



**Intercultural Professional Development in Hospitality
AGREEMENT NUMBER – 2021-1-IE01-KA220-VET-0033351**

R1/A1: Needs Analysis

NATIONAL REPORT

PART 1: National Socio-Economic Report

Name of the Country: **ITALY**

Please reply to the following questions with no more than 50 words:

1. What are the basic pillars of the national economy (References to agriculture, industry, construction, domestic market etc.)?

The Italian Economy is essentially based on services and manufacturing. Taking as a reference the GDP of 2020, a year in which there was a strong recession due to the health crisis (around 9% of GDP), the primary sector (agriculture) accounted for around 2%, the secondary sector (industry) for 24% (of which 4% was construction and 20% industry in the strict sense) and the tertiary sector (services) for 74%. In terms of employment, the three sectors account respectively for 4%, 23% and 73%. These proportions are in line with those observed on average in the European Union and developed countries. The main component of Italy's industrial tissue is manufacturing, both in terms of added value (72%) and number of workers (67%). Fashion and furniture industries have contributed to building the power of the 'Made in Italy' brand around the world, and they are therefore among the most important sectors. Beverage, chemical, pharmaceutical, machinery and transports' industries are important too. It is worth remembering that small and medium enterprises are predominant. In 2018, companies with 0-9 employees accounted for around 95% of active enterprises and 43.7% of total employment. In the same year, large enterprises (250 employees and more) accounted for just 0.1% of enterprises, but 22.7% of total employment. In the field of services, the main sector is trade, but information, transport and storage services are also important, as well as tourism activities, which continue to play an important role despite the setback caused by Covid-19 crisis.

2. What is the situation of the labour market (employment rates, wages and salaries, employment of third country nationals, employment of European migrants etc.)?

The employment rate is 58.6% (ISTAT, October 2021), unemployment rate is 9.4%. The global average annual salary (GGA) in Italy is around 30,000 Euro,

while the gross average annual salary (RAL) is 29,500 euro (about 1,700 euro net/month). 67% of employees are below the national average. Foreigners produce 9% of GDP: the 45% is employed in services. In 2020, due to the Pandemic, Italy registered an unprecedented drop in employment (-456 thousand, -2.0% compared to 2019) associated with a sharp decrease in unemployment (-271 thousand, -10.5%) and an increase in inactivity (+567 thousand, +4.3%). The employment rate of the population aged 15-64, which had reached an all-time high in 2018 and 2019, decreased by one percentage point to 58.1 %. Historically, the country is divided into a highly industrialized and developed northern part, where about 75% of the nation's wealth is produced, and a less developed southern part that is more dependent on agriculture. As a result, unemployment in the north is lower and per capita income is higher than in the south.

3. What is the country's level in terms of economic and financial indicators such as stock exchange, financial results, national debt, and business service? (Where possible, please provide percentages from European or World Bank reports)

In 2021, GDP at market prices amounted to EUR 1,781,221 million at current prices, showing an increase of 7.5% compared to the previous year. In volume terms, GDP grew by 6.6%. An analysis of economic and financial indicators must take into account that in 2020 the Italian economy contracted by an exceptional amount due to the economic effects of the containment measures connected to the health emergency: GDP in volume terms fell by 8.9 %, national final consumption in volume terms fell by 7.8 %: resident household spending fell by 10.7 % while public administration spending grew by 1.6%. Investments also showed a significantly negative trend (-9.1 % in 2020). Exports of goods and services decreased by 13.8 % and imports by 12.6 %. On the supply side of goods and services, value added declined in all sectors, particularly in manufacturing and in some service sectors. The only increase was recorded in the information and communication services sector (+1.9 %). However, 2021 showed more positive trends. On the domestic demand side, there was a 17.0% increase in gross fixed capital formation and a 4.1% increase in domestic final consumption in volume terms. As regards foreign flows, exports of goods and services rose by 13.3% and imports by 14.5%. Economic estimates for 2022 are positive (Bank of Italy, Istat). GDP is expected to return to sustained expansion from the spring onwards, coinciding with the improvement in the health outlook, recovering to pre-pandemic levels by mid-2022. The expansion of economic

activity is then expected to continue at a sustained pace, albeit less markedly than observed after the mid-2021 reopening. GDP is expected to increase by an annual average of 3.8% in 2022, 2.5% in 2023 and 1.7% in 2024. The number of people in employment is likely to increase more gradually and recover pre-crisis levels by the end of 2022. This positive picture would also be linked to the expected results of the fiscal policy's implementation and of the interventions outlined in the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR). Italy's unemployment rate will fall from 9.6% in 2021, to 8.9% in 2022 to 8.4% in 2023. Italy's debt is also expected to fall from 154.6 % of GDP in 2021 to 150.4 % in 2022 and 148.6 % in 2023. (OECD data). The implementation of structural reforms to digitalise and simplify the justice system, increase competition, especially in services, and improve the effectiveness of the public administration "remains crucial" for Italy, along with tax reform to reduce the tax wedge and the complexity of labour taxes, according to the section devoted to Italy in the OECD's Economic Outlook, presented in Paris.

4. What is the country's level in terms of social indicators such as education, health, employment and unemployment rates, participation, safety, and gender equality? (Where possible, please provide percentages from Eurydice or other European or World Bank reports)

According to the indicators of the OECD Better Life Index, Italy ranks above the average in terms of health, work-life balance and civic engagement, while it ranks below average in terms of income, employment, education, environmental quality, social relations and life satisfaction. Once again, an analysis of social indicators must take into account the current post-pandemic situation and the effects that the health emergency has had on education, health, employment and unemployment, sense of safety, and other sectors. Absolute poverty rose sharply and affected more than 2 million households (7.7% from 6.4% in 2019) and more than 5.6 million individuals (9.4% from 7.7%) in 2020. Consistent with consumption trends, the condition worsened more in the North than in the Centre and the South. In the South, the household incidence is still the highest (9.4%), in the Centre the lowest (5.4%). Citizens perceived a worsening of their family's economic conditions in 20.5% of cases.

Education lags far behind other EU27 countries, especially university education: only 20.1% of 25–64-year-olds have a tertiary degree in Italy, compared to 32.5% in EU27.

As already mentioned before, the strong 2021 rebound from COVID-19 is forecast to ease progressively in 2022 and 2023, with growth of 4.6% and 2.6%.

The recovery is expected to benefit from supportive fiscal policy, including investment financed through Next Generation EU funds, and progressively normalising services activity. A gradual rise in employment should support steady consumption growth. The recent increase in headline inflation is expected to moderate, but core inflation is forecast to rise as spare capacity declines and purchasing power increases.

5. Are there any socio-economic threats to the country and its citizens?

As already mentioned before, social and economic estimates for 2022 are quite optimistic, but this scenario is highly dependent on assumptions about the evolution of the pandemic and the effects of support measures, including those included in the PNRR. A worsening of the epidemiological framework, compared to that assumed, could lead to greater restrictions on mobility and negatively affect consumer and business confidence, hampering the recovery of economic activity. Clearly the projections remain conditional on the full and effective implementation of the actions foreseen in the PNRR. Moreover, additional risk factors are related to developments in the recent Russia-Ukraine conflict.

Speaking more generally, social protection systems in Italy are mainly based on public social insurance schemes whose main source of financing is labour income and the saving attitude of households. The Italian population is ageing and the new generations are experiencing a precariousness that undermines the foundations of the system and does not allow for a level of spending comparable to previous generations, with a related erosion of family assets. The state pension system and health care are struggling to fulfil their functions despite recent reforms.

6. What is the level of training of staff working in the tourism industry in terms of intercultural skills?

In Italy, the framework of intercultural competences in the tourism sector is fluid and not well defined. Tourism industry personnel come partly from vocational schools and partly from family heritage. The levels of cognitive, emotional and behavioural dimensions of intercultural competences of Italian hotels' employees are good, but without being necessarily supported by a structured training. On the whole, staff working in the hotel sector rarely possess specific skills or qualifications in the field of intercultural communication. The skills

acquired derive largely from experience “in the field” for those who work in close contact with tourists or colleagues coming from extra-European contexts. Focusing on the offer of training courses, the Italian framework seems to be quite limited. Some universities have recently opened specialisation courses in these subjects: the University of Roma Tre (Rome) and the University of Genoa are two of them that it’s worth mentioning. The latter, in particular, has introduced a course in Intercultural Didactics for Tourism (<https://unige.it/off.f/2021/ins/51217>) in the year 2021/2022. This initiative is an absolute novelty in the pedagogical panorama of the national educational offer.

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- ***RAPPORTO SULLA COMPETITIVITA' DEI SETTORI PRODUTTIVI 2021, ISTAT, REPORT ON THE COMPETITIVENESS OF PRODUCTIVE SECTORS, 2021 Edition, Italian National Statistical Institute, available at: <https://www.istat.it/storage/settori-produttivi/2021/Rapporto-competitivit%C3%A0.pdf>***
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- ***OECD BETTER LIFE INDEX, Italy, available at: <https://www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org/it/countries/italy-it/>***
- ***ECONOMIC BULLETIN N. 1, January 2022, Bank of Italy, available at: <https://www.bancaditalia.it/pubblicazioni/bollettino-economico/2022-1/index.html?com.dotmarketing.htmlpage.language=1>***
- ***ITALY ECONOMIC OUTLOOK, ISTAT (Italian National Statistical Institute), available at: <https://www.istat.it/en/archivio/264321>***
- ***OECD Economic Surveys, Italy, available at: <https://www.oecd.org/economy/surveys/Italy-2021-OECD-economic-survey-overview.pdf>***
- ***ROMA TRE UNIVERSITY COURSE, Master in Languages, Intercultural Communication and Tourism Management, information available at: <http://masterlinguaggiturismo.uniroma3.it/index.php?page=organizzazione-didattica>***
- ***UNIVERSITY OF GENOVA COURSE, Intercultural Education for Tourism, information available at: <https://unige.it/off.f/2021/ins/51217>***

