This volume describes the ideational effort required to design and implement a training-course model for "Experts in proximity violence". The Pilot project design has envisaged a framework where the concepts referring to broad reflections on the topic have be related to the professional skills to be trained. Proximity violence concerns multiple forms of gender-based violence which conceal, in turn, more subtle, intimate and viscous forms of dependence. The course was based on modules and availed itself of a "mixed" methodology, where theoretical lectures were interwoven with experiential workshops.

During the first six months of 2019, over 800 Italian, French and Spanish operators engaged on the migratory front, attended the courses. The model presented in the first two chapters of the present volume was accompanied and corroborated by a set of ex-ante and ex-post questionnaires. The first set, illustrated in chapter three, aimed at pin-pointing the training needs of the operators and stakeholders to whom it was administered and who then attended the course.

The ex-post questionnaires, presented in chapter four, regarded an appraisal of the course provided by those who had participated in and completed the course, and confirmed the positive achievement of the goal established by the Provide Project (*Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme 2014-2020*): that of defining a structured curriculum capable of addressing the problem of proximity and gender violence by providing adequate training, appropriate tools and skills to be used by professionals to identify, prevent and treat the phenomenon.

Ignazia Bartholini is associate professor of General Sociology and Social Policies at the University of Palermo. She was also the scientific coordinator of the PROVIDE project funded by the EU. Among her most recent works: (ed.), *Proximity violence in migration times. A Focus in some Regions of Italy, France and Spain* (FrancoAngeli, 2019).
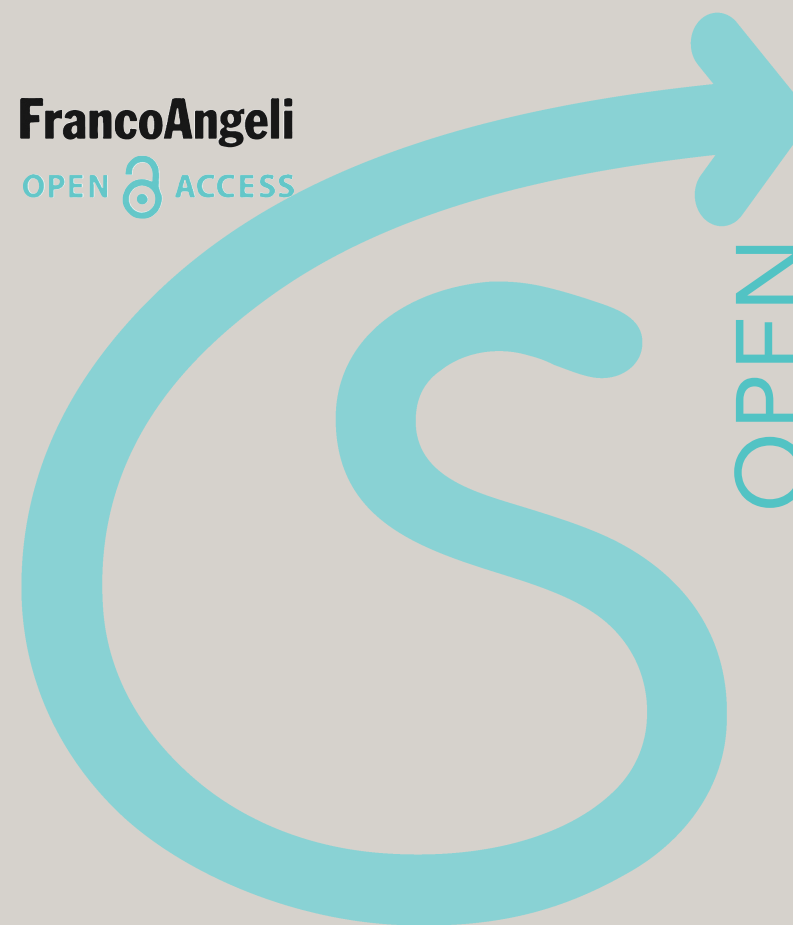
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THE PROVIDE TRAINING COURSE

Contents, Methodology, Evaluation

Edited by Ignazia Bartholini

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PRoximity On Violence: Defence and Equity

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1. An introduction: "to train and to be trained"

by *Ignazia Bartholini*

1.1 The PROVIDE training course

This volume, published after the end of the various editions of the PROVIDE course designed to train operators as experts in proximity and gender-based violence, contains an account of the courses. The courses were created by the team of researchers engaged in the PROVIDE project and implemented by groups of teachers and trainers selected by each of the project's partners (UNIPA, ISMU, OXFAM, Telefono Donna, Badia Grande, ASEIS Lagarto), and appraised by the trainees themselves as regards the effective usefulness and usability of the knowledge they acquired. This was a characteristic of the methodology underpinning the project, and which the first of the two PROVIDE volumes defined in relation to the topic, the legal systems referred to, and, above all, the good practices found in the various European areas engaged in the project.

