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Shanghai's audio describers profile

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Context: accessibility in China

- Media accessibility in China is lagging behind
- Audio description in China: the case of Shanghai
 - Among the most developed in China
 - First AD film screened in 2009
 - 17 cinemas that show a Chinese AD movie a month
 - 14 movies a year in cinemas, 2,000 viewers
 - Life AD in cinemas and registered AD in social centres in districts
 - Support from Shanghai Local Government (2014)





Aims

- Describe audio describers profile in China
- Identify their needs
- Ultimately contribute to define adequate training
- Compare results in China with other countries with more tradition and research

Methodology

- Online questionnaire based on EU-funded project ADLAB PRO



- Web Survey Creator
- Piloted + accessibility issues taken into account
- Distributed to 2 groups between 22nd July and 15th September

Methodology

Questionnaire divided into 5 parts:

1. Demographic profile
2. Activity as audio describers
3. Status of AD and the professional circle
4. Educational background and AD training
5. Skills and competences

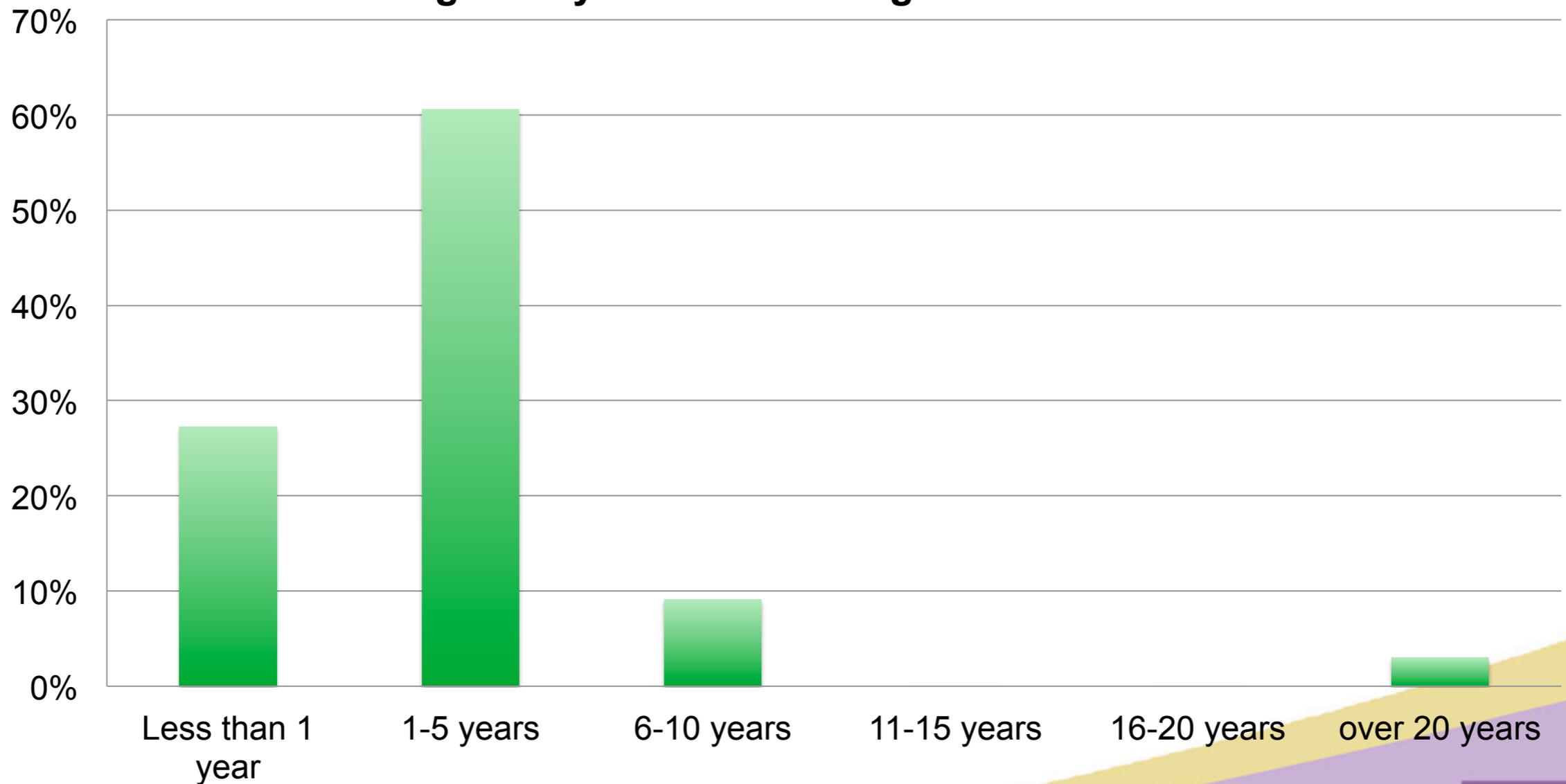
Sample

33 informants (24% men, 76% women)

- Province of origin: Shanghai (76%)
- Mother tongue: Mandarin (85%) (100% AD are in Mandarin)
- Age: 30-50 years old (70%)
- Highest level of education: Undergraduate + postgraduate (94%)

