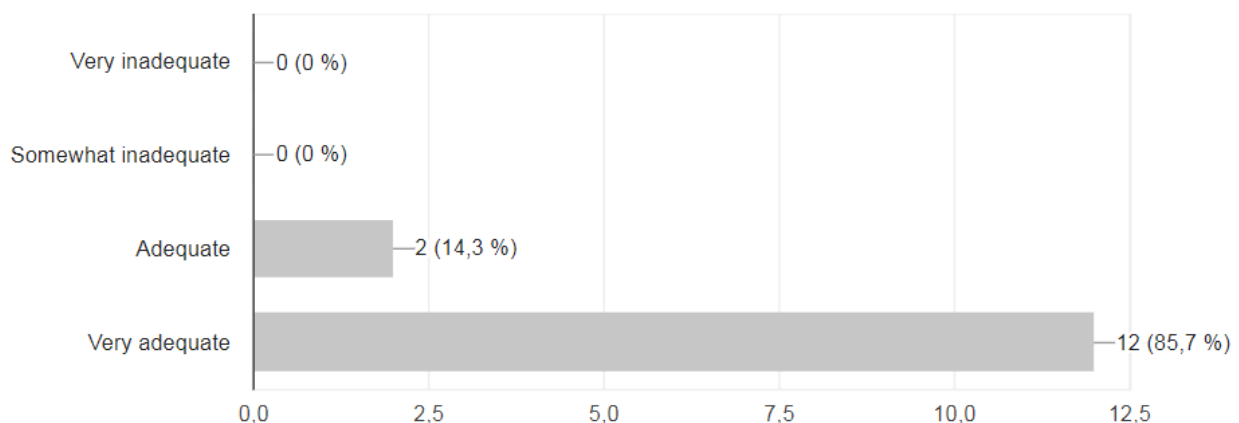
Do you think you have acquired new knowledge?

Did you find the training course relevant with respect to your professional objectives?

2.1.3. Training Content

The participants were all satisfied with the quality of the course content, finding the courses consistent and the lecturers very adequate within their respective fields.

How would you rate your experience of the quality of the teaching content:
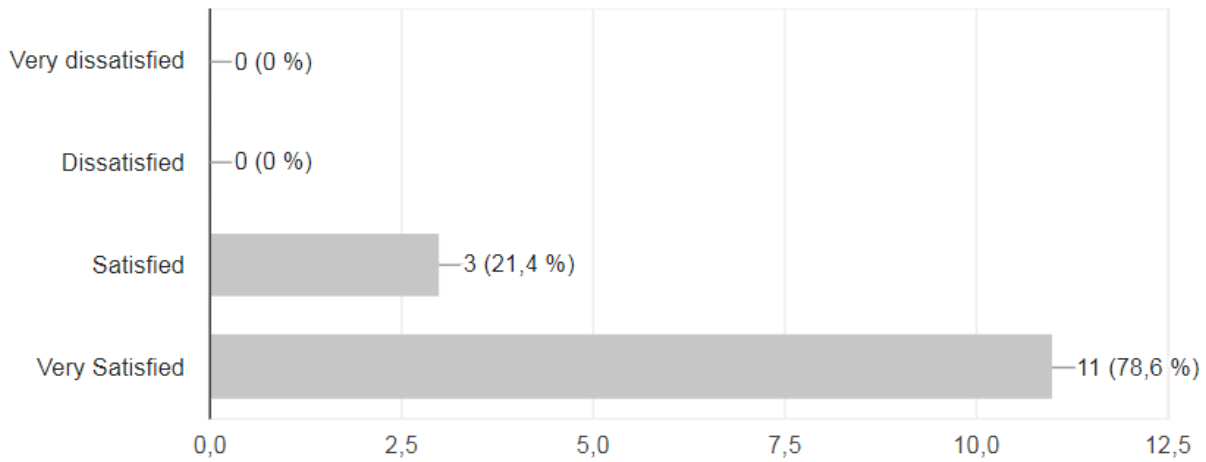
How would you rate the profile of the lecturers:

How would you rate the consistency of the different interventions?

2.1.4. Reception and Support Conditions of the Training Course

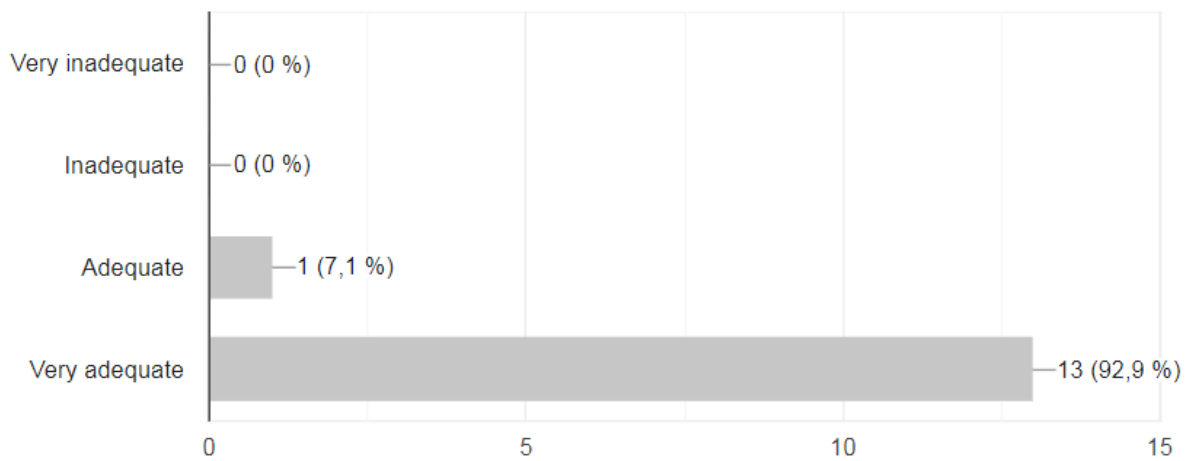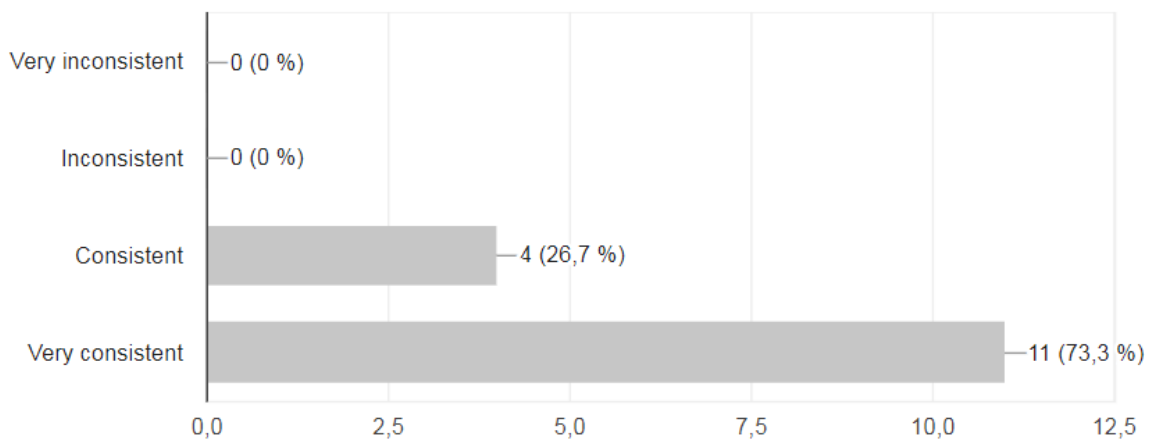Overall, the reception and support conditions of the training course were highly appreciated by the participants, with a slight downside on the administrative and logistical management.