PART 2: Analysis of Questionnaires

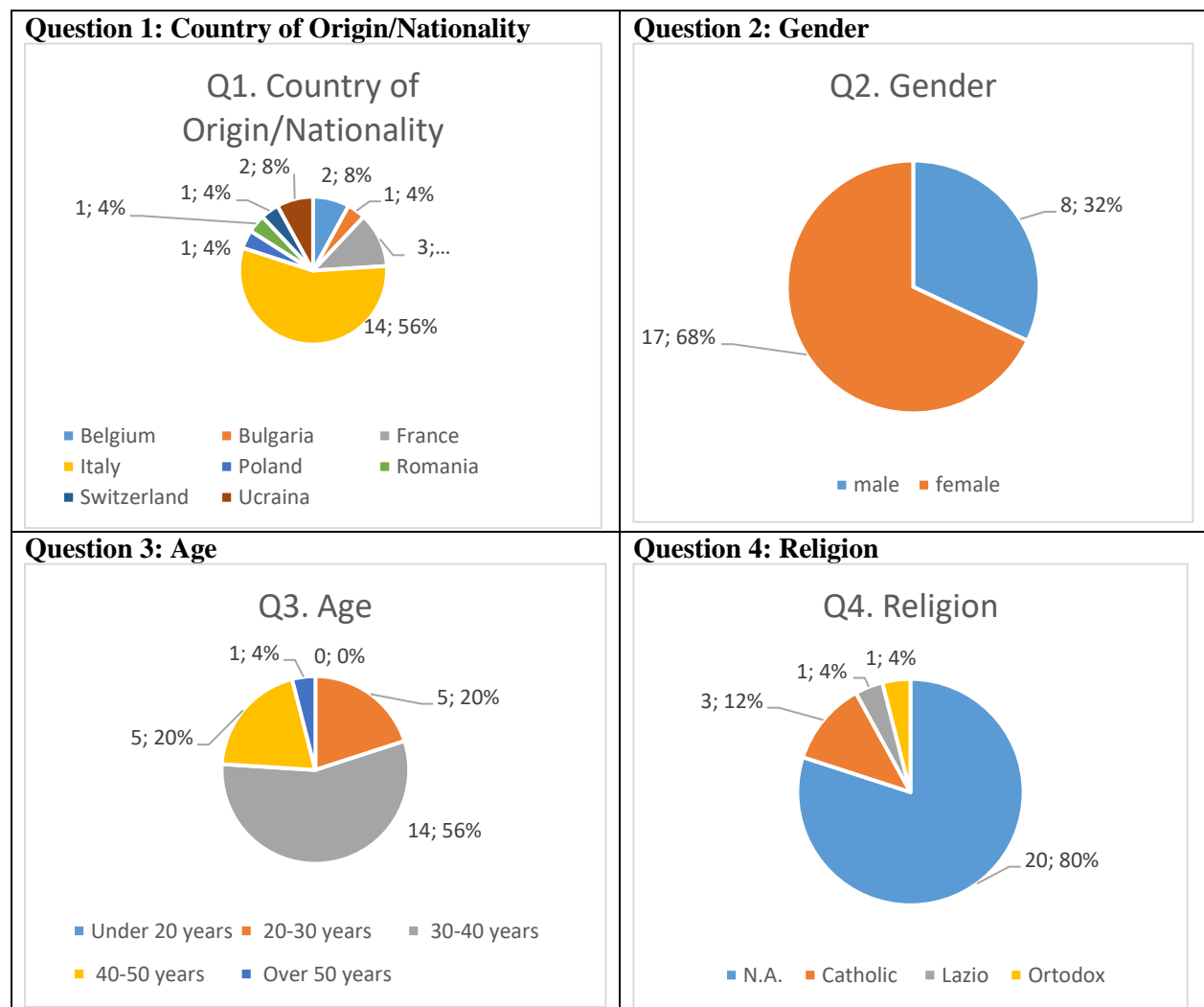
Name of the Country: ITALY

Name of the institution: LABC

Number of participants (Hotel Staff): 25

Number of participants (Hotel Guests): 33

Questionnaire of Hotel Staff



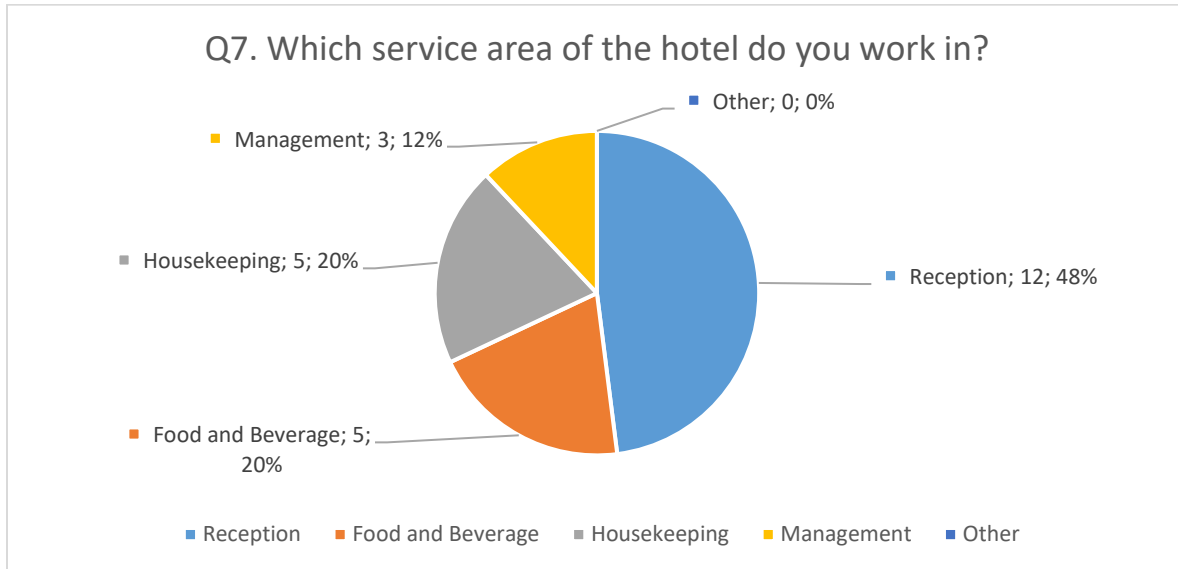
Question 5. In which country are you working?

The data here presented refer to those who declared to work in Italy.

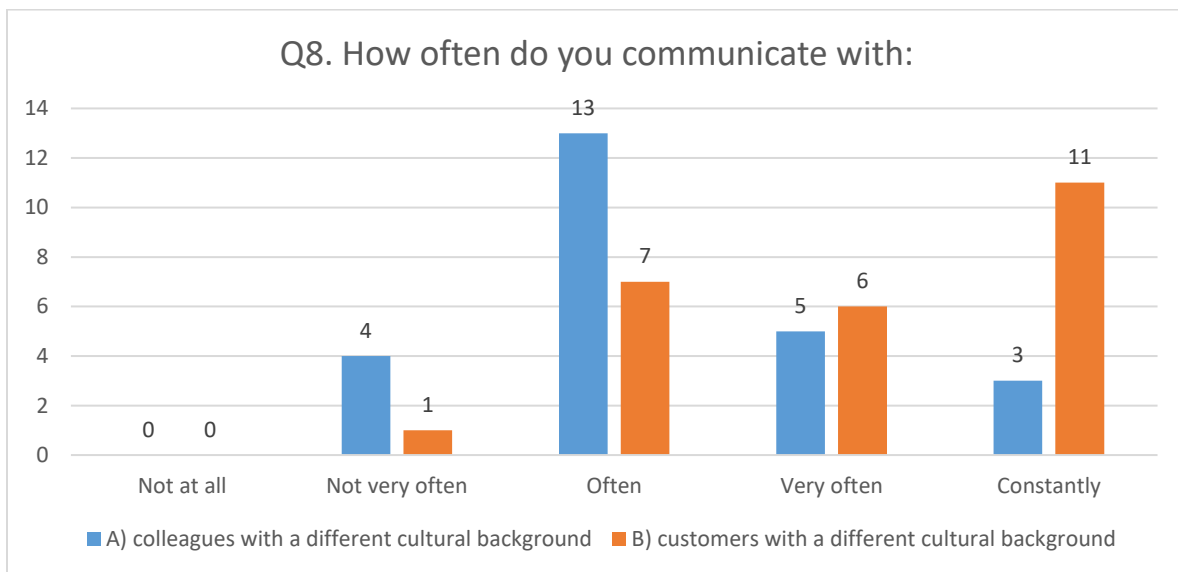
Question 6. If "other", please name the country.

The data here presented refer to those who declared to work in Italy.

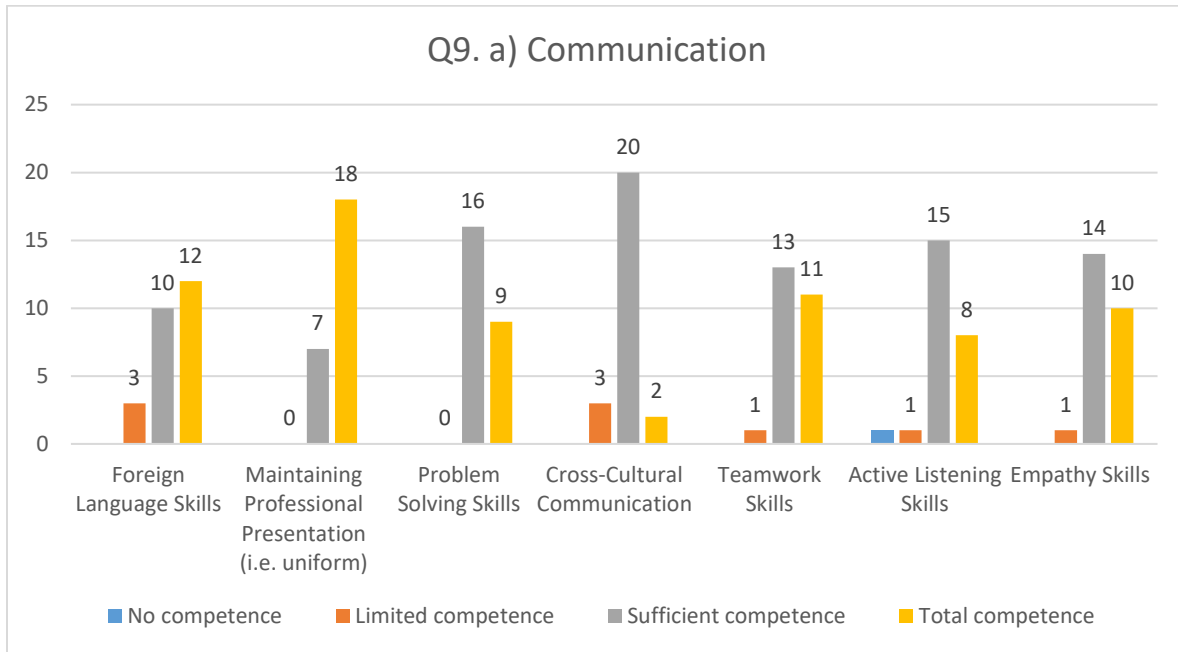
Question 7: Which service area of the hotel do you work in?