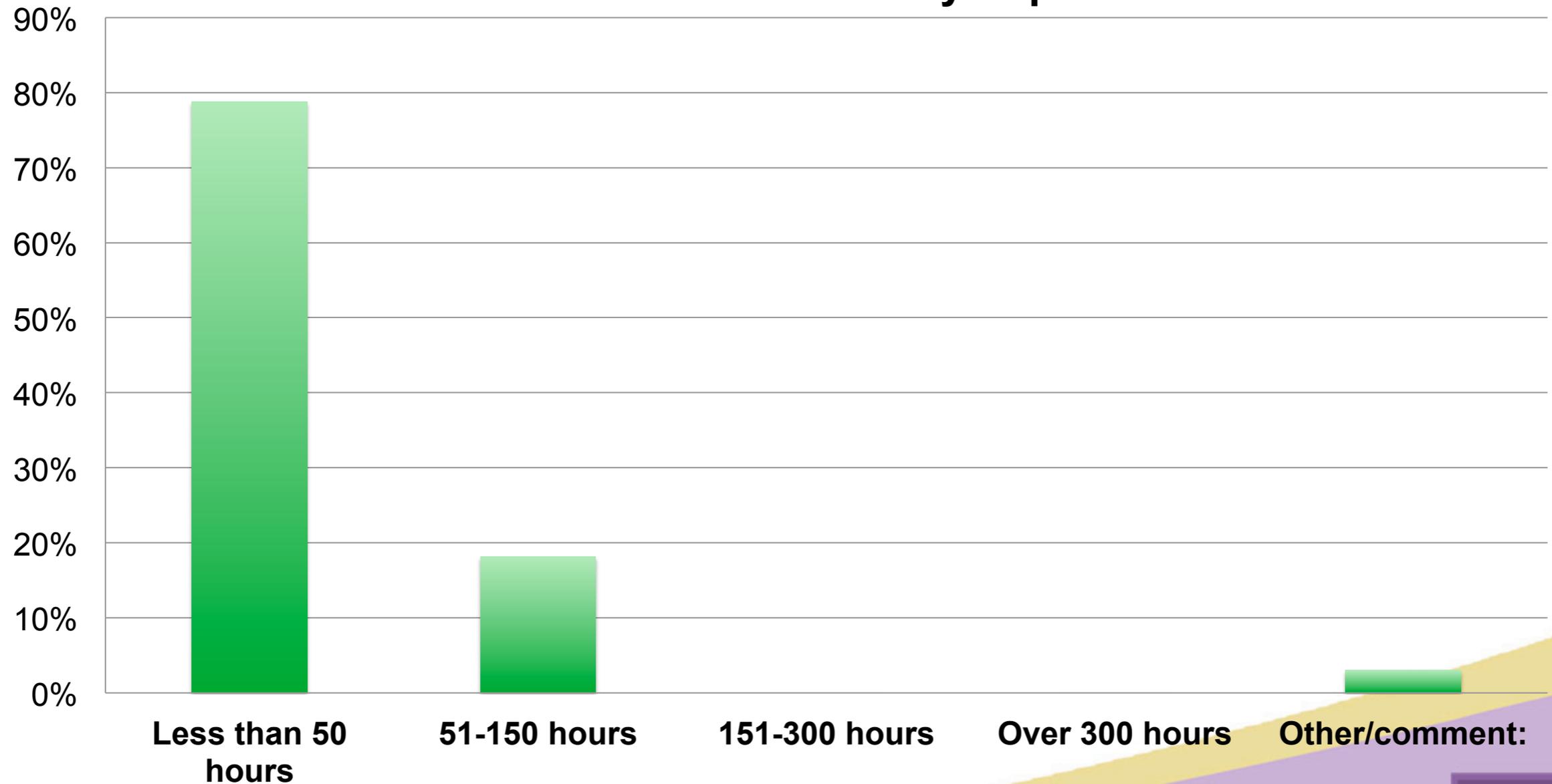
Results: activity as audio describers

How long have you been working as an audio describer?