How would you rate the quality of reception and care by the hosts of the training programme:

Rating	Value
Very Unsatisfactory	0 (0 %)
Unsatisfactory	0 (0 %)
Satisfactory	2 (14,3 %)
Very satisfactory	13 (92,9 %)
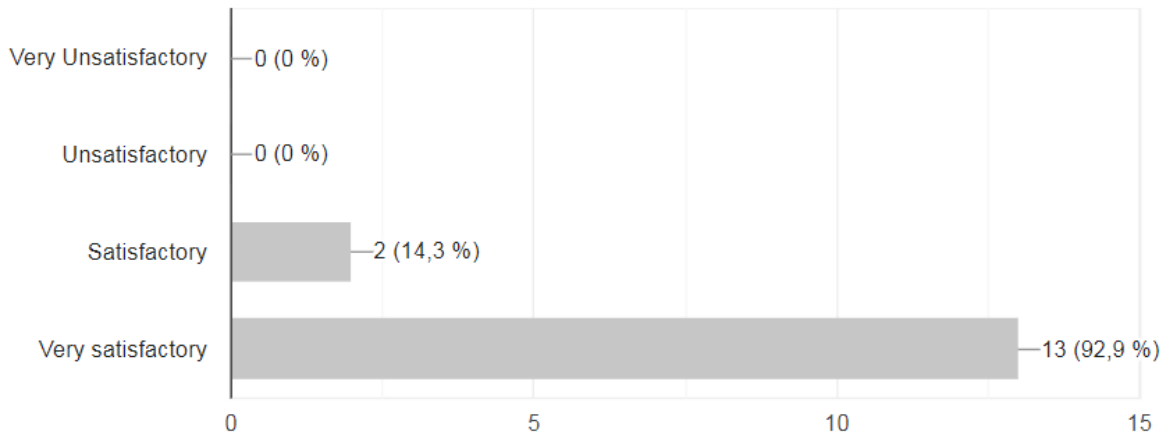
How would you rate the quality of training course premises:

Rating	Value
Very Unsatisfactory	0 (0 %)
Unsatisfactory	0 (0 %)
Satisfactory	1 (7,1 %)
Very satisfactory	13 (92,9 %)
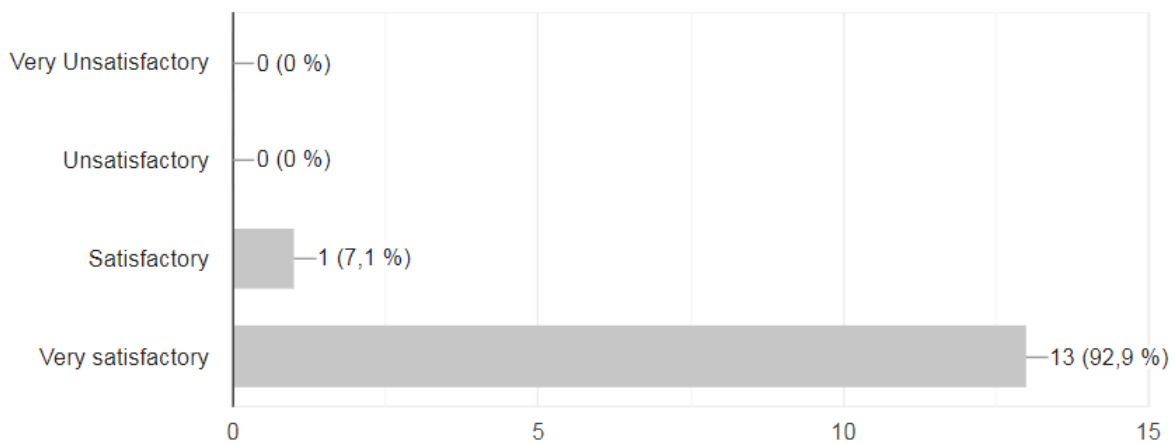
How would you rate the administrative and logistical management of the training course:
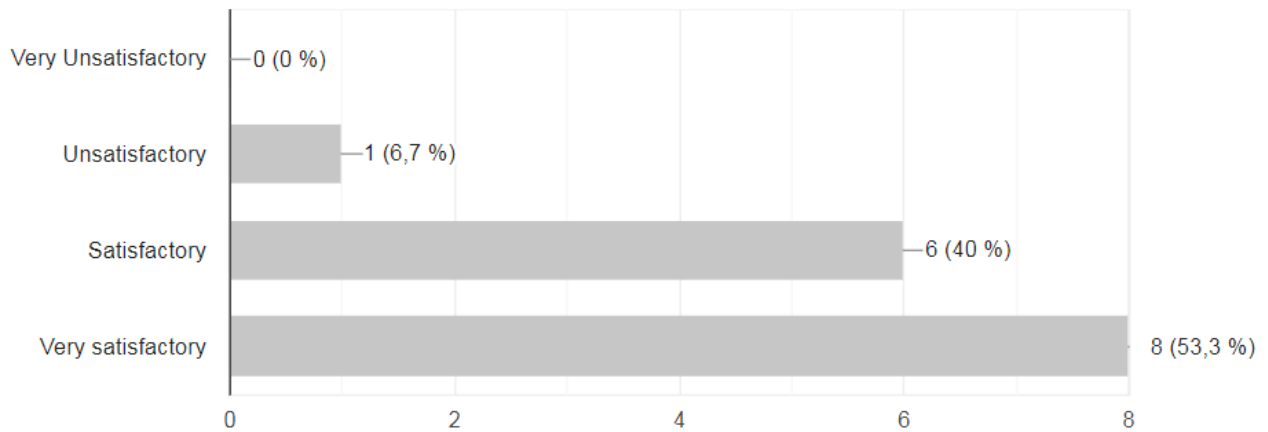
2.1.5. Experience of the Training Course's Teaching