The main exigency underlying the drafting of this second volume was that of filling an "information gap". The exploratory research carried out prior to and during the implementation of the PROVIDE project, brought to light many of the difficulties encountered by those engaged in the services and facilities made available to refugees and asylum seekers (Pattaro et al., 2018; Bartholini, 2019). One of these problems actually concerned operators' lack of the specific skills required to address gender and proximity violence. This meant not only of a lack of *ad hoc* services geared to take charge of victims or potential victims but, also and above all, an almost total absence of trained, specialist personnel. According to the operators, it is extremely difficult to understand the needs of those coming from countries where they have been "exposed" to male violence within segregating cultural systems, whereby they fall victim to rape and psychological abuse considered "normal" in those milieus and frequently normalised by the victims themselves.

The implementation of these professional training courses assumed a far more engaging significance than what is commonly assumed by those who believe it their exclusive prerogative to interpret the transfer of the skills required to carry out given activities. It also drew attention to the need to modulate the interpretative key to the social role associated with the activities to be carried out, in this case, the need to consider it a preliminary alliance, uniting the social scientist and the professional operator.

The goal inherent in the effectiveness of the training provided by these courses, involved a complexity far beyond the simple preparation of programmes aimed at enabling people to take full advantage of the training opportunities offered.

Despite territorial differences, the PROVIDE project succeeded in designing a model centred on three fundamental criteria: *identification, prevention, care*. The cognitive core of the course aimed at dealing with people rather than things, and was combined, therefore, with the charge-taking of victims of violence and the ethics of the professions carried out or to be carried out.

It was, therefore, a matter of drawing up a pilot model based on a systematic approach capable of implementing the *know-how* needed by the professionals working in the various reception centres who enrolled in the various editions – of the course, sixteen in all. The trainees presented their work experiences with a view to foregrounding the complexity of the effects on the conduct and behaviour of victims of proximity violence resulting from what they were subjected to as migrants.

To describe the training model proposed in its entirety, it is useful to refer to its three main features:

1. the identification of training goals capable of providing specific tools, methods and skills;

2. the creation of a training-course prototype capable of integrating the proposed objectives and the relevant contents in terms of professional spendability;

3. the pursuit of goals/objectives that the prototype of the "Provide training course" aimed at achieving in a tenaciously constructive and flexibly self-critical way, to make future trainees aware of the problems, like stress, underlying proximity violence which have an impact upon the professionals themselves and learning to cope with them.

The training programme outlined in the set of contents designed to promote and strengthen the acquisition and development of specific skills regarding the phenomenon, besides a knowledge of the phenomenon, required an upstream employment of a productive kind of productive imagination.

As to the second point, it required that the framework within which the concepts referring to the broader plan, be informed by a reflection on the issues relating to the professional skills to be enhanced. Then, an approach was shaped on the basis of active methodologies designed to cater for the professional training of adults and, within the focus groups, applied by employing *role play* to enhance responsibility and boost understanding engagement with the users/beneficiaries of the reception centres. A training plan based on sociological and psychological, above all, on anthropological, disciplines was also defined. This aimed at permitting the trainees to acquire empathic skills permitting them to see "through the eyes of others", in the places and situations proper to reception of migrants, a characteristic which has now become a permanent mark of most asylum seekers/refugees who reach Europe.

One important datum registered, about five months after the closure of the last edition of the courses, was that the numbers of applications for participation in the courses were far higher than the numbers of places available, despite the fact that, after the first edition, the subsequent ones the intake was increased from the initial eleven to the actual sixteen with the precise intention of responding to the demand for training registered, especially in Lombardy and in Andalusia and in the editions held during the first half of 2019 in Tuscany, Sicily and the French capital.

An equally comforting result was the popularity index registered at the end of the courses and obtained as feedback from rigorously-tested investigation tools used to appraise and above all assess the impact of the course upon the trainees' real-life professional practice.

1.2 The PROVIDE questionnaires

The second part of the volume – chapters 4 and 5 – presents the results of the *ex-ante* and *ex-post* assessments provided by the trainees themselves.

The *ex-ante* questionnaire was administered to the trainees and used to outline their profiles, especially to detect some of the aspects regarding professional activity best related to the topics addressed by the PROVIDE course and those most likely to require improvement after participation in the course.

The *ex-post* questionnaire mirrored the questions dealt with in the *ex-ante* survey and was designed to find out which aspects of the trainees' professional activities had been modified following participation in the course. The administration of the second questionnaire, following the end of the last module of

each course, aimed at evaluating degrees of participant satisfaction with various aspects of the courses, divided into the following categories:

•the interest and participation of the respondent and the other participants, during the course;
• the didactic material provided; organisation and services (location, equipment, teaching staff);
• an analytical evaluation of individual modules and workshops; assessment of the course on the whole.

The hope as well as the aim of the project was to find indicators attesting to improvements in the trainees' professional activities as far as the topics addressed during the course were concerned.

The team of researchers who conducted the survey "*set itself the objective of gathering information regarding the presence of migrant women, victims of gender-based and proximity violence, passing through the Italian reception system and **how those who work closely with them handle the complex situations they encounter**. They also aimed at understanding whether the training course had provided tools useful for the daily practice of the operators*".