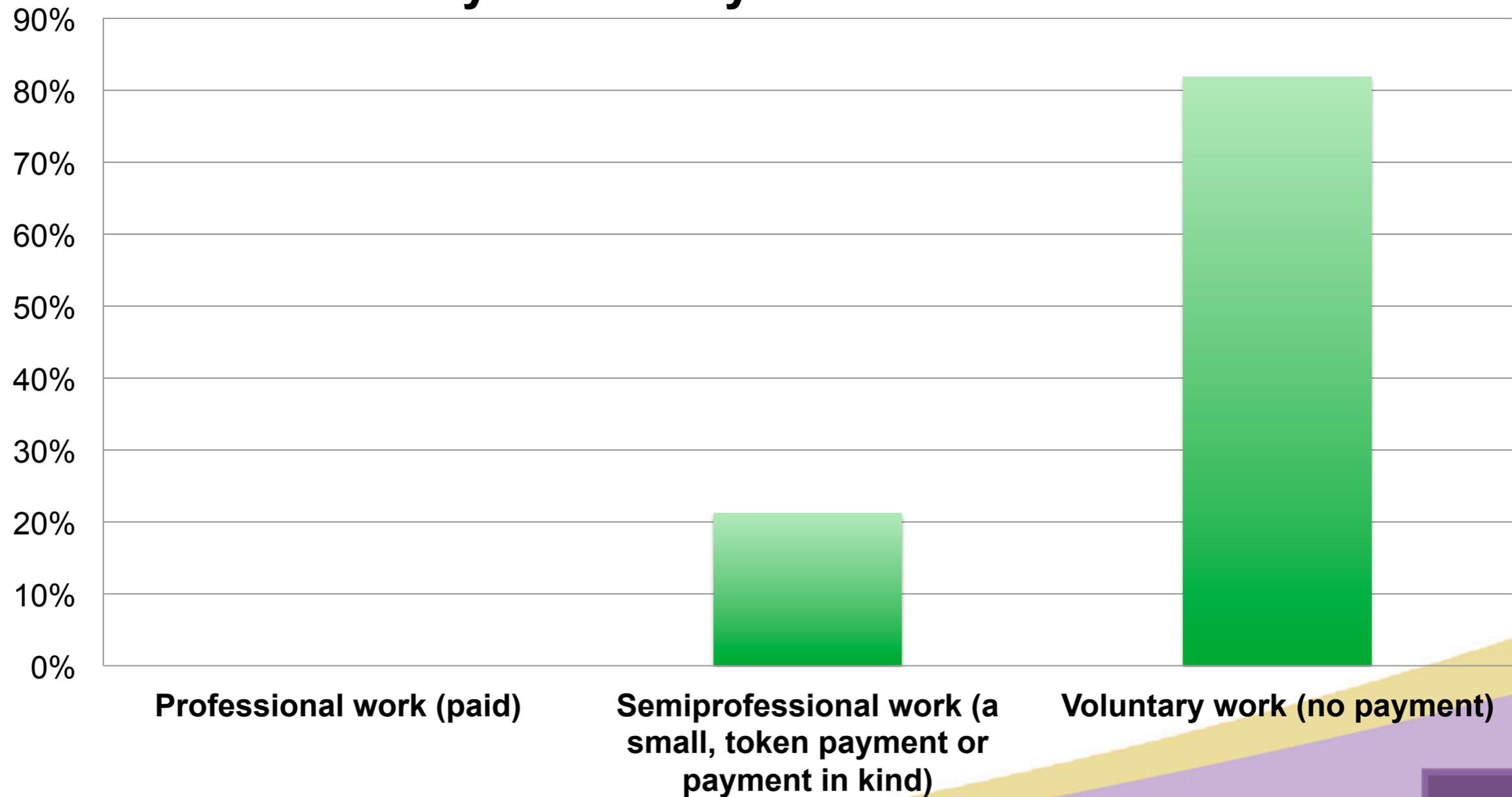
Results: activity as audio describers

How much AD material have you produced?