As for the content itself, the way the courses were taught was unanimously appreciated by the students, in particular the fact that the lecturers took the time to discuss matters and answer questions from the students. However, a majority of students found the course too dense, in terms of pace and educational progression.

How would you rate the level of teaching:
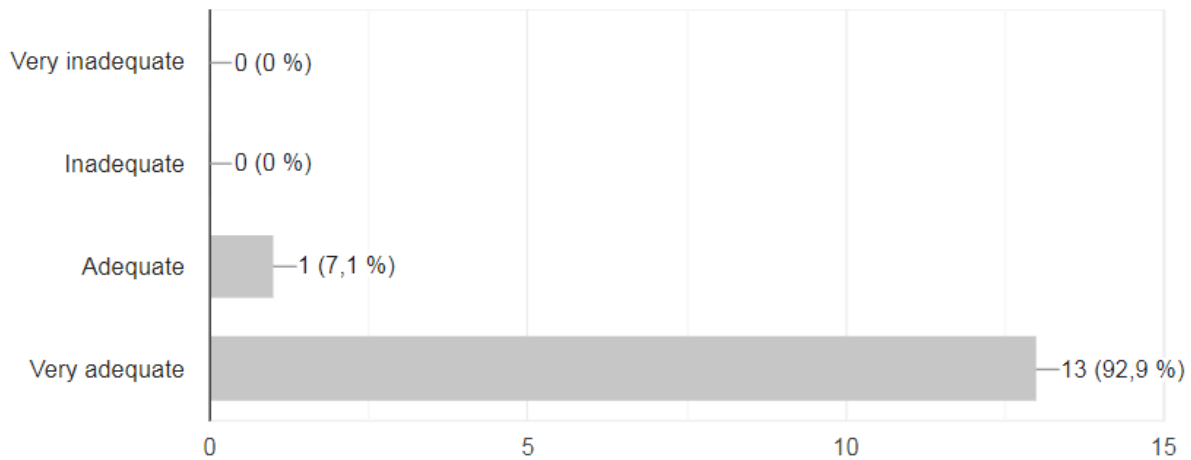
How would you rate you rate the animation and teaching methods used by the teachers:
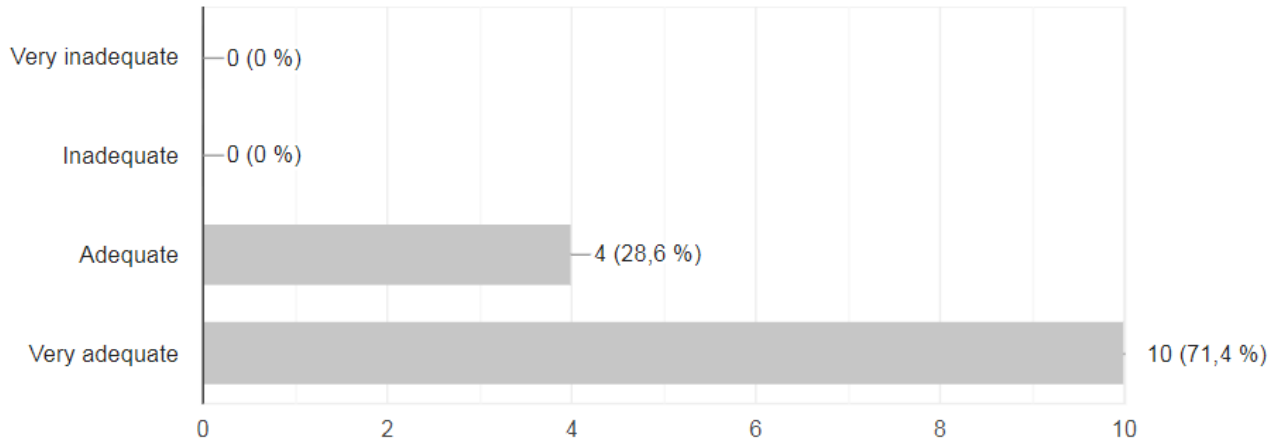
In terms of listening and availability, how would you rate the relationship between the trainers and the participants:
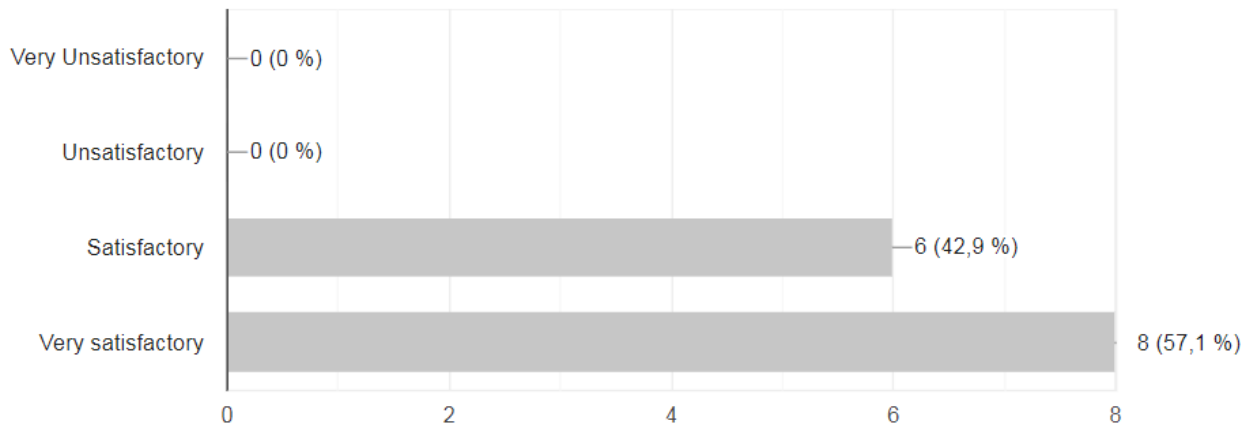
How would you characterise the pace and progression of the lessons:
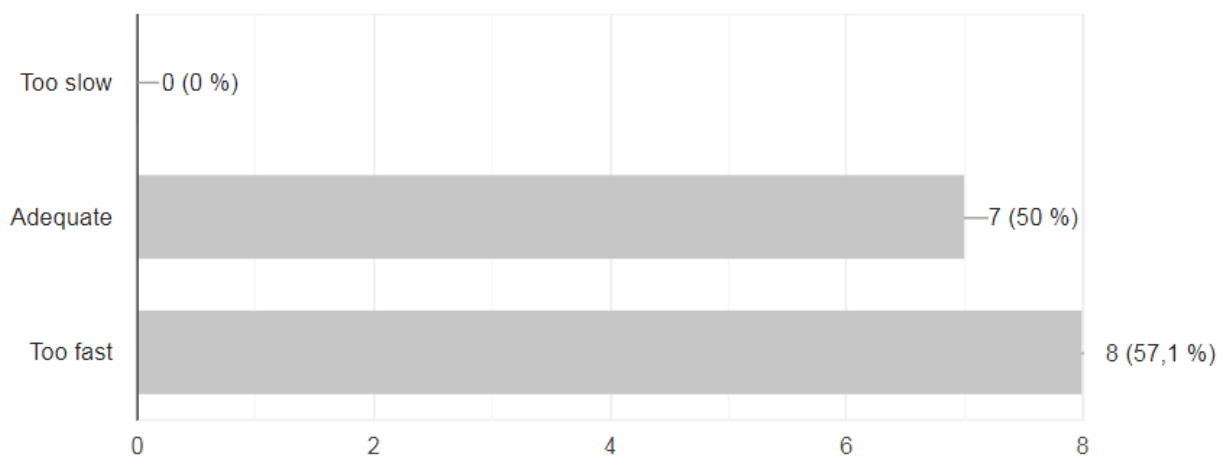
How would you characterise the duration of the course:
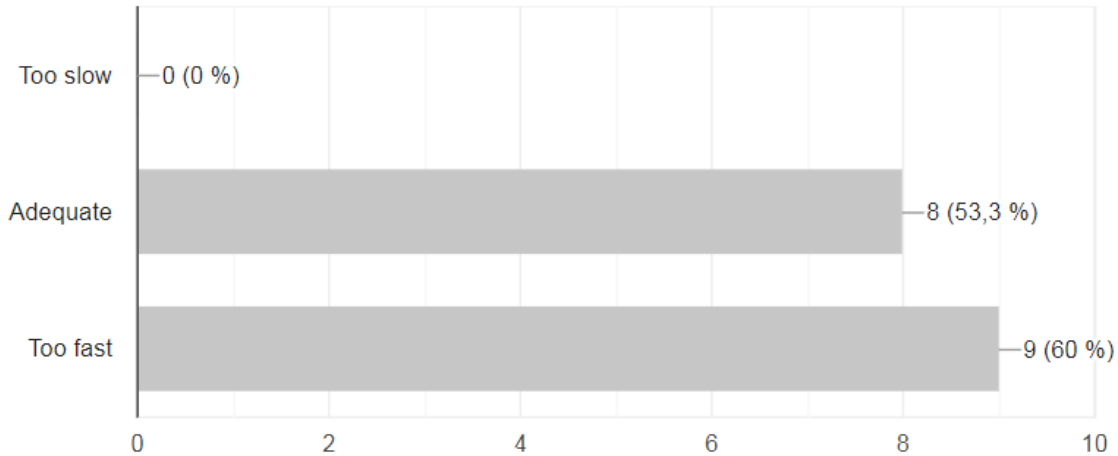
2.1.6. Training Conditions