The reflections on the training needs emerging from the interviews administered to the operators (social workers, psychologists, professional educators, psychiatrists, lawyers and legal assistants) concerned, as Lia Lombardi points out in the third paragraph of this book, bore witness to the urgency of going more deeply into skills that regarded:

• a knowledge of the criteria and symptoms through which to recognise signs of gender or proximity violence in persons hosted by the reception facilities (health-case and life histories; direct and indirect observation of verbal and non-verbal behaviour; reported symptoms; circular communication between beneficiaries and operators, etc.);
• the possibility/need that operators be able to create and set up a therapeutic pathway for migrants, victims of violence (women, men, teenagers);
• the possibility/need to be able to distinguish between the types of violence undergone, but also, and above all, the ability to understand what violence may mean to each of the persons encountered as well as what escape from a context of violence may mean to them. "Because what the Bengali woman requires is different from the model of escape from violence we propose" (PFG n. 2, social worker, SVS-D, woman);
• the possibility/need to guarantee that the psycho-social treatment provided be adequate and effective for the migrants;

• the opportunity to avoid the construction or reproduction of stereotypes and prejudices, since violence is not culturally speaking a universally connoted phenomenon;

• the need to create networks and synergies between all the social actors involved, including the local and national institutions, public and private organisations;

• the importance of cultural mediation and multidisciplinary work, two phenomena indispensable to training courses and operational staff;

• the possibility/need for training courses and modules relating to legal-administrative issues, including family reunification;

• the possibility/need to implement strategies for the management and prevention of crises and emergencies, the ability to network and collaborate with other services active in the area and the importance of a multidisciplinary approach;

• the possibility/need to address and correct the bureaucratic-institutional jargon used since it is often far removed from the language used by the operators working with migrants (for example the police, social services, health-care services, local institutions, etc.).

Training was considered, therefore, necessary for those in high institutional places, as well as for policy-makers, administrators, legal bodies and the police, since their actions have repercussions on the "inclusion policies" implemented at local and administrative level. It also emerged that an inclusive, egalitarian culture required diffusion (Polanyi, 1979).

The reader will have the opportunity of obtaining from the chapters contained in this volume, a detailed account of the rankings scores obtained by the courses. However, what we wish to highlight most of all – at the end of this lengthy research pathway described in depth in the first volume of the PROVIDE project – is that the research inspired by the project and the implementation of the training model replicable in other contexts, required a co-responsible effort on the part of all the researchers and professionals involved in implementing the strategies aimed at recognition of victims of proximity violence and their subsequent accompaniment along pathways of emancipation. Co-responsibility on the basis of "loose" nodes which – as Granovetter (1983) put it – fosters a kind of mutual enrichment at action-research level due to a merger between stochastic attitudes and different skills that become a store of shared experience. At the end of the experience, it was inevitable to ask which strategies, rules, protocols need to be implemented in future scenarios where arrivals of increasing numbers of victims of proximity violence will take place.

The second issue was that of official professional recognition of experts trained in proximity violence. This means – in our opinion – the hypothesis of a specialist social entrepreneurship set up to employ educators, social workers, psychologists and mediators with particular professional qualifications. The need for greater social recognition of professional figures as well as that of policy makers operating within the reception circuit, is particularly worthy of attention (Schön, 2006). The PROVIDE training courses sought to define a process of construction and validation of the skills capable of facilitating recognition of victims of proximity violence, with reference to protecting them but also of activating their own intimate resources.

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2. The PROVIDE training courses for proximity violence' professionals

by *Ignazia Bartholini, Roberta T. Di Rosa* and *Lia Lombardi*[1]

2.1 The rationale of training by modules

2.1.1 From proximity violence to the training project

Training is one of the most important activities used to support the development of people. It provides ways by which to bestow form upon what has not been done as yet. It needs time to acquire an understanding of what is required and how to adapt individual abilities to the professional goals to be achieved. Therefore, it is characterised by a naturally constant, in-progress dynamism aimed at devising and designing a plan of instruction which, the better it is structured, the more it is open to modification, improvement and amendment. This is true in terms both of the creation of the strategies, processes and actions of which it is to be comprised and of those for whom it is intended.

Training is a relatively autonomous area of the theoretical-practical sciences, whose *raison d'être* is the need to tackle the issues operators and professionals have to deal with *in the field.* Here the emphasis is on how to approach Others who find themselves in a position of vulnerability[2], a situation requiring specific ability and skills. These matters are all the more pressing the scarcer knowledge regarding the overall picture from which they emerge is as well as the corrections to be applied. These issues do not regard the structural/emerging causes affecting the reception systems alone, but also the

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[1] Paragraph 2.1 is by Ignazia Bartholini; paragraph 2.2 is by Lia Lombardi; paragraph 2.3 is by Roberta T. Di Rosa.
[2] According to directive 2011/36/EU "A position of vulnerability means a situation in which the person concerned has no real or acceptable alternative but to submit to the abuse involved" (art. 4).

links between bearers of needs and the operators/professionals whose task it is to recognise and accept their request for help, even when it is not expressed explicitly.