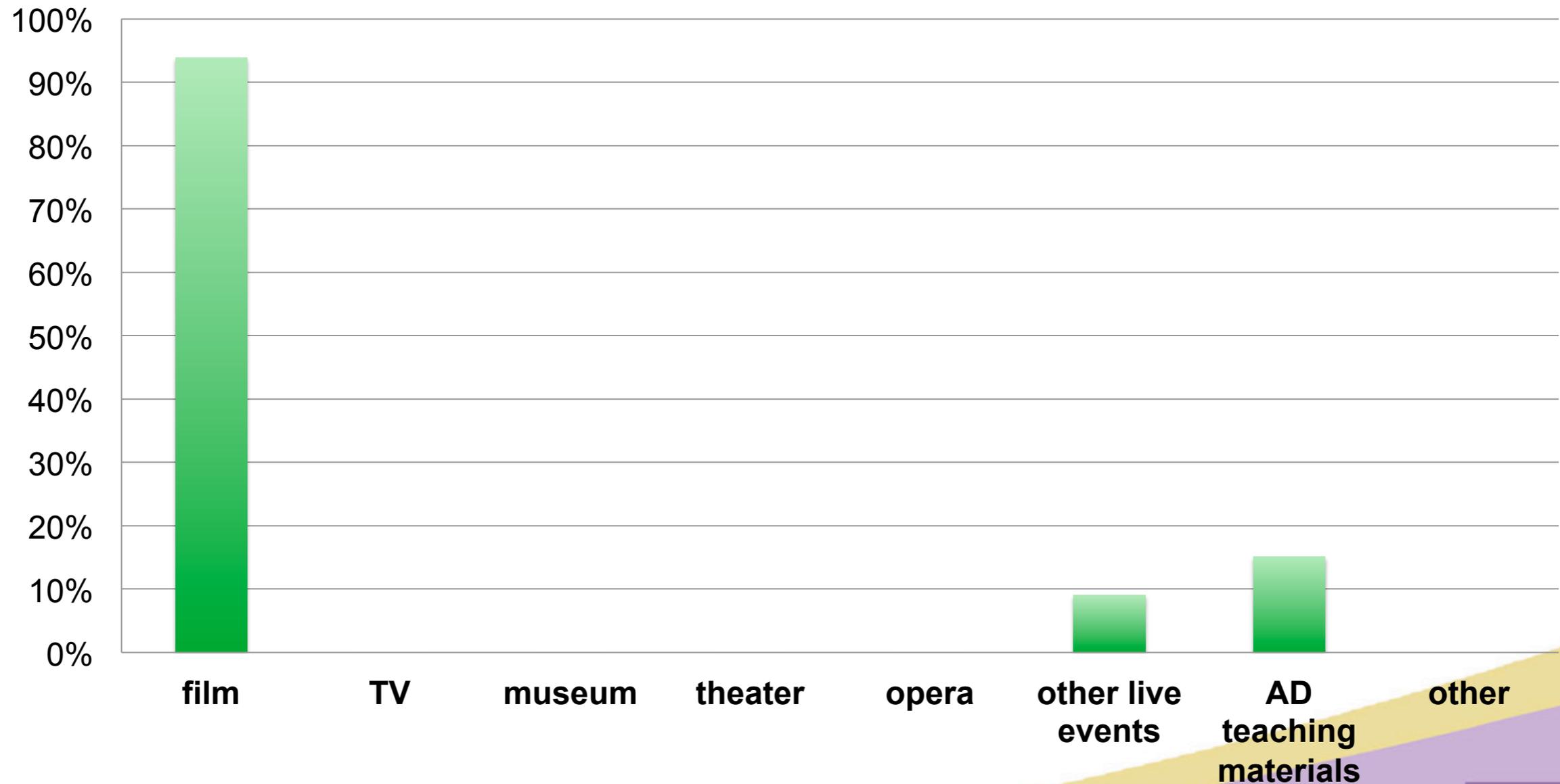
Results: activity as audio describers

Is your activity as an audio describer



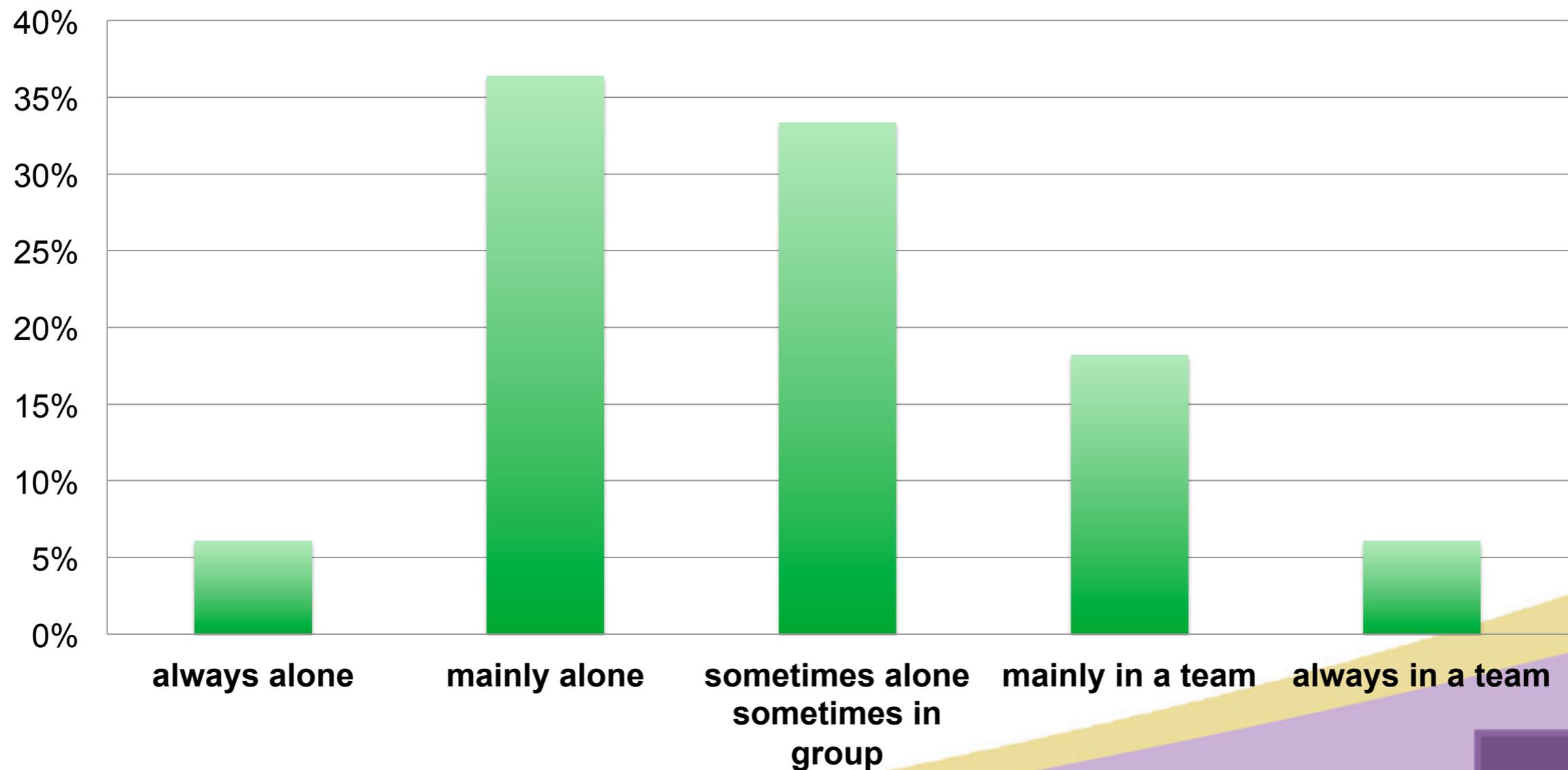
Results: activity as audio describers

What type of products do you audio describe most often?