The students rated the conditions of the course favourably, especially the teaching materials available on Google Drive. Nevertheless, the appreciation of the technical equipment provided by the partners - i.e. a video projection device for displaying slides on a large screen coupled with a camera for the retransmission of courses by Zoom - is more nuanced due to some Internet connection problems and insufficient visibility from some students located at the back of the room.

How would you rate the quality of the teaching materials given to you:
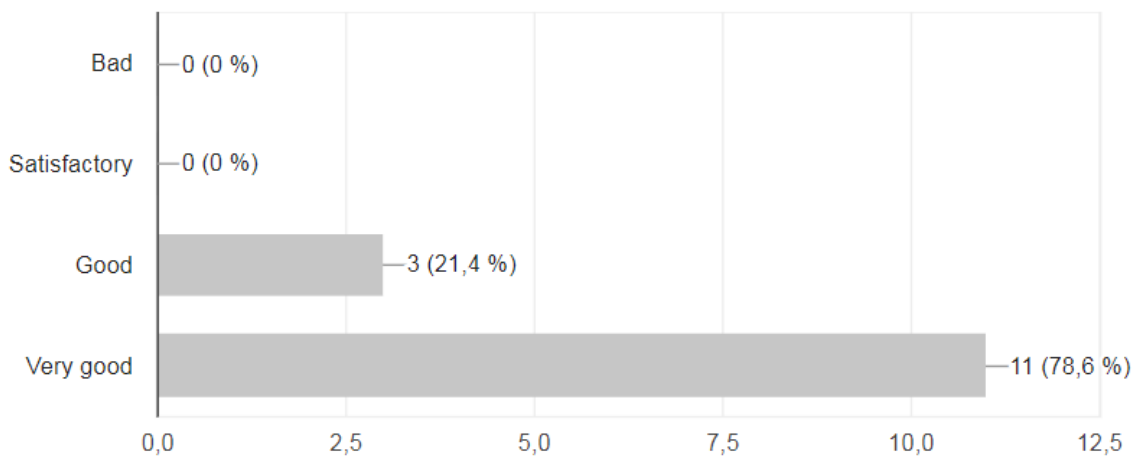
How would you rate the quality of the technical equipment provided to you and the other students:
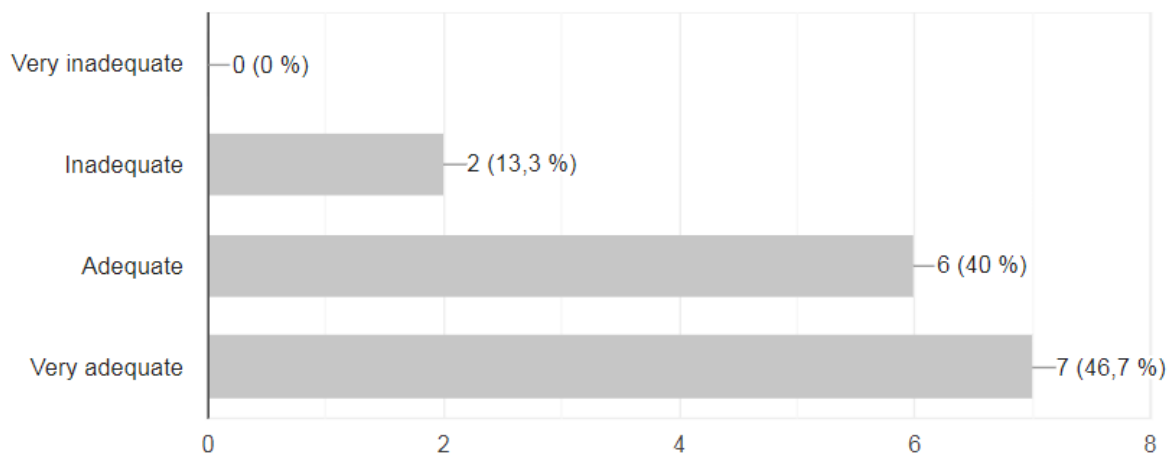
2.1.7. Concluding Thoughts

In conclusion, students primarily suggested lengthening the course or reducing the number of course elements. Among the suggestions, it was also mentioned to increase the number of practice-based classes and reduce the number of lectures. The need to eliminate minor technical issues was also mentioned.

How could the training course be improved (content, teaching methods, teaching material, etc.)?

- *If possible, enlarge the time for the training or dissociate the fact checking part from the data analysis and visualization one ? But it would lower the quality of the course... Anyway, this formation was really good (even more for a first).*
- *Increasing the time would be a good thing and the groups would also have more time to do their research.*
- *Better wifi. The content was good, I especially liked the coding class. Not having intense days every day. Having one extra day in Paris or any other city so you can "enjoy" the city. Since we didn't really have much time after class. More time for the case study. If the participants give permission: put everyone in a WhatsApp group beforehand.*
- *I think that the teaching methods were okay, but if we have too many lectures where we basically listen and sometimes discuss, we get tired quickly. I guess the most could be improved when it comes to the little organizational issues.*
- *Letting the student more time to learn the lessons materials & maybe fewer lessons but less in a rush.*
- *Maybe leave more time to do the case study, or say that it's just an exercise.*
- *Better time organization, more free time (maybe make this course 7 days instead of 6 :))*
- *With a little bit more time and maybe even more practical lessons.*

- *I feel that, for those who had never done data analysis with Google Sheets or anything, it may have been a bit short on this topic. I hope the plexiglas partitions won't be mandatory in the future because it is quite disturbing.*
- *Just give the sessions more time... After all we are all academics, therefore we are used to 3-4 hours complex courses.*
- *It would be great if another week was allotted only for the case study. It could even be done remotely.*
- *More Time! Shorter days.*
- *Allocate more time for using the tools.*
- *Maybe more practical exercises and more lecturers doing the work of data journalism (in another dimension than fact checking).*

Please share any additional thoughts or ideas you have about the training course and your experience of it?

- *The intervenants need to stay the way they were, really nice, concerned and professionnel! More time to share experiences with them maybe ? And the group project could be more "journalistic" (to adapt to the support of our choice, TV, radio, web or written... to have a more precise framework or something like that). And one more time, thank you for this week, it was perfect!*
- *I just want to add that the teachers were really exceptional. They were with us from the first moment until the last second.*
- *I loved it! And the people (yes, including the crew). Thank you!*
- *I cannot describe in words how amazing it was! Not only have I learnt a lot more than I expected to learn, I also got lots of inspiration and motivation. Besides, the group of people was simply amazing. The overall thought is (and it's not a joke) nothing will be the same after the course (in the positive meaning!)*
- *Overall it was an amazing experience!*
- *I could go on at length about my own experience, but I will summarize it by thanking you for this opportunity. And I hope that this course was as interesting for you as it was for me.*
- *It was the best decision to participate in this course. Thank you so much guys! I learned and got inspired a whole lot.*
- *I am grateful to Dario Compagno who told us about this course "The main stages of a data project, from data exploration to storytelling". I am thankful to everyone who participated in the organization of this week. I want to stay in touch with the other students, go to the Netherlands, Poland, and use all the tools we discovered for any reason whatsoever.*
- *As I said before, I believe students would benefit from introducing to one another their own fields of study before starting the training. I happen to come from the field of media studies but my particular master's degree focuses on cultural studies, media sociology and critical theory ; the students I met this week that come from Nanterre, for example, also come from*

media studies but their approach is more data-coding related. I strongly believe that, nowadays, media studies cannot be one thing or the other and should embrace each approach. This is, at least, what I aim to do and why I wanted to do this training. Anyhow, thanks everyone for such a great experience. I am truly thrilled :)

- *I think we might learn more if the courses were less like lectures and more like very practical exercises.*
- *Thank you so very much for this opportunity, I will candidate again without hesitation at any other class.*
- *The technical issues delayed the programme sometimes so maybe that could be prevented for upcoming sessions.*
- *Nothing in mind, thank you!*

2.2. Post-Training Evaluation

In addition to the on-the-spot evaluation, this second evaluation aims to analyse the impact of the MediaNumeric course on participants' activities, training and professional path after their attendance.