The phenomenon of proximity violence [PV] is precisely one of the issues that requires training proportionate to the urgency and alarming peculiarity of the needs new migrations have produced and/or brought to light. This section of this book deals specifically with a macro-group, vulnerable by definition – women – while emphasising the two-fold, asymmetrical dimension of forms of subordination attributable to customary, moral and collective attitudes rooted in values of male domination (Bourdieu, 1998), religious beliefs, practices handed down historically which normalise abuse, especially in situations where weaker subjects are particularly exposed. It is, therefore, a matter of "violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately" (*Istanbul Convention* of 2011).

The violence undergone by migrant asylum seekers is also – and at the same time – a constant and a variable, or violence perpetrated incessantly against women victims, often characterised by alternation among various perpetrators and abusers and leaving an indelible mark on their journey to Europe. One may, in this sense, speak of gender relations among migrants in the name of male domination legitimised by a "patriarchy of kinsmen", which justifies, in extreme instances, the reification of the victims by means of abuse, exploitation, enslavement within relationships masked by blood ties or by particular structural bonds of affectivity. Since the abusers are almost always husbands, brothers, cousins and friends – real or presumed – of the victim's, it is not easy for the operators to recognise abuse/violence hidden within the folds of parental relations or grounded in affective involvement, treat it as "real imbalance between vulnerable victims and abusive persecutors" and take the victims into charge.

It is not easy to understand, for example, what the deepest and most intimate needs of newly-arrived women may be. Their weariness and prostration tend to be attributed to what has surely been an extremely tiring journey across the desert first, the sea, then, though this is often not the most remote and profound cause of the tiredness and exhaustion "visible to the eye". Even if the specialised medical assistance, psychological assistance and legal aid are provided at the first reception centres, in the opinion of the operators, it is extremely difficult to grasp the needs of those coming from countries where they are "exposed" to male alterity because they are women belonging to segregating cultural systems, and the victims, therefore, of rape and psy-

chological abuse considered "normal" by their communities. It is the particular conditions determined by context, by the viscosity and impenetrability of relationships, heightened by the impossibility/inability of the victims to express, even acknowledge, the consequences of the vulnerability of their own condition which keep the weakest in a situation of dependence on the strongest and of exposure to contingent situations (see vol. 1).

It was precisely the first volume of Provide – PRoximity On VIolence: Defence and Equity (Just/2016 Action Grants) – which identified many of the multiple factors which hinder access to care services by asylum seekers who are victims of proximity violence. These include – and not only – a pile-up of gender-based violence [GBV] and the need to enhance other services.

The most common obstacles, according to the operators interviewed (see vol. 1), are those concerning anti-immigration norms at legal level and the asylum-seekers' socio-cultural *Lebenswelt* convictions. These factors cause barriers at communications level which prevent the asylum seekers from becoming aware of the services available to them, the reception system from sending them to those very services. These lacunae do not constitute only an accidental amendable gap but from the onset act as an obstacle impeding provision of pathways of accompaniment. Contrariwise, factors which would facilitate the charge-taking of migrants who survive the journey and/or detention in sorting camps include free healthcare and protection available in compliance with ad hoc legislation regarding sexual violence.

It appears to be extremely difficult to set up a transmissions network between systems for asylum-seekers and assistance for female refugees.

Planning and designing a similar training course – the first of its kind – which required incisiveness and specificity such as to meet the requirements of an emergency as pressing as proximity violence, proved a daunting task. Like every other model, this course had to respond not only to training as such, but it had also to grasp the unexpressed needs of those who were to attend it. To this was added the ex-ante burden of modelling the objectives to be achieved and design content consistent with these, effective in terms of procedural implementation.

The design for experienced operators of a prototypical training course in proximity violence focusing on asylum-seeking migrant women victims of violence, placed those who designed the course on the narrow crest of the distinction between the superfluous and the essential, the useless and the useful. It was, therefore, a question of identifying perceived usefulness and heuristic utility, of avail only if the participants had built up a clear vision of the cognitive interest and operational utility of the topics to be dealt with.

It was necessary, therefore, to unravel a problem-topic by moving centrifugally towards unexplored contours capable of extricating the nodes between gender violence and proximity violence and outlining a model of training content and seminar practice involving multiple layers of reflection from the cognitive to the experiential. It was a question, therefore, of delineating as clearly as possible the object of the training experience and the intrinsic "thing" to be explored by devising and providing tools, methods and skills. This, while keeping in mind the users for whom the various editions of the training courses were meant to cater and the goals the "Provide training course" prototype aimed at achieving in a tenaciously constructive and flexibly self-critical manner.

Therefore, planning this professional training course required greater commitment than might be commonly expected, considering that its fundamental function was to transfer the skills necessary to perform a very specific activity. It also required modulation of an interpretative key concerning the social role inherent in the task to be carried out and shared by the social scientist and the professional operator. The purpose essential to the educational effectiveness the course sought to achieve, represented a more complex phenomenon than the creation of study programmes designed to prepare people *tout court* to take maximum advantage of the opportunities arising from training and avoid or mitigate threats that might crop up during their work in the field. This course required a solid alliance between the designer/s of the course and the professionals to be trained. It foresaw the need for the training syllabus to be stripped bare, upstream, of the contents which the participants would later help provide. It envisaged a fruitful kind of conjunction between *pòros* and *penìa,* a need for knowledge and tension, for a drive towards educational enhancement.