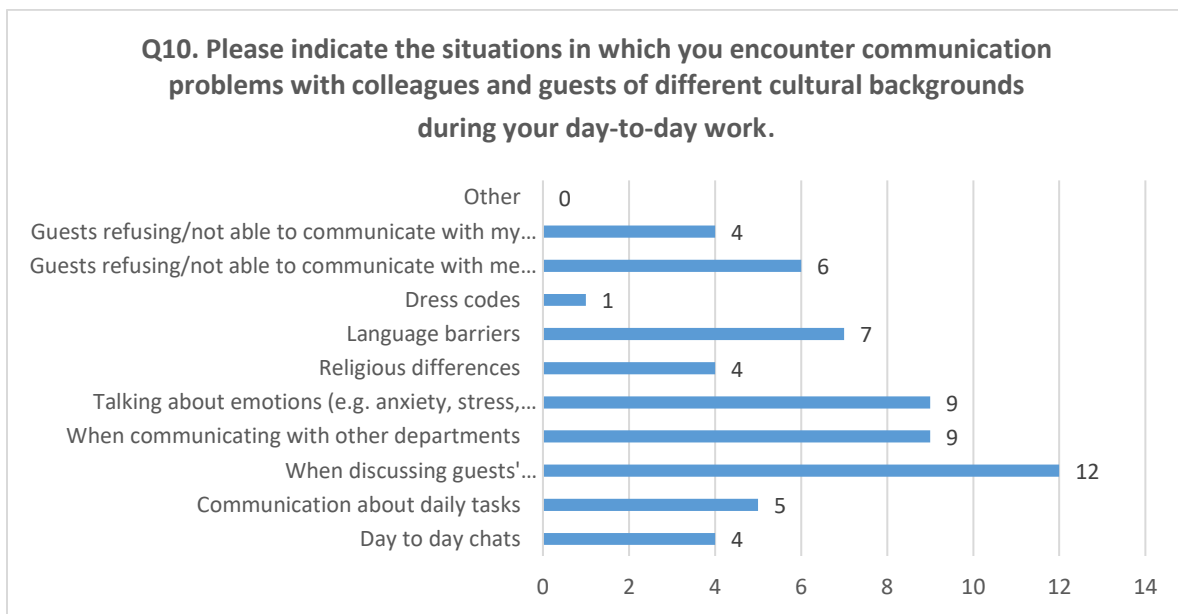
Question 8: How often do you communicate with: a) Colleagues with a different cultural background b) Customers with a different cultural background



Question 9: a) Communication



Question 10. Please indicate the situations in which you encounter communication problems with colleagues and guests of different cultural backgrounds during your day-to-day work.



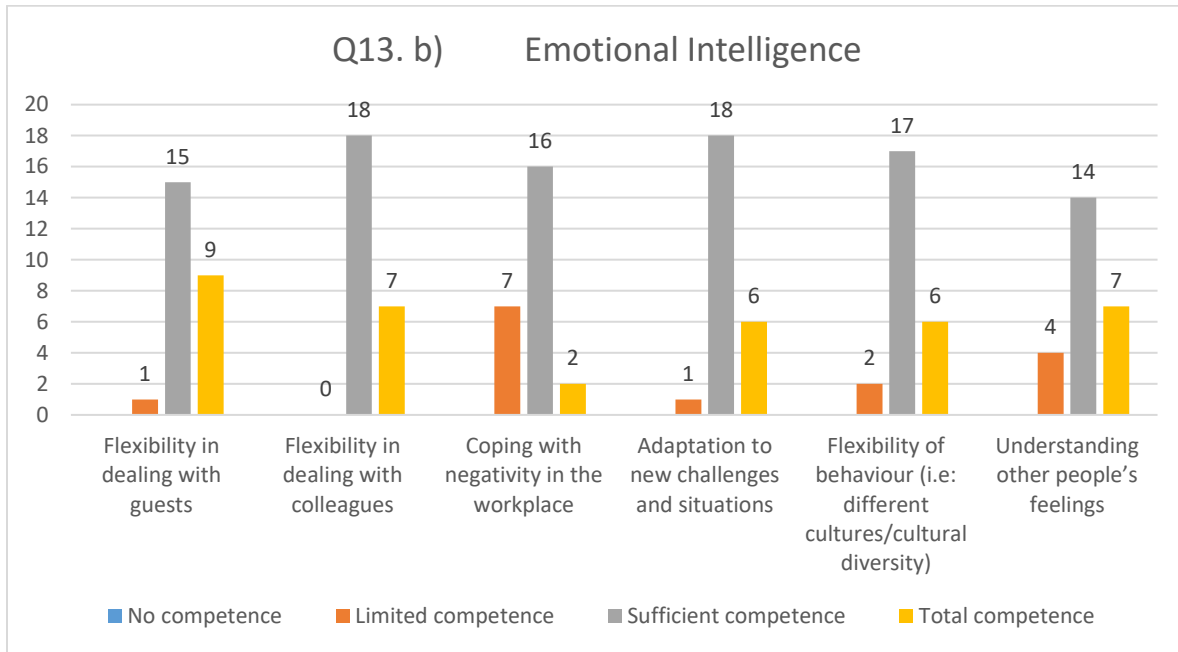
Question 11: In the case one of your answers was “other”, you have the opportunity to (optionally) provide more information here.

NO ADDITIONAL COMMENTS REGISTERED

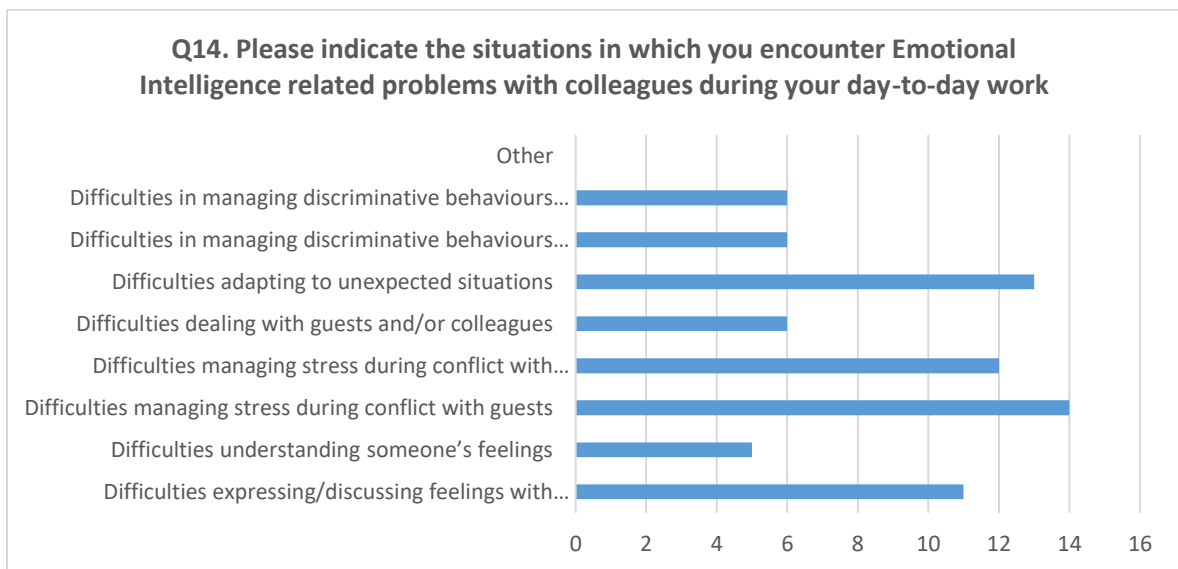
Question 12: If you wish, please describe situations in which you encountered any of the above in more detail.

NO ADDITIONAL COMMENTS REGISTERED

Question 13: b) Emotional Intelligence



Question 14: Please indicate the situations in which you encounter Emotional Intelligence related problems with colleagues during your day-to-day work. (Please tick any that applies to you)



Question 15: In the case one of your answers was “other”, you have the opportunity to (optionally) provide more information here.

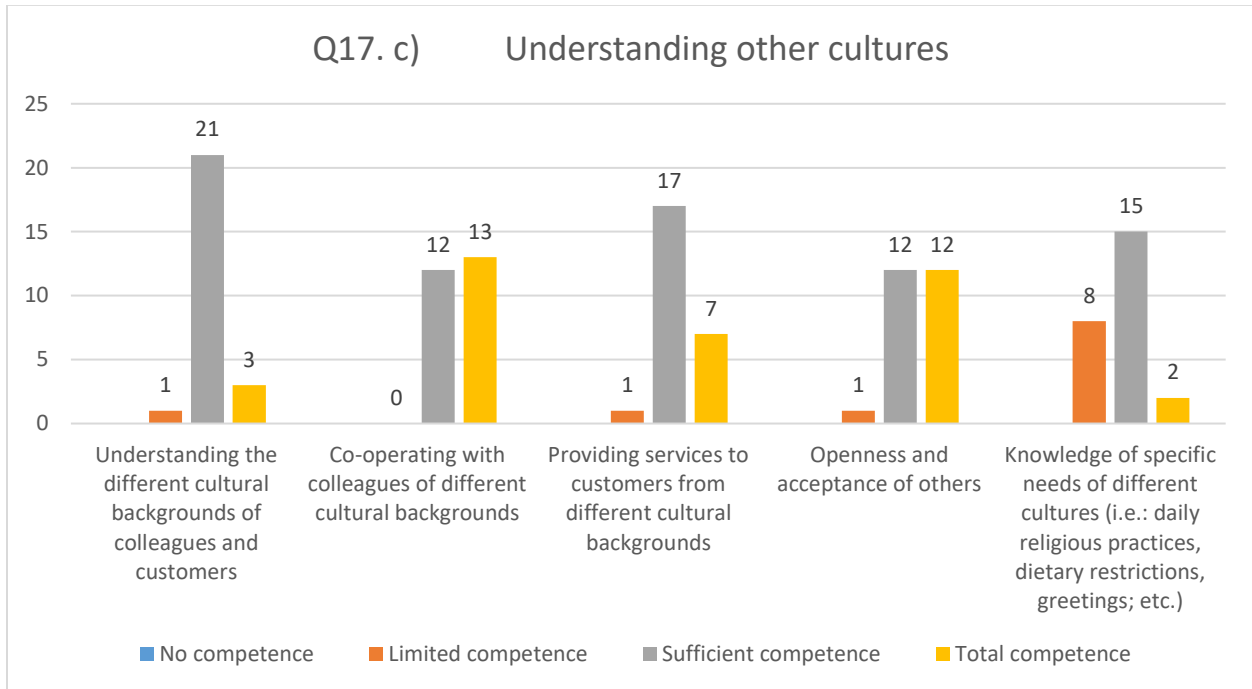
NO ADDITIONAL COMMENTS REGISTERED

Question 16: If you wish, please describe situations in which you encountered any of the above in more detail.