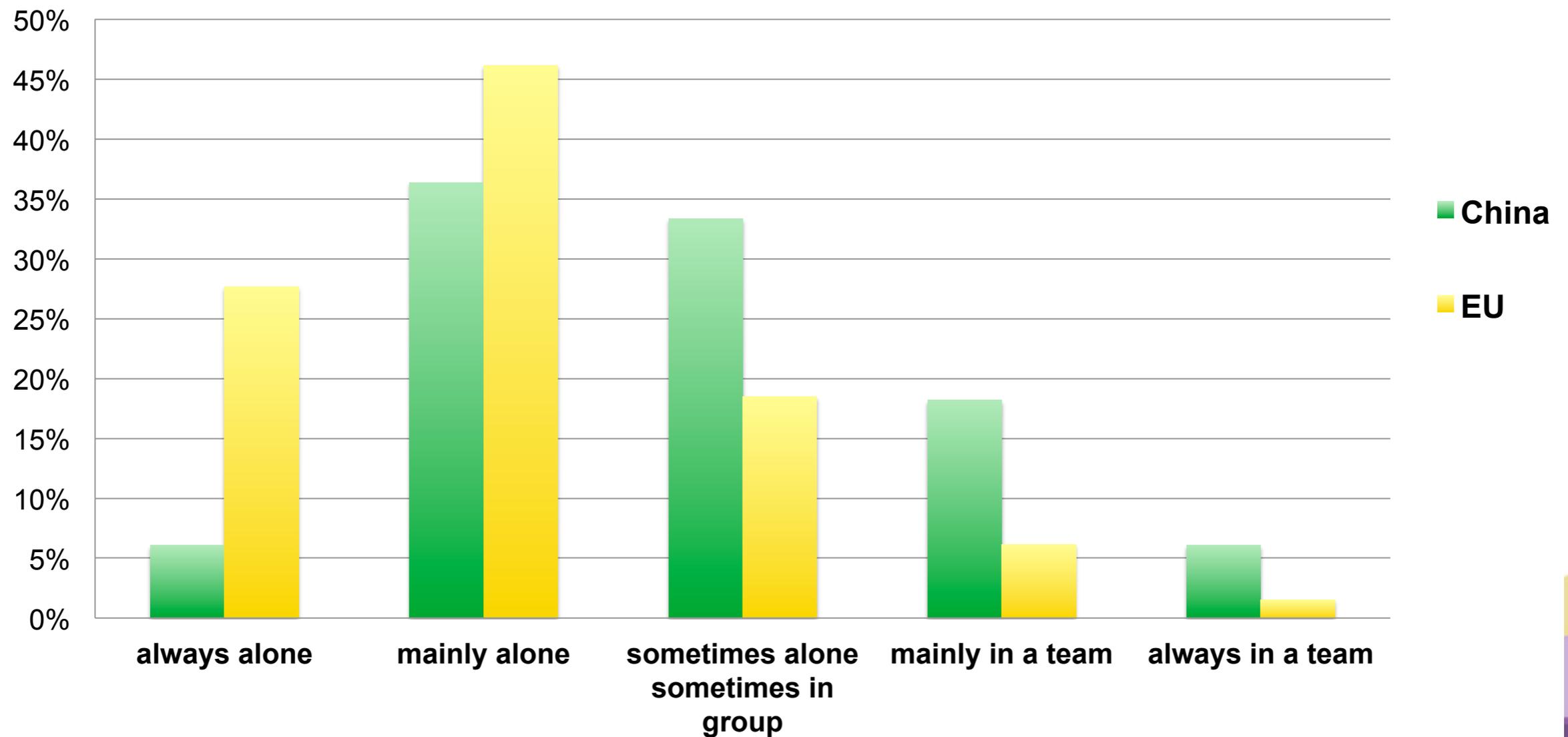
Results: activity as audio describers

When you prepare audio descriptions, do you work alone or in a team?