The topics treated became the transversal objectives intended to accompany the course progressively as it unfolded. It therefore dealt with:

- detecting and understanding the professional skills the operators working within the reception systems required in order to be able to recognise and, if possible, accompany victims of proximity violence along pathways of autonomy;
- re-orienting the professionals' overall goals by enhancing and developing adequate role and behaviour styles;
- promoting the trainees' ability to detect the needs of the Other in relation to emerging and gradually recognised requests;

- fostering acquisition by the trainees of techniques, tools, methods of analysis, process management within their contexts of reference;
- improving the trainees' basic communications skills (developing assertiveness, clarity of exposition, stimulating their ability to manage relationships with the various organisational interfaces associated with their roles);
- providing conceptual tools and methodologies regarding the control of relationship dynamics (motivational support, setting, group dynamics, conflict management);
- boosting the trainees' sensitivity towards the best possible management of moments of inter-dialogic communication.

2.1.2 The framework of the Provide training course

The design of the Provide project's "Training Course for Experts in Proximity Violence" envisaged a framework where the concepts referring to broad reflections on the topic (see volume one) might be related to the professional skills to be trained. The Operational Plan, and, therefore, the explicit educational objectives were drawn up in an effort necessarily 'upstream' of the subsequent empirical analysis of the training contents to be structured in generally repeatable modules. The training modules, developed in depth to direct guided seminars while outlining progressive teaching-learning pathways to follow, needed to adapt and enhance the trainees' skills upon an intrinsically homogeneous plane.

A number of key terms were identified following a brainstorming procedure involving open discussion of ideas and proposals among the experts of the international Provide team.

a. Proximity violence – the use of this term during formulation of the training pathway for operators experienced in proximity violence was meant to foreground how female asylum-seeking migrants were exposed to two-fold violence: that of the males belonging to their own ethnic groups, that of the west which underestimated the situation or failed to devise instruments capable of accompanying the victims.

b. Legislation – here it was a question of matching sources of international human-rights law, European Treaties/recommendations, and highlighting how they were transposed into the legal systems of the partner countries involved in the project.

c. Humanitarian medicine – it was necessary to underline that the victims of proximity violence had precise health-care needs requiring specific skills on the part those providing service. For this reason, cultural mediation played a fundamental role.

d. Behavioural disorders – it was necessary to emphasise how migration acts as a re-traumatising event in a context of deculturization which creates fractures which can assume the appearance of sensory-somatic signals that may not be understood because of being rooted in the victims' implicit memory. It was necessary, therefore, to reinforce the psychosocial pathways and post-traumatological skills of the professionals involved in Provide training process.

e. Stress management – finally, it was necessary to pay great attention to the repercussions that such delicate and all-encompassing professional work had on the operators themselves and, consequently, strengthen their ability to deal with difficulties in a conscious, balanced manner.

The outcome was a training pathway for expert operators that may be summarised as follows.

Table 1 – Training pathway

Module I GENDER INEQUALITY: FROM GENDER TO PROXIMITY VIOLENCE	
Gender discrimination and inequality: a global overview.	Theoretical module 3 hours
Gender violence vs. proximity violence: differences and peculiarities	
Violence against women: types and markers.	
Violence against minors: types and markers.	
Violence against vulnerable persons: types and markers.	
Workshop	Practical module 2 hours
Module II MIGRANTS AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN INTERNATIONAL AND EU LEGISLATION	
Rules for entry into the Schengen zone and international area of co-operation: training and updating regarding immigration policies, legislation and systems in support of asylum	Theoretical module 3 hours
International protection legislation	

The Regulations, guidelines and services provided by the public systems	
The case of URMs, victims of violence	
Provision to LGBT asylum seekers: the challenges of discrimination in terms of jurisprudence	
Workshop	Practical module 2 hours

Module III HUMAN CARE AND EUROPEAN HEALTH-CARE PROVISION	
Humanitarian medicine as far as aspects of assistance to victims of proximity violence are concerned.	Theoretical module 3 hours
Psychological support for victims of violence, particularly women and children.	
Victim support provided by the public services	
Cooperative and network tools for the care of victims of proximity violence.	
Workshop	Practical module 2 hours

Module IV MENTAL DISORDERS	
Aggressive and deviant behaviour: specificities, diversities and approaches	Theoretical module 3 hours
Violence, torture and mental disorders: how to recognise them	
Forced migrations and mental disorders: how to approach them	
Differences in the mental health of minors, women, men	
Trauma and post-traumatic problems: how to act in these cases	
Workshop	Practical module 2 hours

Module V STRESS MANAGEMENT	
The cultural approach to GBV: how to deal with difficult situations	Theoretical module 3 hours
How to support staff when making operational choices	

What the operators may and may not do and the boundaries they may not cross at organisational and behavioural level	
How to protect personnel from aggression or help them manage stress	
Workshop	Practical module 2 hours

Source: own elaboration

2.1.3 The rationale of good practice

The rationale of training by modules took shape and foresaw:

1. a selection of potential trainees chosen on the basis of a grid of indicators contained in the call for applicants;
2. the outlining of the students' training needs by means of an ex-ante questionnaire to be administered to each cohort of trainees;
3. detection of the outcomes of the training courses, aimed at evaluating the effectiveness of the methods and criteria defined during the design phase of the individual courses.