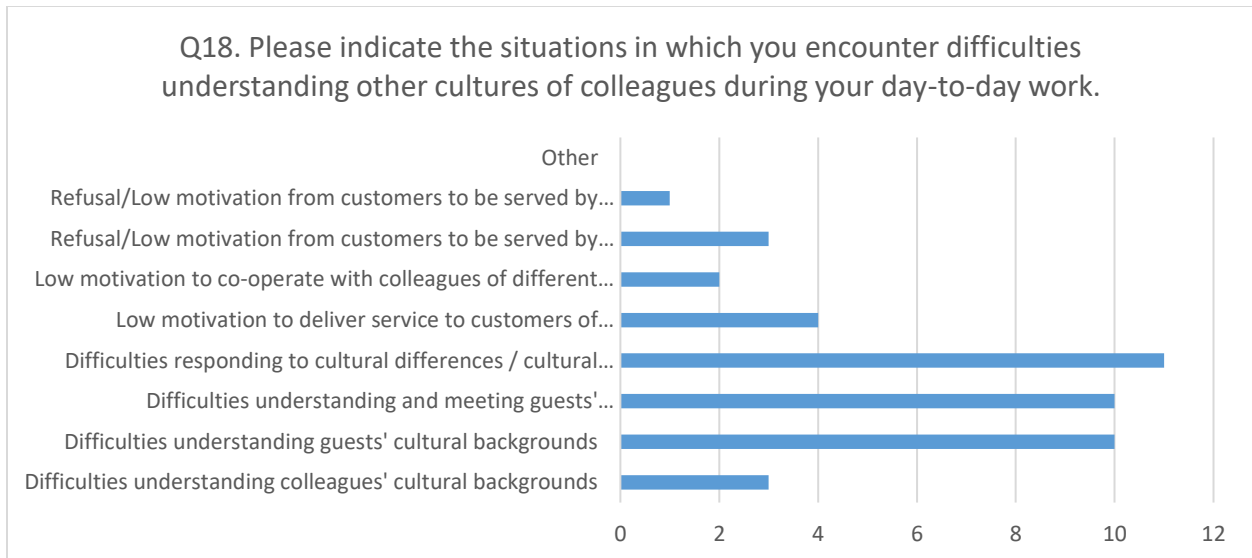
Note:

“Sometimes, especially in little daily arguments with colleagues, it is difficult to make them understand my point of view”

Question 17: c) Understanding other cultures



Question 18: Please indicate the situations in which you encounter difficulties understanding other cultures of colleagues during your day-to-day work.



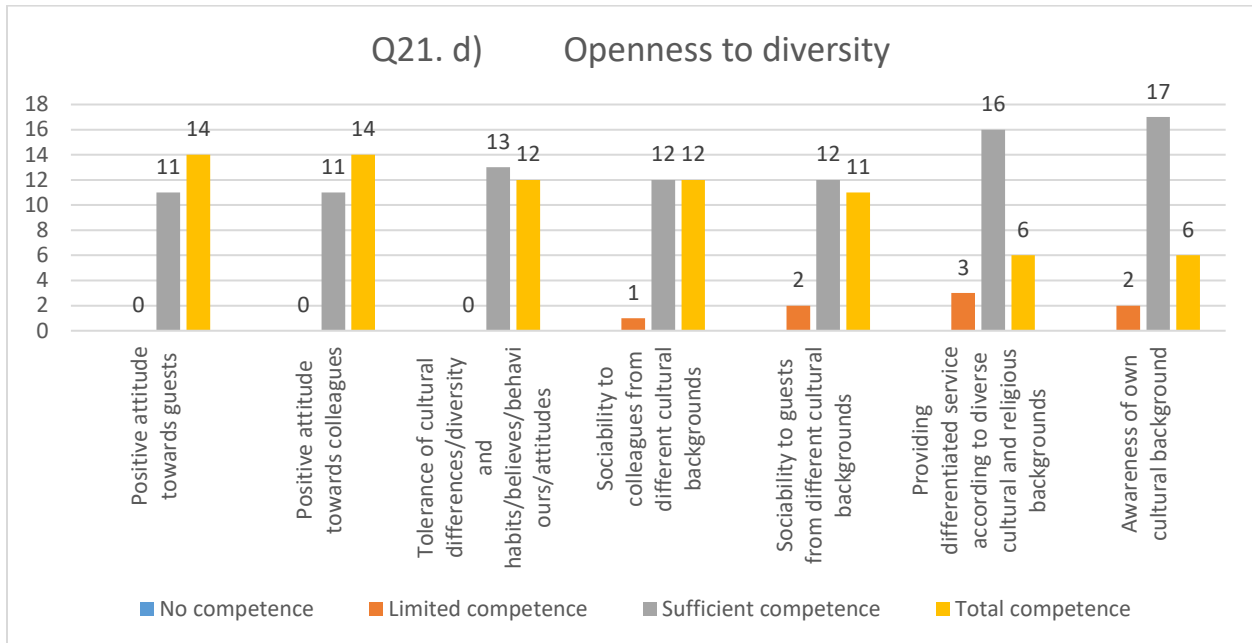
Question 19: In the case one of your answers was “other”, you have the opportunity to (optionally) provide more information here.

NO ADDITIONAL COMMENTS REGISTERED

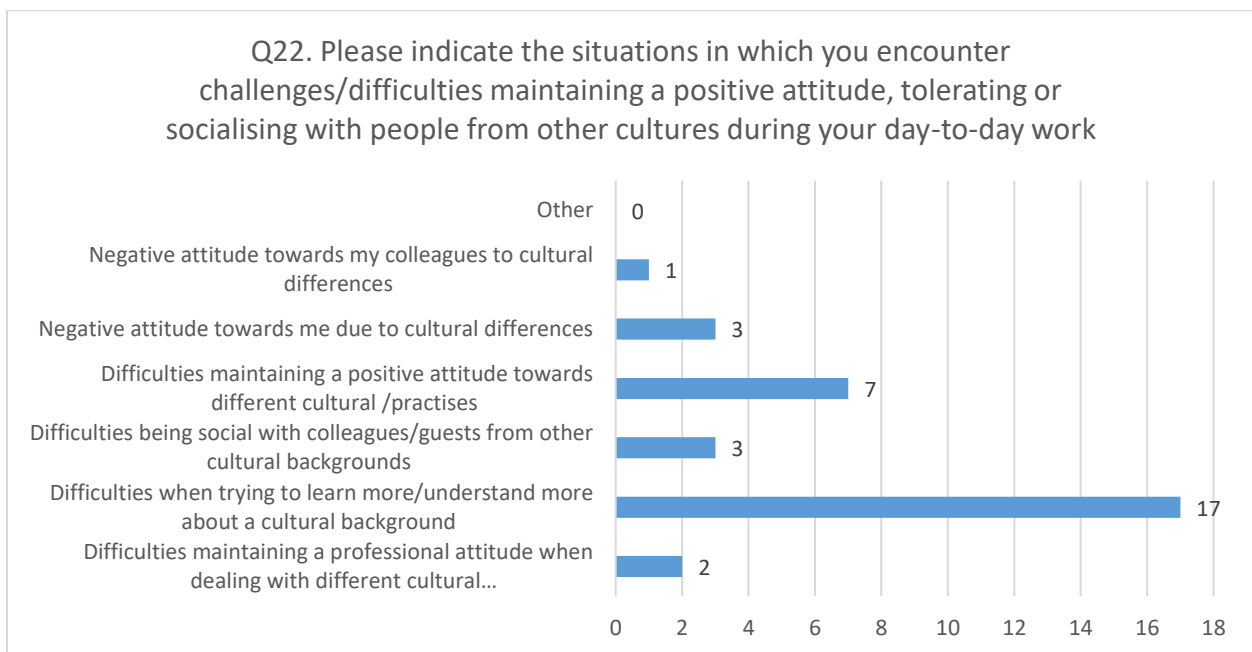
Question 20: If you wish, please describe situations in which you encountered any of the above in more detail.

NO ADDITIONAL COMMENTS REGISTERED

Question 21: d) Openness to diversity



Question 22: Please indicate the situations in which you encounter challenges/difficulties maintaining a positive attitude, tolerating or socializing with people from other cultures during your day-to-day work.



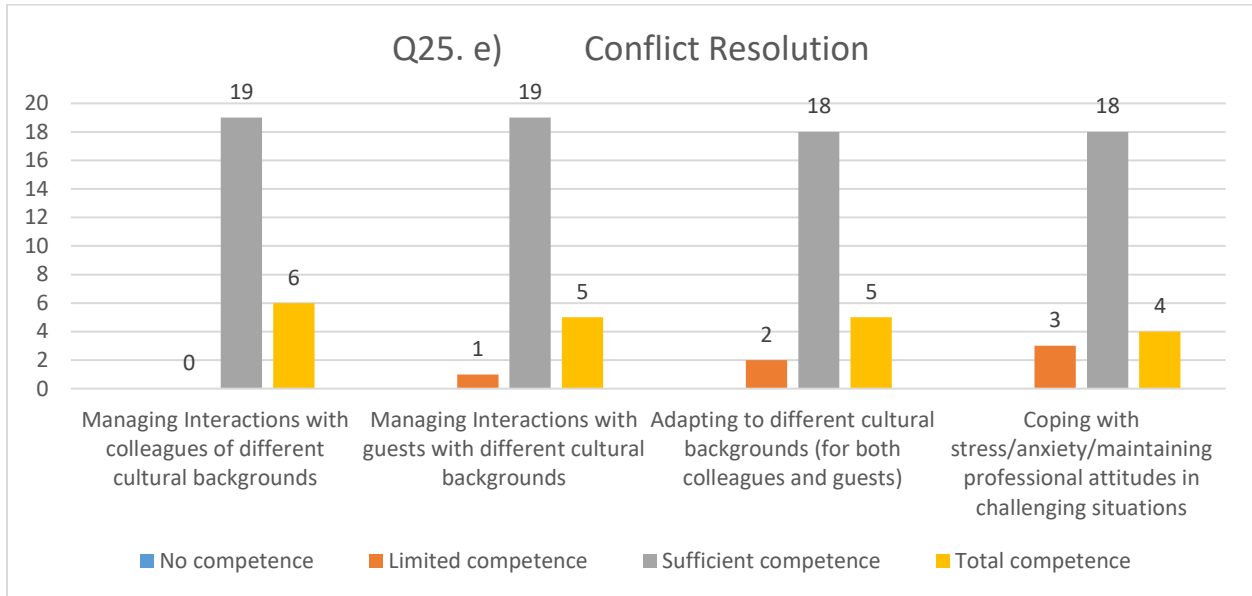
Question 23: In the case one of your answers was “other”, you have the opportunity to (optionally) provide more information here.