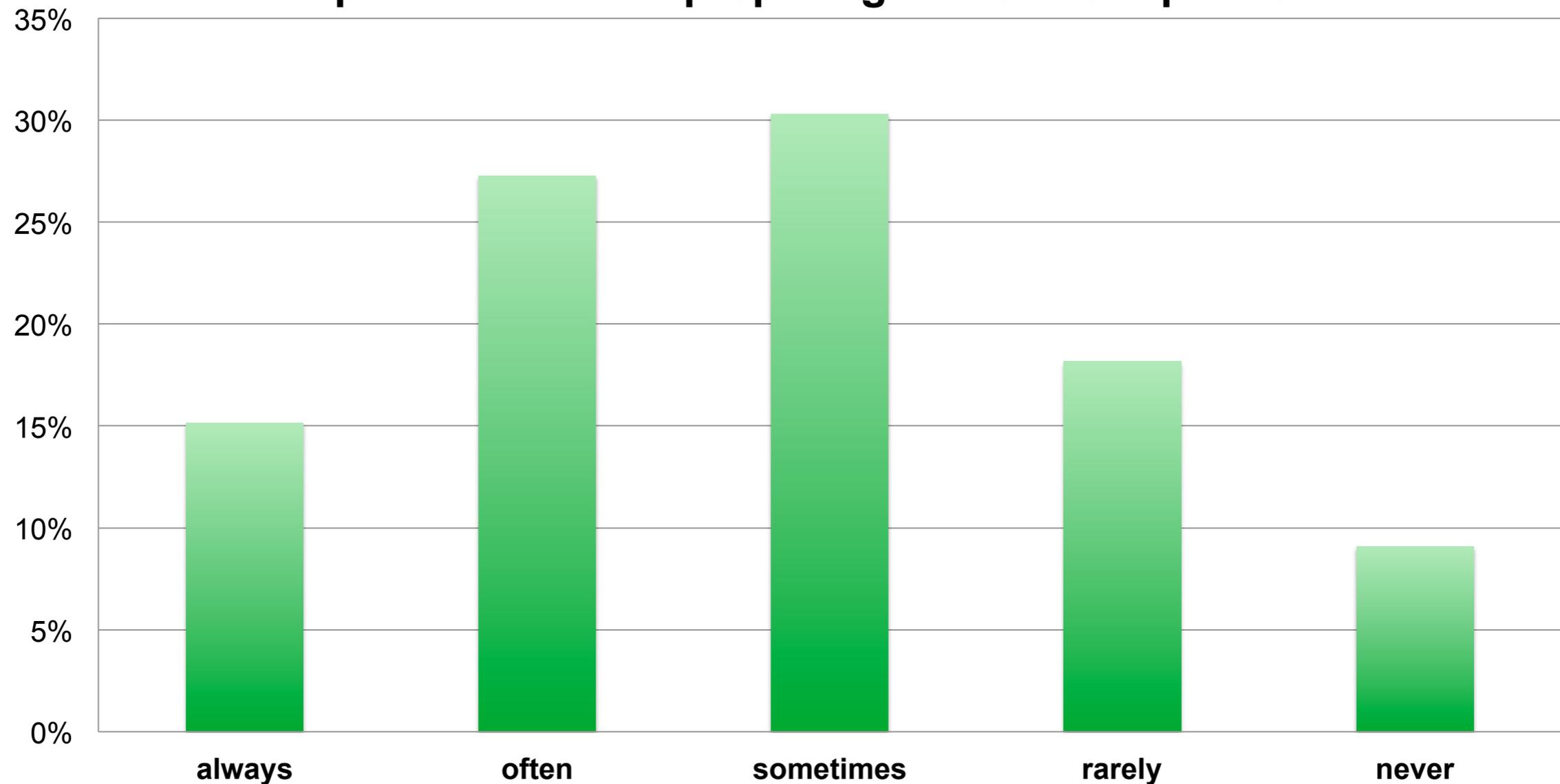
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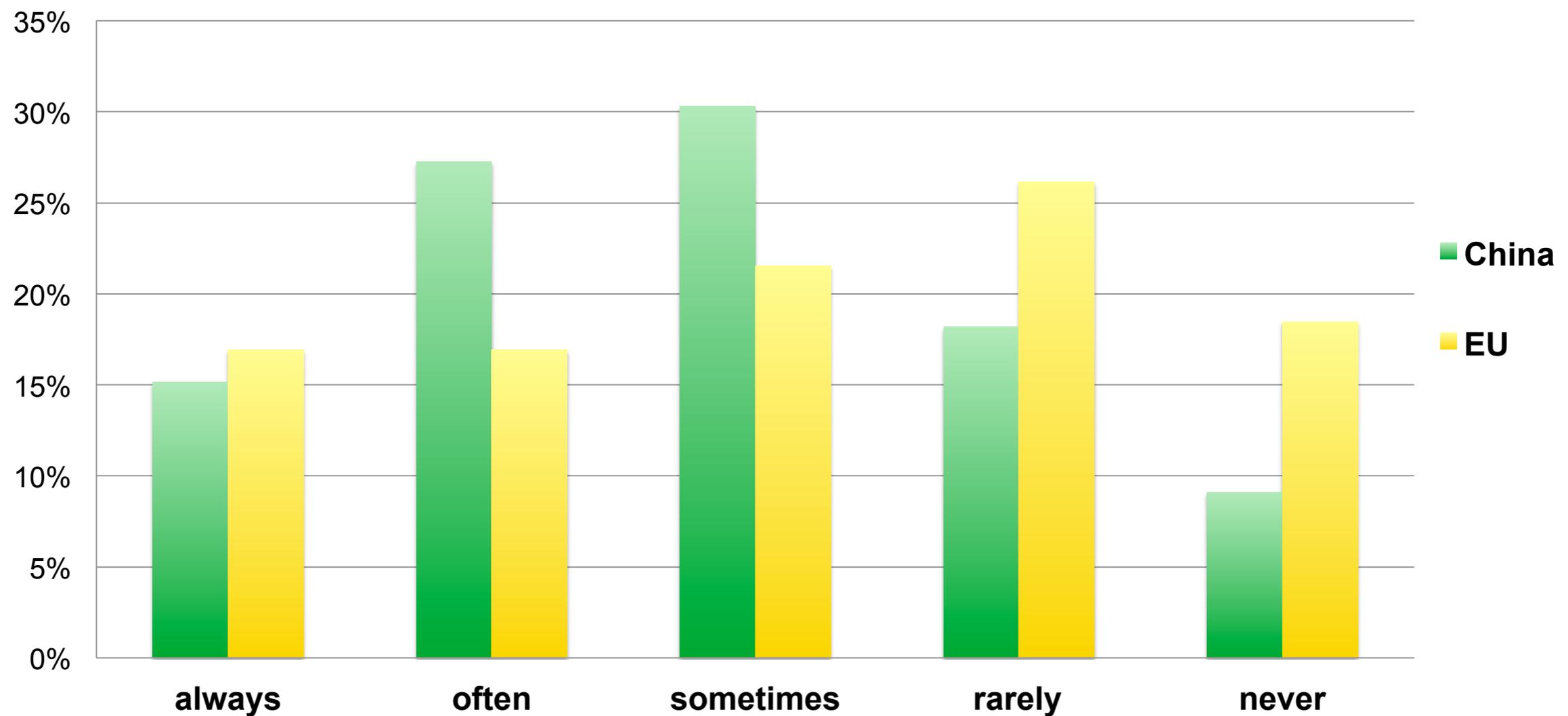
Results: activity as audio describers

How often do you cooperate with persons with visual impairments when preparing audio descriptions?