It was also meant to register the good practices acquired by the students during their previous experiences. By tracing the participants' experiences back through time, with PROVIDE Training course sought to place particular emphasis on the good practices the students themselves had witnessed and/or created.

Therefore, if the objectives of the training course were subordinate to the possibility of detecting whether or not the trainees' abilities and skills increased compared to their initial situation (a) by verifying the degree of participant satisfaction; (b) identifying possible "feedback/return" regarding the networking of the good practices described; (c) and becoming a further indicator of performance. The implementation of this modular pathway was achieved by means of a "mixed" methodology, where the theoretical level of the lessons was interwoven with experiential workshops, then an attempt was made to store the good practices by preparing training pathways particularly innovative in terms of didactic methodology, of assessment and certification of the results and of the workshops inducing experiential brainstorming.

Within this overall panorama, and in view of the type of action envisaged, the group leaders represented one of the fundamental professional figures

charged with guaranteeing the "quality" of interrelations between the participants, their facilitation and familiarisation with the learning forums by subordinating their participation in planned team activities to their approval / refusal. The group leaders, besides detecting critical issues, also took note of the good practices implemented by the operators attending the various editions of the course.

By good practice we intended empirical construction of the developmental modalities of those experiences which, due to the efficacy of their results, the internal quality of their characteristics and the contribution made to the solution of particular problems, satisfied a complex set of professional-training expectations. At the same time, it was deemed necessary to attribute appropriate space to good practices, as well as to the critical issues detected, precisely because good practice possess a bottom-up characteristic – as it is built on the basis of exemplary and positive experiences believed to be transferable to broader contexts – and a top-down one – seeing that it requires the prefiguration of a systematised set of hypotheses to be verified on empirical bases, in the case of the Provide course by the tutor. The trainer (or classroom tutor often supported by a cultural mediator) provided the possibility/opportunity of outlining an optional solution – "in progress", therefore, to the training needs which emerged gradually to be added that to those identified by means of ex-ante evaluation (see chapter 1).

The term "good practice" is based on that of "best practice" coined by Frederick Taylor in 1911 in his *The Principles of Scientific Management*, Harper & Brothers Publishers, New York. This managerial idea asserted the existence of a technique, a method, a process or an activity, considered more effective when pursuing the achievement of particular results, than any other technique, method, process, etc. Taylor held that by means of appropriate processes, proper controls and correct analyses, the desired result could be obtained by avoiding unforeseen problems and complications.

Within this framework, good practice was inextricably linked to a modelling process, which identified satisfactory solutions experienced in a given educational context, but it was also refers to in terms of its defining characteristics, which when better specified, were considered as criteria and indicators of good practice by those who experienced them. Finally, good practice was seen as a work-in-progress mode of developing experiences which, due to the effectiveness of their results, the characteristics of their internal qualities and the contribution made to the solutions of particular problems, satisfied the complex system of the training course's expectations.

Generally speaking, it is only by assuming the most effective experiences that good practice provide that they may be considered such. When they

show their ability to inform models of action conventionally considered 'suitable' by the experts, they act upon the level of 'having to be' and are appreciated for their usefulness and functional feasibility. Therefore, each theoretical module of the course was integrated by a workshop demanding the intense, active participation of the trainees, through whom it was possible to detect and define good practices and valuable experiences. Thus, they became an essential feature of the course for experts in proximity violence funded by the European Commission and tested by the teams of the University of Palermo, Ismu, Telefono Donna, Oxfam, Jaén University, Samusocial International, Aseis Lagarto and Badia Grande.

2.2 The methodological implementation of the PROVIDE Training Course

2.2.1 Active methodologies and lifelong learning

As in the case of schools, the area of adult education has experimented with so-called "active methodologies" for several decades now. An important boost to active methodologies, applied to adult education, was provided by the process of "lifelong learning" (LLL). The term "lifelong learning" (LLL) refers to a process of self-orientation and continuous (self) education lasting one's entire lifetime. It is the tool preferred by the European Commission to indicate its goal of achieving the development of a kind of society based on knowledge, sustainable economic development, new and better jobs and greater social cohesion, while safeguarding the environment. The session of the European Council, held in Lisbon in March 2000, posited three strategic objectives: 1. the improvement of the quality and effectiveness of educational and training systems; 2. the facilitation of the access of all to education and training systems; 3. the realisation of educational and training systems open to the outside world (Lisbon Strategy).