NO ADDITIONAL COMMENTS REGISTERED

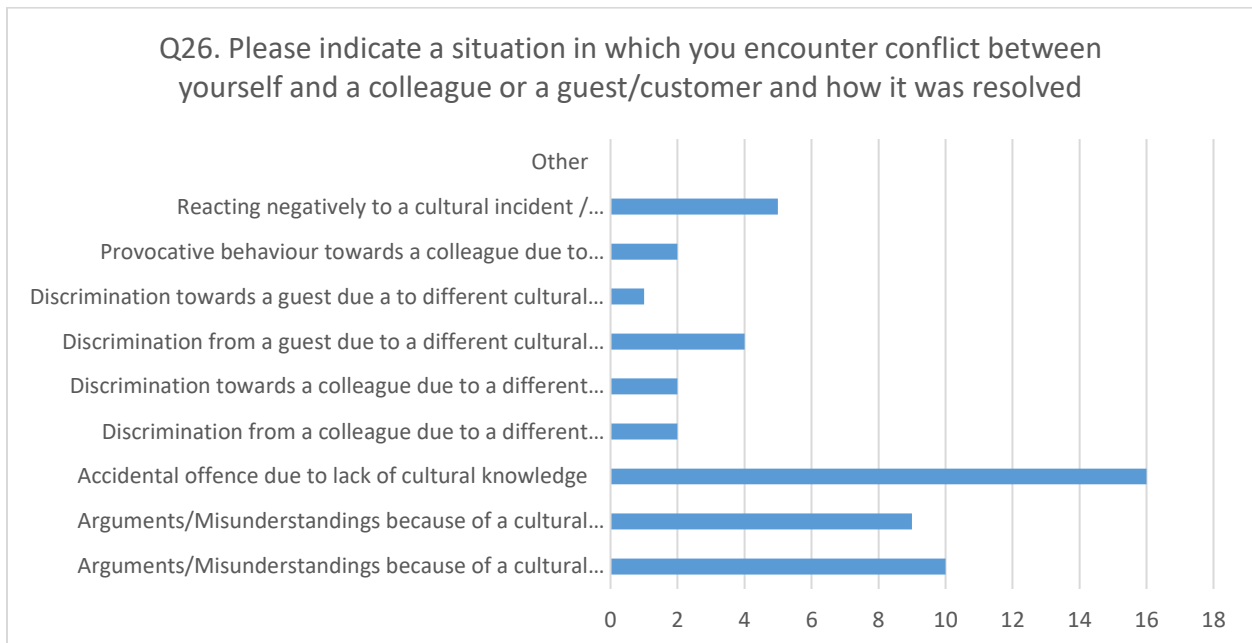
Question 24: If you wish, please describe situations in which you encountered any of the above in more detail.

NO ADDITIONAL COMMENTS REGISTERED

Question 25: e) Conflict Resolution



Question 26: Please indicate a situation in which you encounter conflict between yourself and a colleague or a guest/customer and how it was resolved. (Please tick any that applies to you)



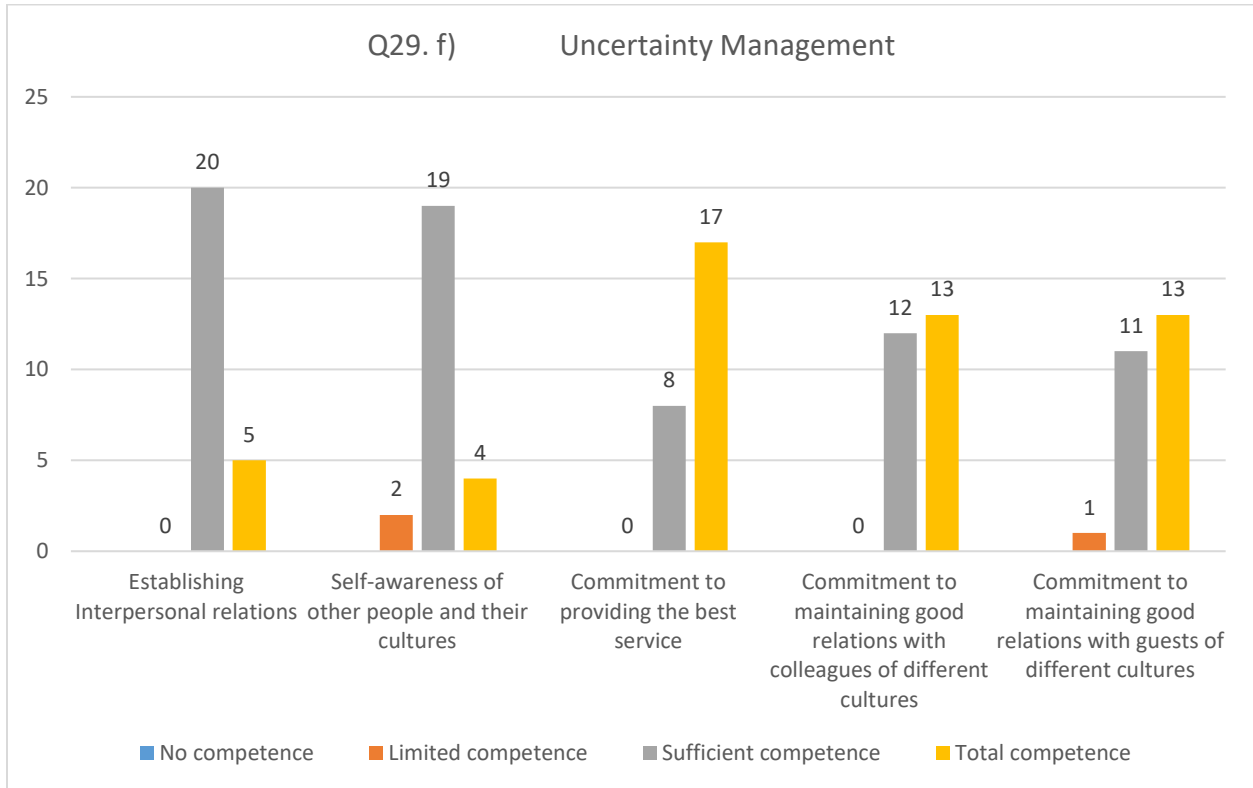
Question 27: In the case one of your answers was “other”, you have the opportunity to (optionally) provide more information here.

NO ADDITIONAL COMMENTS REGISTERED

Question 28: If you wish, please describe situations in which you encountered any of the above in more detail.

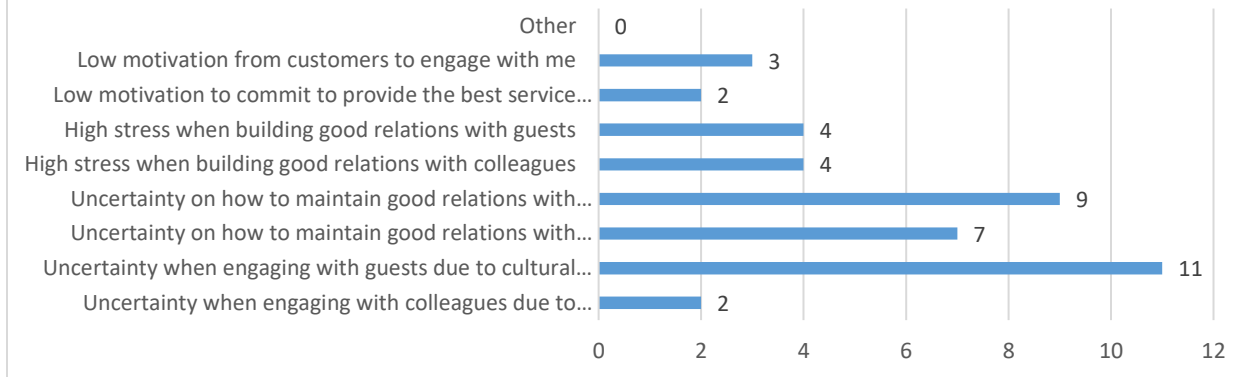
NO ADDITIONAL COMMENTS REGISTERED

Question 29: f) Uncertainty Management



Question 30: Please indicate a situation in which you encounter challenges/difficulties developing and maintaining interpersonal relations with customers and colleagues.

Q30. Please indicate a situation in which you encounter challenges/difficulties developing and maintaining interpersonal relations with customers and colleagues.



Question 31: In the case one of your answers was “other”, you have the opportunity to (optionally) provide more information here.

NO ADDITIONAL COMMENTS REGISTERED

Question 32: If you wish, please describe situations in which you encountered any of the above in more detail.

NO ADDITIONAL COMMENTS REGISTERED

Question 33: Does your organization support the Intercultural Development/Awareness/Sensitivity of the workplace? (Please refer to the chart below)

Question 34. If ‘Yes’, please elaborate how: (i.e. trainings, coaching, mentoring, team-building activities etc.).

Note:

- “Team building activities”
- “Team Building & mentoring”
- “Team-building activities”

Question 35: Have you attended any Training Seminars/Courses/Programmes on Intercultural Development of the Hospitality Industry in your country? (Please refer to the chart below)

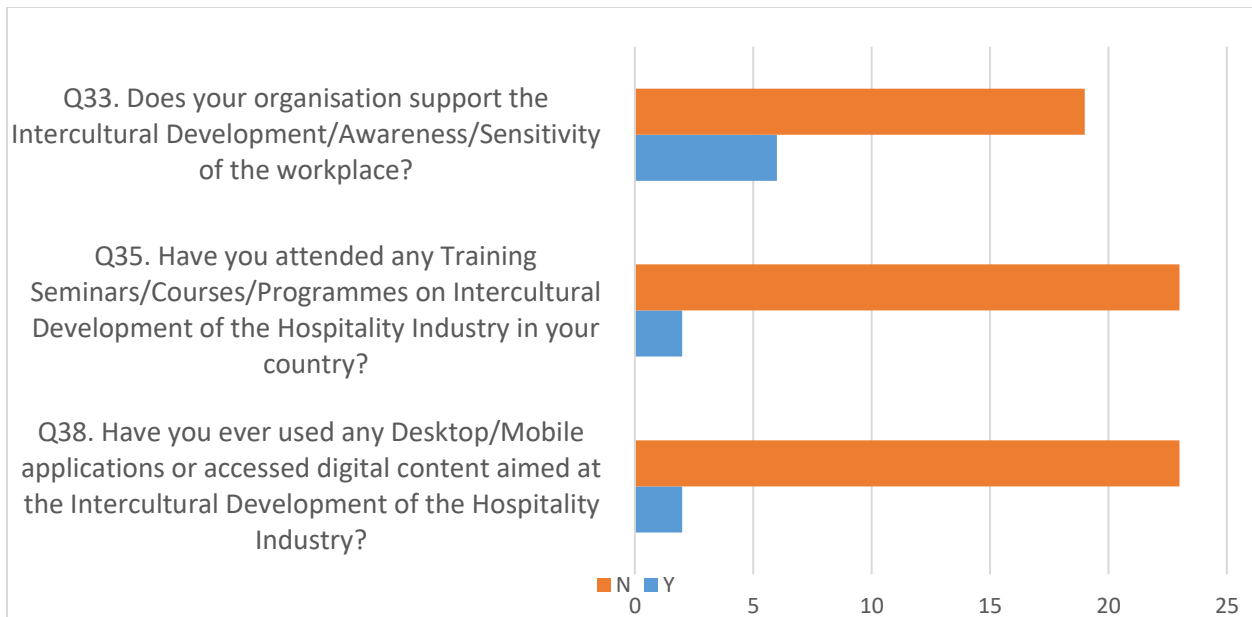
Question 36. If ‘Yes’, how often and if you can, please provide information on the course (Programme Title, Duration)

NO ADDITIONAL COMMENTS REGISTERED

Question 37. What topics would you like to have included in Training Seminars/Courses/Programmes on Intercultural Development of the Hospitality Industry in your country?