The Post-training Evaluation questionnaire was designed by INA, with the support of the MediaNumeric consortium. It was sent on April 5, 2022 by Centrum Cyfrowe to the students, approximately five weeks after the training session. Ten responses were obtained from the nineteen participants who took part in the training session; a participation rate of approximately 53%.

The statistics presented below are based on the analysis of these ten responses. As with the previous questionnaire, responses to the Google Forms questionnaire were anonymised so as not to restrict participants' freedom of expression.

2.2.1. Acquisition of New Skills

The students expressed themselves positively with regard to the ability of the training to provide them with new skills.

To what extent do you agree with the statement that this training course enabled you to acquire new skills? (1 for strongly disagree to 5 for strongly agree)
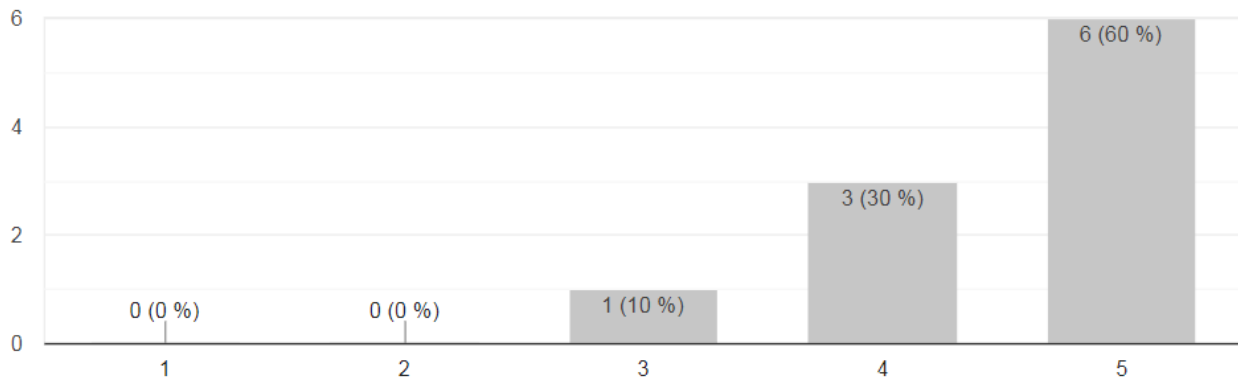
2.2.2. Practical Application of Knowledge

Nine out of ten students who responded to the post-training questionnaire believe they were able to put the knowledge acquired during the training course into practice in the short term, on all the topics covered by the MediaNumeric course, and in particular on those from module 2.

Have you been able to put the skills you acquired during the training course into practice?
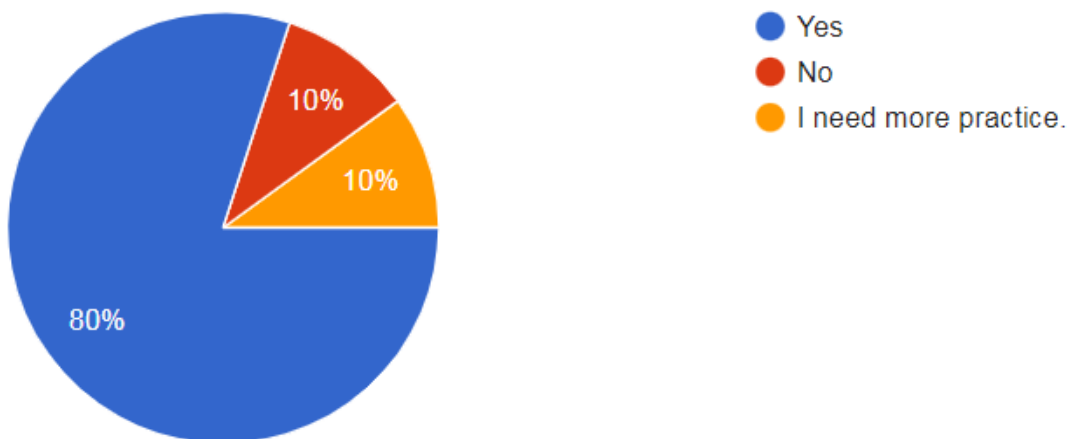
If yes, please share which particular skills you have put into practice since the training?

- *Data visualization.*
- *Storytelling and visualization skills.*
- *Graphs/Flourish.*

- *Checking information,*
- *cleaning and visualizing data, data search.*
- *Data visualization is what I learned the most and that I use at my university often.*
- *I am glad you showed us everything that you showed us since now I have a clear idea of how journalists do certain things. However, no one can learn code or visualization in 1 week. Some students will probably answer this question by saying that they are already putting these skills to use ; they probably already were before the course since they already had coding skills.*
- *Image reverse, modules like web archives, knowledge about the social role of medias and what is misinformation.*
- *Image reverse search, data visualization.*
- *Storytelling.*

2.2.3. Professional Perspectives

All participants recommended the course, stressing the fact that it allowed them both to consolidate their knowledge on subjects already partly studied and to open up their field of professional skills.