The LLL model requires that people have the ability to manage their own knowledge in a critical way since, by this process, individuals are responsible for everything they learn, the way they learn and the environment in which they choose to carry out learning. The practice of LLL is applicable to both formal and informal learning types. Informal learning concerns adults in particular as it takes place outside of the main education and training streams and does not usually include official certificates. It can take place in the workplace or during participation in activities offered by organisations or civic groups (associations, trade unions, political parties, etc.). This process

originated in what today is called the *learning society* (or knowledge society), one where learning is vital to membership of society and keeping up with changes.

Self-regulation, the main characteristic of LLL, cannot be separated from the acquisition of both the transferable skills and techniques required to meet the demands of the working world. Active training methods are perfectly suited, therefore, to this type of learning and to the "knowledge society". Said methodologies mark a transition from the so-called "transmission of knowledge" through traditional and substantially "lecture-type" strategies – which see the learner in a position of passive attention – to learning through the elaboration, analysis, discussion and solution of problems. These new methods are oriented towards the subject's self-realization (self-development). Several methods refer to "active" training. Here we list some of those used most frequently used in adult education (Massa, 1997).

The case-study method. This involves analysis by the learning group of excerpts from stories concerning certain issues relating to the themes and contents of the course. The activity usually involves distributing the case(s) to subgroups, allotting their components a given time for reflection and analysis of the contents and further time to respond to questions that may be asked at the bottom of the case sheet.

A variation on this method is called the *incidental* – or open case – where the trainees are asked to provide the data missing from a very short except drawn from a case study.

Simulation. This method envisages learning through direct experience of problems and situations requiring strong involvement on the part of the actors. It includes role-play – where representation and dramatization, starting from predefined roles – and analogical psychosocial exercises, relating to acquisition of relational dynamics or team-work training, are carried out.

Experiential groups. These groups focus on the analysis of the interactive processes occurring in contingent situations (the here and now). They are, therefore, of clinical and relational worth (Massa, 1997).

Study and own-case groups. This method foresees that the stories and problems to be analysed be posed by the participants, not by the teacher. For this reason, the tendency is to favour a more concrete learning style, close to the working and experiential realities of the participants. The self-case refers to a real case introduced by one of the participants and subjected to analysis by the other members of the group, according to procedures and times that may vary according to the circumstances under which the training is provided.

The Provide professional training course for adults had its organisational

peculiarities. The classes were usually small in numbers, while the permanent teaching staff included a training manager who identified, in collaboration with the project team, the lines and syllabi of the course and monitored their implementation. A classroom tutor was charged with guaranteeing congruence between the activities carried out in the classroom and the project. The teachers, as disciplinary and technical experts, were in charge of carrying out the training sections (or modules) of the course entrusted to them (Massa, 1997).

2.2.2 Implementation and outcome of a training model

The group entrusted with drawing up the Provide project's "Training course for experts in proximity violence", planned the methodological structure of the course by referring to sets of active methodologies designed for professional and adult education. The contents of the five training modules (see par. 2.1) were chosen on the basis of the educational and professional characteristics of the trainees – who were, above all, social workers and professionals employed in reception centres for migrants and in the public services and in significant contact with migrants. The course's five-hour modular structure was subdivided into lectures during which a teacher provided the trainees with basic theoretical concepts and references regarding the contents of the module, while interacting with them by posing stimulating questions to be explored and taking on board the stimuli, questions and other considerations proposed by the members of the class.

The second part of each module consisted, instead, in a workshop requiring the intense and active participation of the trainees. The approach and content of the workshops was inspired by the "case-study method" (Massa, 1997) with some variations with respect to what was specified above.

Proceeding in order, we need to point out that the course required the contribution of several professional figures, both organisational and teaching. For the scientific and organisational part a design team was set up comprising the Project's principal investigator as its chief reference, a referent for each of the partners who also acted as training manager for each area, and, therefore, as principal trainer for some areas, with the specific task of overseeing the realisation of the course. The principal trainers followed and attended the conduction of at least one entire edition of the course carried out in their own area.

A second organisational figure was that of the classroom tutor who followed all the modules and editions of the course held in his/her area, and was

charged with planning and organising the teaching schedules, enrolling the trainees, responding to the specific needs of the participants, organising the classroom set-up and guaranteeing congruence between classroom activities and the project.

The illustration of the training courses provided below was drawn up by the teaching staff, the professionals, experts and/ or technicians responsible for the training modules.

The Provide project held a total of sixteen editions[3] of the course for "experts in proximity violence", engaging six experts in proximity and gender violence, nineteen psychologists, two psychiatrists, seven lawyers, nine medical doctors and six cultural mediators.

The criteria for the recruitment of teachers and technicians were based on a number of specific guidelines like competence and experience in ; competence and experience in working with migrant refugees and asylum seekers; competence and experience in managing and caring for victims of violence, gender-based violence, torture and trauma.

As regards the structure and management of the workshop – albeit with some differences due to the peculiarities of the various territories, the resources available and the type of participants – these were held by the teacher and co-teacher who, in several cases was a cultural mediator or a professional like a legal operator[4] or social worker. On the whole, the cases, always real and referred inherently to the theoretical part of the module, were read up on and proposed to the class which was immediately invited to form groups of 4-8 people. The teacher and the co-teacher then asked the groups to reflect on and discuss the case in hand on the basis of three analytical categories: 1. resources and strengths of the persons referred to in the case, their backgrounds and contingent situations; 2. fragility and weaknesses of the persons, their backgrounds and contingent situations; 3. the management of the case by the services (reception centres, health-care, social and other services), the critical issues, the good practices and how they might/ should have acted to make the action taken more effective.