- "Religion"*
- "Communication, assertivity and problem solving"*
- "something dealing with communication skills and the best way to communicate in the workplace, in the hospitality sector"*
- "Self-management, self-awareness"*
- "communication"*
- "How to improve communication skills"*
- "How to overcome communication barriers "*
- "Focusing on different religions and traditions to anticipate guests needs"*
- "How to implement Effective communication among team members"*
- "How to overcome cultural barriers"*
- "Knowledge of the culture and customs of the major tourist markets in Italy"*
- "To be open minded and to not have prejudices"*
- "Team building "*
- "More practical information about how interact with guest with different cultures and languages "*
- "Practical information, no long and boring lessons"*
- "Religion, Food "*
- "Best ways to communicate diversity in the workplace"*
- "Managing stress at work in a cultural diverse team"*
- "Management"*
- "How coping with stress in the work place"*
- "A course about the best ways of dealing with cultural diversity could be useful"*

Question 38. Have you ever used any Desktop/Mobile applications or accessed digital content aimed at the Intercultural Development of the Hospitality Industry? (Please refer to the chart below)



Question 39: If 'Yes', please provide information on the applications/content, you have used:

NO ADDITIONAL COMMENTS REGISTERED

Question 40: Do you have any other comments?

NO ADDITIONAL COMMENTS REGISTERED

Main findings

Profile of the respondents

The questionnaire was sent to a panel of people employed in the Hospitality sector, in different Hotels located in Rome, Turin and Milan. 14 out of 25 participants were Italian, while the others were born in different countries: Bulgaria, France, Poland, Romania, Belgium, Switzerland and Ukraine. It is largely common, especially in Rome, that the hospitality sector attracts workers from other European and extra-European countries.

As far as the gender is concerned, 68% of respondents were female, 32% were male. The majority (56%) of respondents were in the range 30-40 years. The 20-30 and 40-50 age groups gathered the same number of participants, representing respectively the 20%. Only one respondent was aged over 50, no one under 20 years.

When it comes to religion, the vast majority (80%) preferred not to answer the question. Those who did answer were divided between Catholics (12%) and Orthodox (4%).

Analyzing the sector of activity, the majority of the interviewed worked in the Reception area (12 out of 25, 48%), Housekeeping and Food and beverage covered 20% respectively with 5 answers each, while only 3 participants were employed in Management.

As it can easily be imagined, communication with colleagues or customers from different cultures is a common issue, or very frequent, for most of the respondents.

Generally speaking, the analysis of the results of the staff questionnaires did not reveal any significant criticalities in any of the sectors surveyed. Cultural diversity is largely acknowledged, but it is not seen as a big obstacle to the aim of providing a good and professional job, but rather as a factor that can lead to problems at a personal level, in terms of the ability to manage stress and to feel comfortable in relationships with colleagues or clients. As we will see shortly by analyzing the answers given, in some sectors the lack of in-depth knowledge about cultural differences has been indicated as a possible factor creating difficulties (misunderstandings, conflicts, closures, uncertainties when dealing with people) in relations with colleagues and clients.

Although the general level of intercultural competence was sufficient in the panel, and even if in many cases a high level of professionalism may compensate other deficiencies, it is clear the need for training, broadening the knowledge of cultural diversity.

Communication Competences

Interviewed on their communication skills, most participants supposed to have a good level of competence in almost all the different aspects presented. Some problems emerged when talking about soft skills such as empathy or active listening, probably considered more difficult to achieve. Maintaining professional presentation and foreign language skills obtained the highest scores (respectively 18 and 12 participants out of 25 indicated their level as “total”). Moving the subject to cross cultural communication, the majority of

the respondents (20 out of 25) assumed they have a sufficient competence, and this could be considered an interesting data, taking in consideration that as we will see later in this analysis, almost no one of the participants have ever attended any specific course in this field.

Talking about communication, the most problematic situations emerged are: talking about emotions, the communication with other departments and also the discussion of guests' complaints/requirements/requests.

No one in the interviewed group decided to share a specific experience.

Two elements that seem quite important are the difficulty in dealing with people of different cultures when talking about emotions, and the importance of guests' requests.

Emotional Intelligence

As already seen in the case of communication skills, also with regard to emotional intelligence a large part of the respondents confirmed to have a good level of competence. The majority of the answers in this area covers sufficient or total competence in dealing with emotional intelligence challenges and for each of the aspects considered no 'no competence' answers were collected. It should be pointed out, however, that some difficulties emerge when it comes to dealing with negativity in the workplace: in this case 7 respondents stated to have a low competence, 16 sufficient and only 2 total.

Flexibility seems to be a well-known competence, as well as the capability of adaptation. Conflicts, with colleagues as well as with guests, and related stress, seem to be the most important challenge employees have faced along with expressing feelings. Discriminations do not seem so common.

With regard to the sharing of specific episodes, only one respondent specified that his greatest difficulty is in managing arguments with colleagues: *"sometimes, especially in little daily arguments with colleagues, it is difficult to make them understand my point of view"*. A situation that actually can be considered very common in many workplaces and contexts.

Understanding other cultures

On the whole, "understanding other cultures" doesn't seem to be a big deal. The majority of respondents are quite confident about their abilities: cooperating with colleagues of different cultural backgrounds as well as openness and providing services to customers of different backgrounds obtained the highest scores. Some difficulties emerged when it came to showing knowledge about specific features of different cultures: in this field only 2 participants stated they have total competence, for 15 the answer was sufficient and for 8 limited.

Most problematic situations referred are those linked to the difficulties in understanding and meeting guests' requests/expectations as well as understanding guests' cultural backgrounds: a result that is apparently in conflict with the answer given to the first competence listed in question 17, where 21 respondents declared that they had sufficient competence, 3 that they had total competence and only 1 that they had limited competence in understanding the different cultural backgrounds of colleagues and customers.

From our point of view, the data seem to highlight once again the need (even latent) for specific competences on cultural diversity: although at a superficial level it may appear easy to understand other cultures, going deeper the lack of specific knowledge/training/tools may give rise to unexpected difficulties.

Openness to diversity

The competence “openness to diversity” seems to be fairly well developed: tolerance, positive attitude and sociability do not seem to be affected by cultural differences, since most of the respondents claim to be totally or sufficiently competent. Also, with the ability to provide services differentiated according to cultural and religious differences the level seems quite good: even if 3 respondents declared that their competence is limited, 16 affirmed they have a sufficient level of competence, and 6 a total competence.

Focusing on the question “situations in which you encounter challenges/difficulties maintaining a positive attitude, tolerating or socializing with people from other cultures during your day-to day work”, some problems emerged when it comes about learning more/ understanding more about a cultural background: 17 respondents stated that they found this quite hard.

So, the biggest difficulty does not seem to meet guests' requests or to provide a differentiated service, but rather to understand deeply the cultural needs that move them. Once again, even if professionalism could help in facing different requests, specific learning sessions and trainings could help to solve many of the problems that arise, due to the lack of understanding of the characteristics of other cultures

Conflict Resolution

More than half of the respondents stated that they had sufficient competence in all 4 skills related to conflict resolution. Again, as previously mentioned talking about Openness to diversity, the biggest difficulties are linked to a presumed “lack of knowledge”: 17 respondents indicated as a trigger of conflict an accidental offence due to lack of cultural knowledge.

This is a point that should be highlighted.

Uncertainty Management

No particular criticism has emerged in respect of this competence. In all the questions most of the participants placed their level of competence between Total and Sufficient. Only two respondents stated that they had limited competence with regard to awareness of other people and their culture, and one for commitment to maintaining good relations with guests from different cultures.

Despite this, uncertainty when engaging with guests due to cultural differences and to maintain good relations with guests/colleagues from other cultural backgrounds are the two situations that make it difficult to build and maintain positive relationships with customers and colleagues.

Intercultural Training

Focusing on the questions related to training on intercultural communication, as expected, the large majority of participants stated that they do not work in organizations that promote cultural awareness, that they have never taken part in specific training courses in this field, and even less that they have used apps or other devices to train on these issues. Very few of the organizations for which the surveyed work promotes training initiatives in the intercultural field and, in any case, when they do, it is always at a more informal and generic level: intercultural issues are mostly dealt with in the context of team building and mentoring initiatives.

Only 2 out of 25 stated that they had some experience in this sense, a figure that is definitely in line with the observations made in the Italian background regarding the framework of intercultural competences in the tourism sector, and the consciousness that in the Italian framework the offer of training courses seems to be quite limited

Here the list of the proposed topics for Training Courses. Communication and cultural diversity seem to be the most desired:

- "Religion"
- "Communication, assertivity and problem solving"
- "something dealing with communication skills and the best way to communicate in the workplace, in the hospitality sector"
- "Self-management, self-awareness"
- "communication"
- "How to improve communication skills"
- "How to overcome communication barriers "
- "Focusing on different religions and traditions to anticipate guests needs"
- "How to implement Effective communication among team members"
- "How to overcome cultural barriers"
- "Knowledge of the culture and customs of the major tourist markets in Italy"
- "To be open minded and to not have prejudices"
- "Team building "
- "More practical information about how interact with guest with different cultures and languages "
- "Practical information, no long and boring lessons"
- "Religion, Food "
- "Best ways to communicate diversity in the workplace"
- "Managing stress at work in a cultural diverse team"
- "Management"
- "How coping with stress in the work place"
- "A course about the best ways of dealing with cultural diversity could be useful".