Results: activity as audio describers

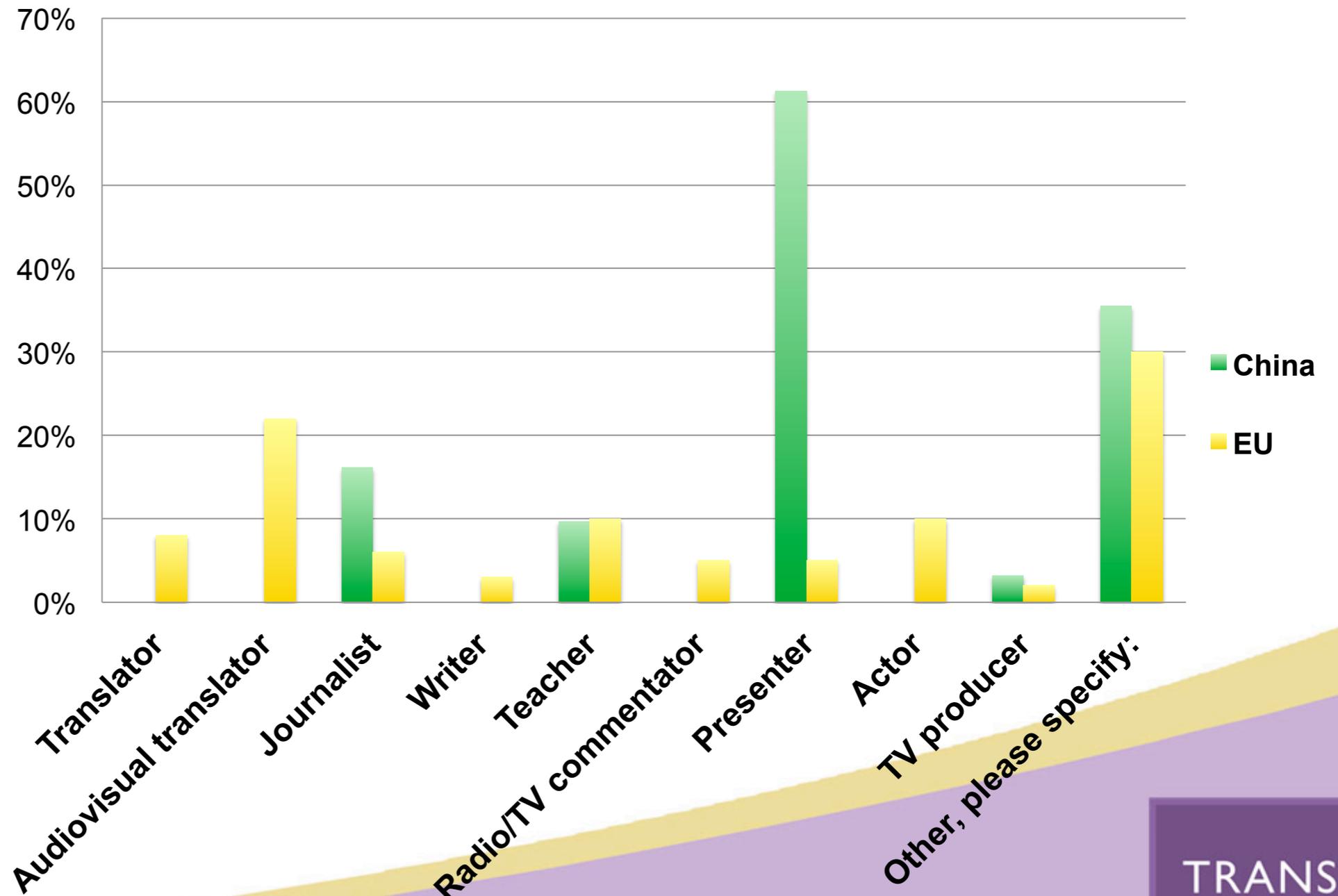
How often do you cooperate with persons with visual impairments when preparing audio descriptions?