To what extent do you agree with the statement that the newly acquired skills have opened up new professional perspectives for you? (1 for strongly disagree to 5 for strongly agree)
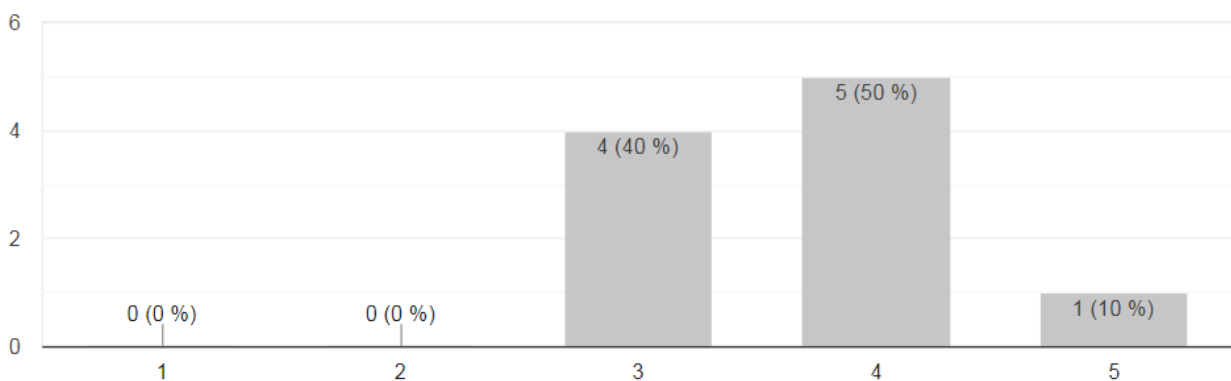
Please tell us to what extent do you agree with the statement that the skills acquired have enabled you to strengthen and broaden your knowledge in your original professional field? (1 for strongly disagree to 5 for strongly agree)
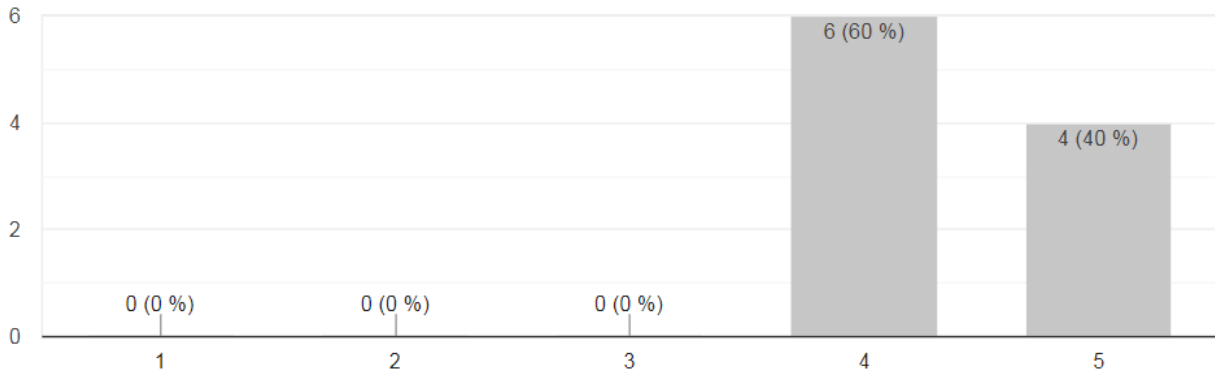
Would you recommend the MediaNumeric training course to your professional entourage or as part of your studies?
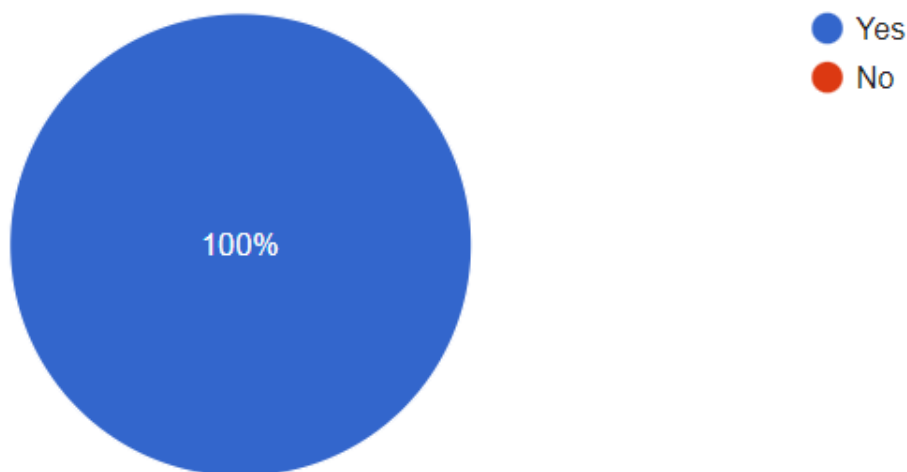
2.2.4. Participant Suggestions

To conclude, do you have any additional comments or suggestions to add?

- *Elaborate more on the tools. There was not enough time for practice.*
- *MediaNumeric training was very interesting to me. Today the knowledge acquired is useful to me whether at school and in the professional world.*
- *It was an amazing experience and I miss it & the people a lot!*

- *The case study seemed kind of rushed given how little the course lasted and how little we knew each other. I would have preferred having time to do exercises on the courses taught in the morning.*
- *I don't know if my case is particular or if other students are in the same situation but personally, I was in the middle of my school year during this formation. At the end of this week, I had to catch up with everything so I didn't have the time - yet - to go back through my notes. Maybe a global recap could be sent, like one month after (not to do the job for us but to remind us the main points / main tools or idk). I guess it would represent a lot of supplementary work so this is just a suggestion but personally, I am scared to forget everything by the time I will have a moment to go back through my notes. And I felt so supplemented right after the formation that now, all I fear is to have lost everything and that I might have missed important points in my notes and I probably won't remember it at all.*

3. Internal Evaluation

In addition to the assessment of the participant satisfaction, defined in deliverable 5.1, the MediaNumeric consortium has also conducted its own evaluation of the training session.

The purpose of this partner assessment is to provide overall feedback on the course in terms of content/teaching quality, but also to analyse how partners organised/executed it (what worked, what did not work as well), to ensure continuous improvement of the course (both programme/content and logistics) and to adjust and update the contents of the next on-site sessions.

This evaluation was carried out by all the partners present on-site during the training session, by cross-checking different criteria, trying to look at the nuances of the training content and teaching for each of the lectures individually or grouped around multiple lectures. This internal evaluation was completed at different levels: per lecture/workshop/teacher, per day, per thematic module, site visit, pitching session on Day 6, and globally.

To facilitate the evaluation work of the partners a questionnaire about the lectures was developed which was incorporated afterwards into Google Forms.

Finally, only a small number of partners were able to follow the lectures in the classroom due to Covid-constraints (25 people maximum in the room, which included students, teachers and MediaNumeric partners). A computer had been set up so that the partners who could not sit in on the lectures would have the possibility to follow them via Zoom in a different room. As the video streaming was not able to properly offer a full perspective on the execution of the lectures, the two questionnaires listed above were not able to diligently capture perspectives on every lecture by every partner.However, each partner in attendance took detailed notes based on the specific sessions they viewed in person, and on conversations with the students, teachers and each other, resulting in the documentation of individual assessments.

The evaluation that follows is based on these notes, on the feedback we had from the teachers, as well as on the reading and analysis of the comments provided by the participants in the on-the-spot evaluation questionnaire. An online meeting was organised the week following the course to gather all the feedback from the partners.