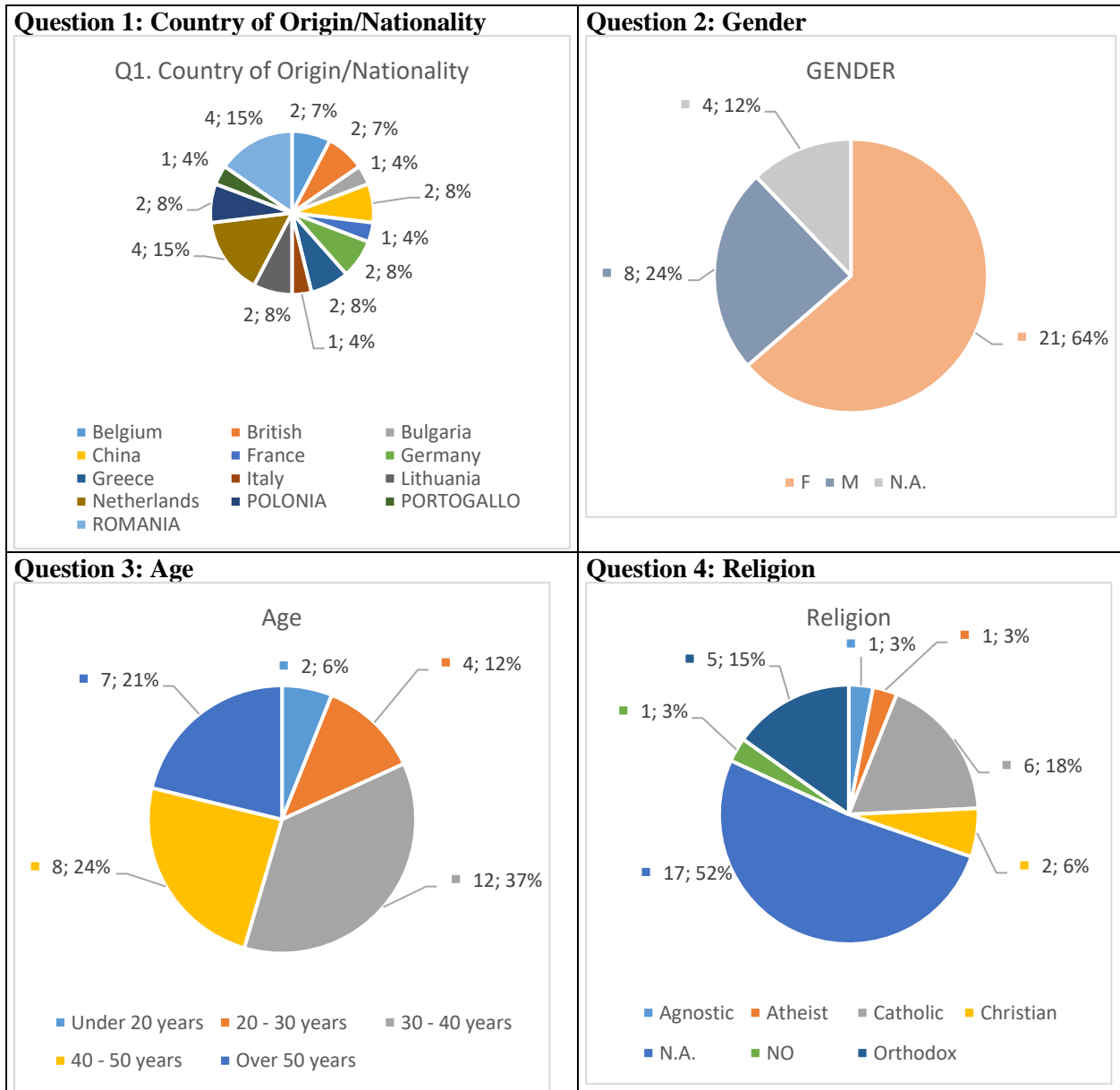
Questionnaire of hotel guests

Question 1: Country of Origin/Nationality

Question 2: Gender (optional)

Question 3: Age

Question 4: Religion (optional)



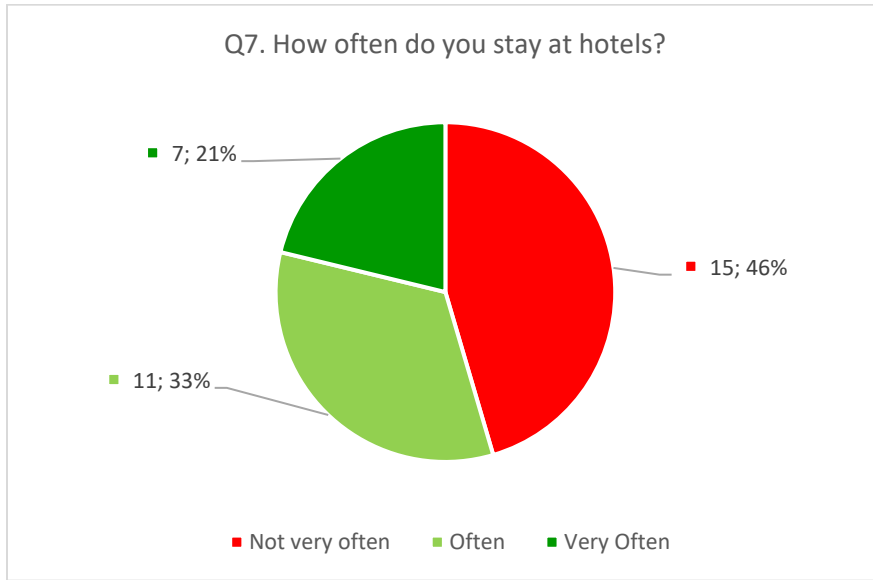
Question 5: Which partner country does your experiences as a hotel guest relate to?

All data collected are related to Italy.

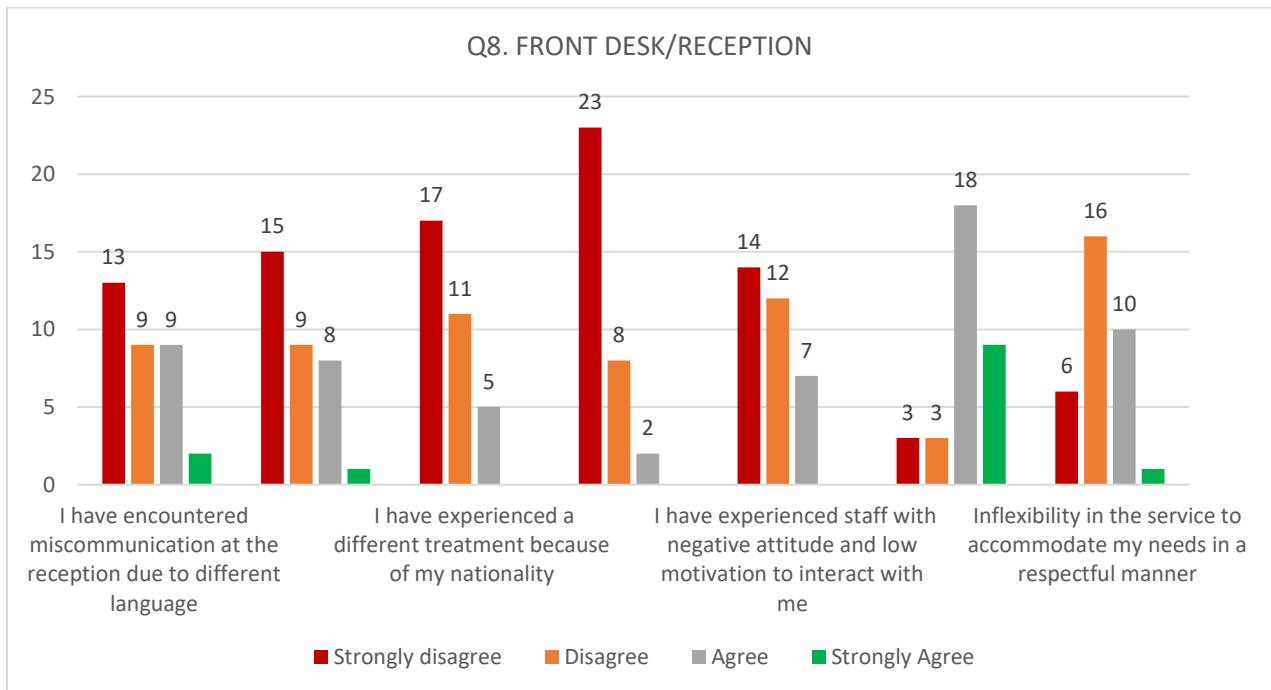
Question 6: If "other", please name the country.

//

Question 7: How often do you stay at hotels?



Question 8: a) Front Desk/Reception



Question 9: Is there a particular incident (misunderstanding) that you would like to share with us?

-No

-No, I do not have

-I gave the notion in advance that I would arrive late. However, the doors were closed. After a few phone calls, I could check-in. Very unpleasant after a long journey.

-No

-I didn't have any incidents

-I remember some German friends complaining that in a hotel in southern Italy the Italian receptionist prepared their check-in and answered to questions from other guests, who joined the desk a bit later, all at the same time. They found it quite irritating why she didn't finish their check-in first. Then she would have had all the time she needed for the other guests.

-I am a member of a highly respected Hotel brand. I booked my hotel in Italy and there was not a single information that the SPA and sport facilities are not working. The price was not reduced and no one could answer me why there was not information on my reservation nor on their website that the facilities are closed. If I knew that I would have booked another hotel.

-No

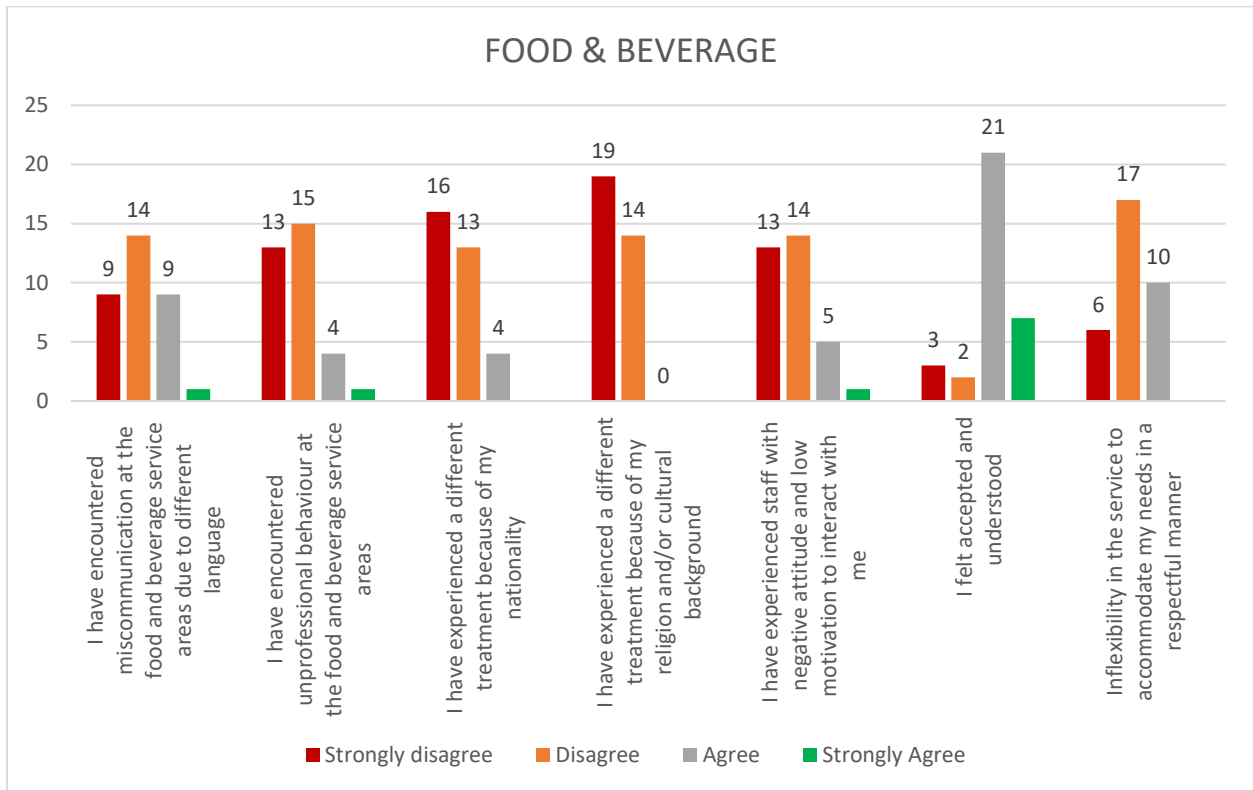
-I did not experienced any incidents in my last journeys