Results: status of AD and the professional circle

Two main profiles:

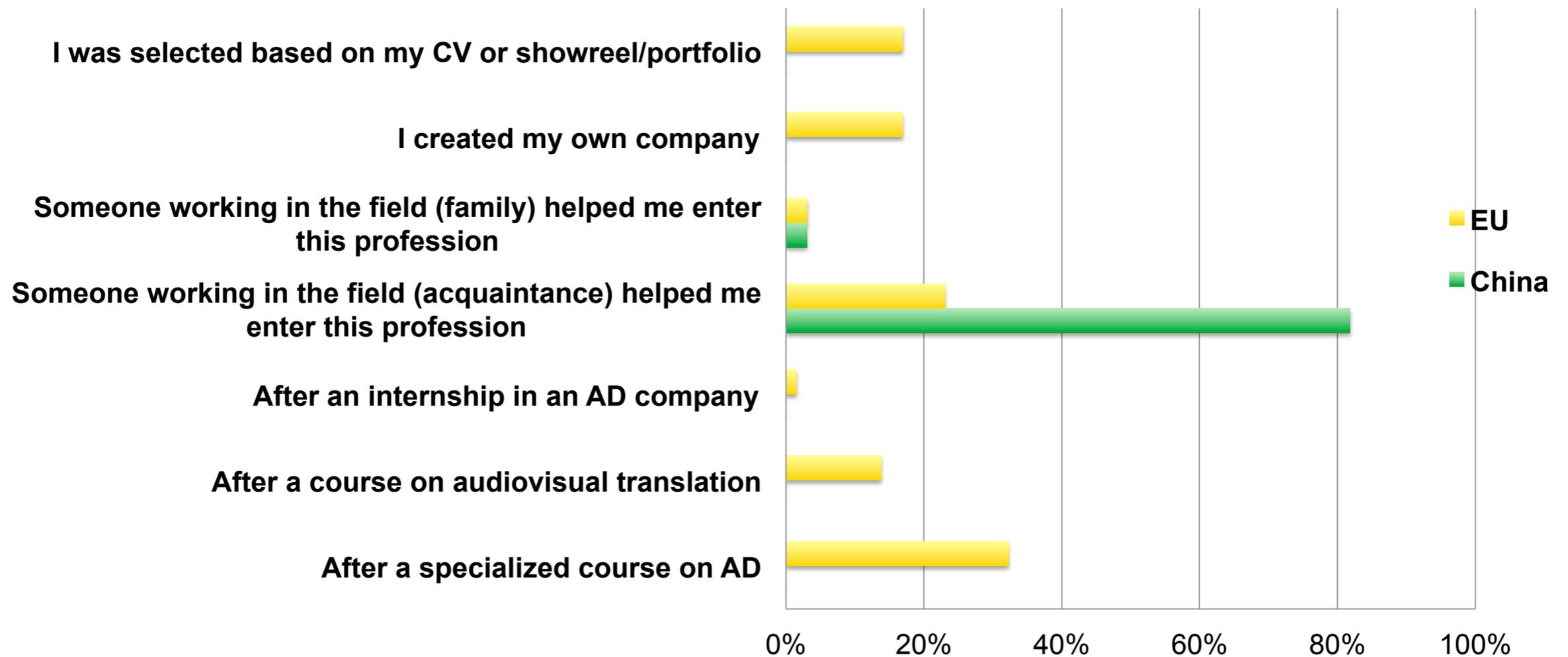
- Presenters
- Journalists



Results: status of AD and the professional circle

The main route of entry into AD in China is through interpersonal relations (family, friends and acquaintances)

How did you start working as an audio describer?



Results: educational background and AD training

- Educational background: Journalism, Language & Linguistics, Literature, Film & TV Studies
- No training at all on media accessibility: 76%
- In-house training: especially with films
- No certificate
- Only 33% are aware of the existence of guidelines
- Experience in the field and analysis of existing AD are their main ways of learning and improving

Results: skills and competences

Soft skills needed

Be assertive and fight for the quality of AD provision	100%
Cope with time pressure	97%
Improvise	97%
Organize work efficiently	94%
Know when to call for expert help	94%
Have good communicative and interpersonal skills	94%

Results: skills and competences

Theoretical knowledge and understanding needed:

Language and linguistics (e.g. knowing the principles of text analysis, text cohesion and coherence, etc.)	88%
Target group: types of visual impairment, user perception and cognitive processing, disabled needs	85%
AD principles, guidelines and standards	79%
Scriptwriting	79%
AD history, status, and applicable scenarios (e.g. museum)	76%
World knowledge	76%
Translation studies and audiovisual translation	73%
Media accessibility (standards, legislation, guidelines, technologies, etc.)	70%

Results: skills and competences

Technical knowledge and skills needed:

AD voicing	94%
AD script writing and textual editing	91%
AD recording	88%
Mixing AD with original sound	85%
Use of AD software	79%
Technology of AD provision	76%

Results: skills and competences

Most important difficulties

Compiling an audio introduction	78,79%
Choosing the most appropriate wording	75,76%
Possessing excellent command of mother tongue	72,73%
Selecting significant visual information	72,73%
Using language that sparks imagination	72,73%
AD script writing and textual editing	69,70%
Expressing meaning succinctly	69,70%
Mixing AD with original sound	69,70%

Concluding remarks

- Shanghai: example of grass-root initiatives (with local government support).
- AD mainly in movies, live in cinemas or recorded.
- Chinese AD lacks official guidelines (in-house).
- AD writing and delivery are clearly separated.

Concluding remarks

- AD is considered to be volunteer work.
- Audio describers have little working experience.
- Room for improvement: lack of official guidelines, training and professional status.
- Remarkable differences with respect to EU results (activity, status and training), but not so important as for skills and competences needed.
- Training by ADLAB PRO project can be very useful in China.

Acknowledgments

- ADLAB PRO (2017). Report on IO2: Audio description professional: Profile definition. Retrieved from www.adlabproject.eu
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Thank you!

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