3.1. Global Evaluation

Global Satisfaction

Overall, the partners were very satisfied with the training session, which is in-line with the feedback expressed by the participants and the trainers. However, all the partners felt that the programme was too dense and that the participants needed more free time, especially to implement and practice the tools shown during the classes and to work on the case study. Despite this, students were very excited and engaged, which was greatly appreciated by the lecturers, who were very impressed with the amount of questions from the students.

Balance between Theory & Practice

The partners felt the course was of a high quality and diverse and they were pleased how available the teachers were for the students. As previously mentioned, there was not enough time to put the lectures into practice, which is a counterpart to having so many themes covered in such a short time. Thus, the balance between lectures and workshops could be readjusted with less lectures and more focus on workshops and group work.

3.2. Content Evaluation

Lectures

The course on 'Tools & databases: basic principles + choice of apps' was very technical and required more time for practice. The courses on 'Media ethics' and 'Social impact of journalism and media transitions' could be moved to the beginning of the course (Day 1), to 'set the scene'. For the technical lectures in Module 1 and 2 it would be better to limit the number of tools shown in classes (focus on one for example) and mention the rest in the handouts (links to additional tools, links to tutorials).

Study Visit

The partners and the students were all very interested in and impressed by the AFP study visit, during which the speakers showed great professionalism and availability, despite the circumstances (coverage of the war in Ukraine). For the next on-site session, if the focus should be more on data, then a study visit to NISV could be more applicable than a news-focussed study visit at ANP (The Dutch counterpart to AFP).

3.3. Pace and Progression

The informal networking events in the evening could be cancelled to free up time, but at the same time, they were nice opportunities for the participants to get to know each other. Logistically speaking, there was a lot of time spent on travelling to the different locations, that needs to be considered for the second session. In any case, the need for more free time in the afternoons for practice, group work and networking was clearly felt, which has encouraged partners to think

about offering a free afternoon for the students in the middle of the week, without losing content and course diversity.

3.4. Pedagogical Framework and Evaluation

Pedagogical Framework

The participants seemed to be asking for more clarity on what was expected of them at the beginning of the course (quizzes, satisfaction questionnaire, work on the case study), although the pedagogical framework was presented to them on Day 1. The partners should communicate clearly from the beginning that the students will get 5 ECTS at the end of the course, which is quite a lot for a training week. It is therefore expected from them that they work a lot, and then the intensive nature of the course will be more easily expected.

In addition to a 'teaching assistant' who can answer questions on the lectures and workshops, it would be useful to have a 'classroom assistant' who is technically savvy with data/technical matters that are relevant to some technical workshops. They could then help teachers in answering student questions during their workshops (e.g. someone who is experienced with the Flourish tool for the 'Techniques and tools adapted to multimedia storytelling' workshop).

Evaluation

The quizzes went very well: one student did not pass but took a resit on March 4, in which she passed. In terms of planning, it would be better to schedule the quizzes in the early morning rather than immediately after a lecture/workshop, as the students are all exhausted by then and also to give the students more time to revise.

3.5. Case Study

For some students, it was not very clear that the evaluation of the work for the case study did not count for the final evaluation of the training. Indeed, case studies were not being taken into the grading even though a lot of focus was put on these. That's why a clear evaluation criteria, shared with the students, is needed beforehand for the case studies.

Furthermore, to avoid losing time on Day 1 and Day 2 in the research of data sets, the partners could provide data sets to students rather than ask them to find their own.

The 'coach role' could be more clearly defined to the students on Day 0 or Day 1: presentations of the coach profiles and their expertise, how they support the students through the case study, etc.

For the evaluation of the case study pitches during the first training session, the panel made up of Jacqueline Pietsch, Kuba Piwowar and Susannah Montgomery as the review/feedback team was a good trio because they represented different key skills the students were expected to master

during the intensive course (data, storytelling, media ethics). They were also each from a different professional background and geographic location. The diversity of coaches is something the partners could more obviously embrace/promote in the next on-site training sessions. The panel should also be determined beforehand, not right before the pitches.

3.6. Communication with Students and Lecturers

Communication with the Students

Some students found that accessing the documents on Google Drive was a bit troublesome. The partners need to collect both university and personal email addresses from each student, to properly access the Drive (mention handouts, better structure of the Participants' space). Thus, the partners have to make sure the students have access to the teaching materials on the Google Drive at the beginning of the course (Day 0).

Moreover, a direct live communication tool with students (Basecamp, Slack or Whatsapp group) could be considered, and condense emails into key communications with all expectations laid out from the beginning.

Communication with the Speakers

The partners must be mindful of the effects of their communication with lecturers: amount of things to do vs. agreed upon fee based on a smaller amount of things to do specified at the beginning. Speakers received a lot of information from multiple partners. Partners must be careful not to scatter too much information across multiple channels (emails, Basecamp, Google Drive…) or at least to be clear which tool is used for what purpose.

3.7. Technical and Organisational Aspects

Partners should consider drafting a technical check-list for the course (what is needed and when, drive back-up, IT support in-house, back-up plans for Internet problems, etc.) It could also be useful to assign roles to all people from MediaNumeric present during the training week.

4. Conclusion

The MediaNumeric training course is evaluated in various ways:
- The assessment of participant satisfaction ('on-the-spot' evaluation and delayed-evaluation).
- The internal evaluation led by the consortium during and after the training course.

The assessment conducted at the end of the first training session reveals a high level of satisfaction from the participants, which is in accordance with the positive overall feedback expressed by the trainers and the MediaNumeric consortium.

Among the main factors appreciated by the participants, we can mention the quality of the trainers and the relevance of the training program, which has met its objectives by providing a good overview of all the topics related to data-journalism, creative storytelling and fact-checking. The students also enjoyed the diversity of the courses, which were up-to-date and in-line with market trends. Finally, the participants also liked the fact that the training course encourages exchanges and networking between them and with the trainers.

Nevertheless, the participants also pointed out some weaknesses and areas of improvement that were taken into account by the consortium for the second training session in The Hague. Apart from minor technical problems, we can mention in particular the excessive density of the program, with a lot of intensive activities in a relatively short period of time, which did not allow participants enough time to put the learning into practice and work on the case study.