-no

-it is sometimes difficult to find people who speak fluent French

No.

Question 10: b) Food and Beverage



Question 11: Is there a particular incident (misunderstanding) that you would like to share with us?

-No

-No

-I didn't have any incidents

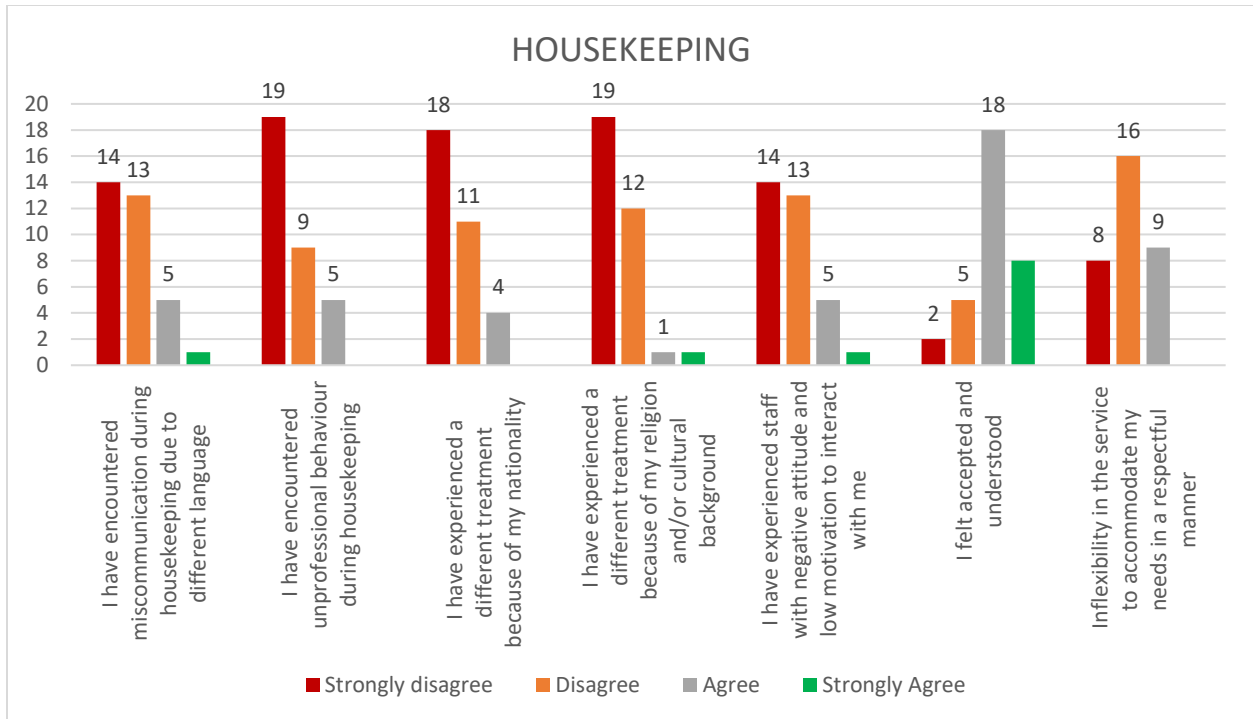
-No

-no

-No.

-Dietary requirements (Vegan and Gluten free) can often be misunderstood, or can sometimes take a little longer to accommodate

Question 12: c) Housekeeping



Question 13: Is there a particular incident (misunderstanding) that you would like to share with us?

-I asked several times for a blanket, and at the end they unhappily gave me one...

-I didn't have any incidents

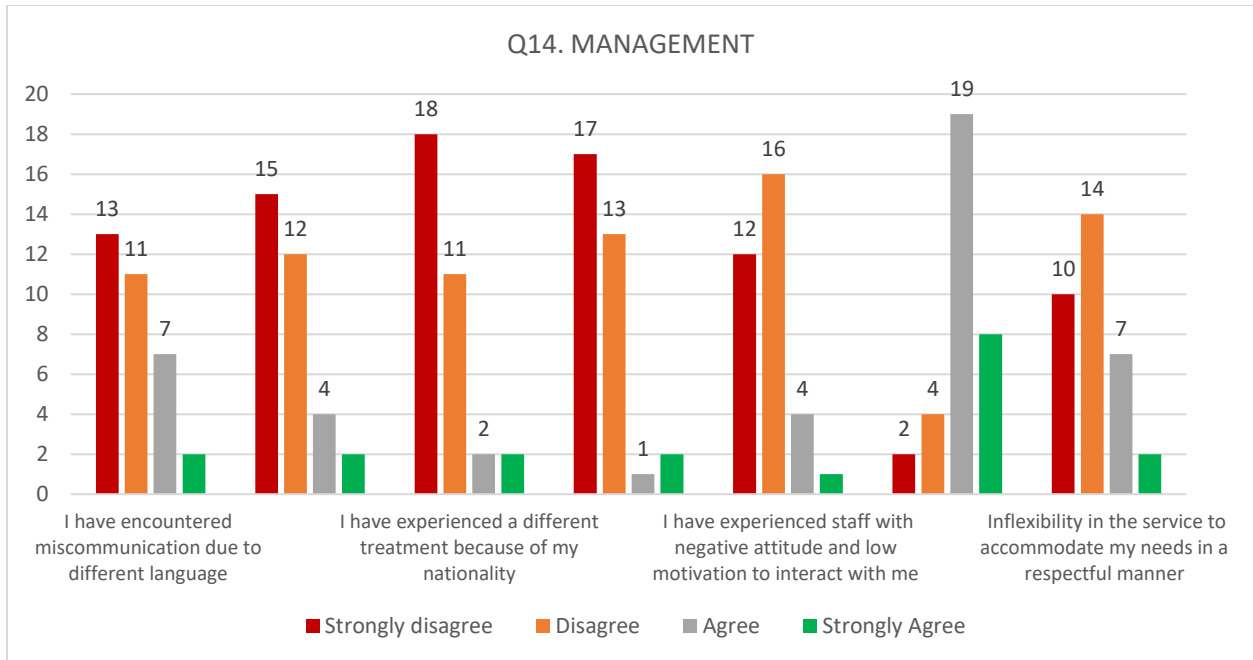
-No

-no

-Housekeepers often do not speak French. Sometimes they don't greet.

-No

Question 14: d) Management



Question 15: Is there a particular incident (misunderstanding) that you would like to share with us?

-No

-No

-I didn't have any incidents

-No

-no

-No.

-Not really. I have always felt very welcome during my holidays.

Question 16: Do you have any other comments?

-No

-no

-I think it is very important to have language training for all hotel staff.

-No.

-Sometimes I feel that some hotel staff assume that all British travellers are fussy/particular, or noisy, rude and drink/party a lot, so it sometimes feels like they don't want to deal with us, based on previous interactions with other British travellers (i.e. putting us all in the same bucket).

Main findings

First of all, it is important to highlight that we exceeded the required number of questionnaires, with 33 filled surveys. Surveys have been sent mostly to colleagues of European projects partnerships. Many European countries have been represented: Belgium, Romania, Netherlands, France, Great Britain Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Germany, Poland, Portugal. We also collected two questionnaires from Chinese guests.

64% of respondents were female, 24% male, while 4 participants did not deliver their gender. Focusing on the age, the majority of respondents were in the range 30-40 years; another significant group was that of people aged 40-50 years, followed by that of people aged over 50 years (7 respondents out of 33).

More than half of the respondents didn't reply to the question related to religion (52%). Among those who answered, the majority was of Catholics (18%), followed by Orthodox (15%).

Although the panel of respondents was selected between people accustomed to travel, 46% of them answered that they don't stay very often at hotels. For 11 out of 33 staying at hotels is common, and only the 21% answered "very often".

On the whole, the overall situation with respect to the four areas of Hospitality emerged by the questionnaires is quite good. No significant incidents have been reported. Those that have been presented are not closely linked to any lack of intercultural skills, but only to organizational issues.

Across all sectors, experiences of miscommunication, inflexibility or different treatment due to cultural differences are a very small minority, with only one or at most two 'strongly agree' answers recorded for each of the questions. Answering the question "I feel accepted and understood" the participants agreed in the vast majority of cases (18 Agree for the Front desk/ Reception Area, 21 in the Food and Beverage area, 18 in Housekeeping and again 19 for Management). When noticed, the most critical issues are linguistic: the first question ("I have encountered miscommunication at the reception due to different language") obtained respectively 9 Agree for Reception, 9 for Food and Beverage, 5 for Housekeeping and 7 for Management.

From the intercultural point of view an interesting comment has been delivered about a presumed kind of bias towards British tourists: *"Sometimes I feel that some hotel staff assume that all British travellers are fussy/particular, or noisy, rude and drink/party a lot, so it sometimes feels like they don't want to deal with us, based on previous interactions with other British travellers (i.e. putting us all in the same bucket)"*. Obviously, a single episode/ experience cannot be considered as a general rule, but it is anyway interesting to highlight that often bias and ideas could significantly influence our perception and our behavior in the workplace in general, and in the hospitality sector as well.

Unconscious biases can be a good starting point for identifying the contents of the training to be provided to professionals, precisely because thanks to training, awareness and provision of appropriate knowledges, biases, which spoil all forms of communication, can be avoided.