At the end of each team-work session (approximately 30-40 minutes), the spokesperson for each group was invited to report to the rest of the class on

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[3] Seven editions in Lombardy, three in Sicily, two in Tuscany, two in the Paris area and two in Andalusia.

[4] In the editions of the course held in Sicily and Lombardy the co-teacher was the cultural mediator. In those held in Lombardy, the legal-administrative module was co-led by legal operators since they, besides being experts in the law regarding asylum-seeking migrants and refugees, are those who also accompany migrants during the entire course of the application for asylum. The cases proposed to the groups were drawn up by the cultural mediator or the legal operator.

the discussion conducted by his/her group and present the results that had emerged. This was one of the most important aspects of the training day, as each group – and every single participant – had the opportunity to interact with the others, in a mutual exchange of knowledge and experience.

The workshop ended with a short summing up by the teacher and co-teacher of the analyses carried out by the groups to highlight the most salient points emerging and add any information requested by the participants and/or aspects considered relevant that had failed to emerge.

Some of the peculiarities of the PROVIDE project's training methodology were the preliminary meetings with teachers and co-teachers and the observation grid.

As to the first point, the person in charge of the training in each area organised a preliminary meeting before each course with the trainers and co-trainers of each module. The reason for these meetings was to specify the objectives to achieve and actions to carry out. This informed the methodology to apply while creating the possibility for the trainers to confront each other on specific matters of each module, its contents, the territory of reference and the possible participants, in order to adopt the approaches and methods deemed best suited to each area and group of trainees. These preliminary meetings proved very useful and effective, precisely because they bestowed homogeneity on the training effort without, however, neglecting territorial peculiarities.

The University of Palermo's training team, in order to monitor the various stages of the training course and collect data regarding good practices, carried out periodic briefings with the workshop leaders, two meetings (one intermediate; one final) with the tutors, collected feedback from each teacher at the end of the five modules and conducted a final evaluative meeting with workshop leaders.

As to the second point, the managers of the courses created an observation grid (see below) to be used by the principal trainers to gather data, information and observations for a qualitative analysis of the progress made by the training courses.

This bore fruit too by bringing to the surface training practices, strengths and weaknesses, the best-attended activities and modules and those most appreciated by the participants as well as differences in context.

Table 2 – Observation grid

Lessons	Workshop
✓ Teacher's teaching method: lecture interactive, deductive, inductive, etc; ✓ The attitude of the teacher: detached, professional, engaging, attentive to feedback from the participants, etc; ✓ Trainee participation: attentive, interested, participatory, engaged, etc; ✓ The content which engaged the participants most; ✓ The questions asked most frequently by the participants.	✓ Workshop method; ✓ Continuity between theoretical lessons and practical workshops; ✓ Activation of class teams; ✓ Participation and involvement of the participants; ✓ Ability of the class to work independently; ✓ Working ability of individuals and/or groups of participants; ✓ Production by individuals and/or groups of participants.

2.2.3 A mirror up to good practices by operators

The mixed-methodology training approach promoted synergistic relationships between the teachers and the participants, between the instructors in legal matters and the professionals operating in the social services and at the reception centres for migrants, between the medical doctors and those operating within the social and health-care services, between stress-management psychologists and front-office operators.

In most cases the response from the local authorities during the promotion of the courses and recruitment of the participants was excellent and produced positive integration by means of action favouring "top-down" awareness and spontaneous applications.

All the courses were appreciated for the effectiveness of the interactive lessons where the participants proved attentive and interested thanks to the continuity between the theoretical lectures and the practical seminars and the use of the case-study methodology. Considerable participant satisfaction was observed regarding the teachers and the contents of the courses. Particular appreciation was expressed concerning the theoretical contents capable of deconstructing stereotyped representations of the phenomenon of violence and migration.

The University of Palermo's team highlighted, however, the need to distribute some aspects of the contents in a better manner in order to improve the protocol. In particular it remarked on the need to balance over-representation of the psycho-medical area; it proposed integrating social work with an ethno-anthropological module as well as modifying the highly general

nature of the legal module, which should focus not so much on migration law in general as on the specific issue of violence and the legal instruments required to protect victims.

In some editions of the course a marked involvement of the participants in group sessions was observed, while, at times they also provided an occasion for horizontal supervision and inter-professional comparison. This involvement was stronger in smaller groups (around 20) this leads us to hypothesise that the appropriate number of participants in the case-methodology sessions should not exceed twenty.

Several of those responsible for training held that in order to draw up a Provide protocol it would be necessary to secure specific investments to assure the involvement of cultural mediators, emphasising the centrality of that particular figure and the need to provide teaching on how to engage as a team where cultural mediators are involved. In the same way, the figure of the cultural mediator was deemed indispensable as a support to social worker dealing with migrants and while they accompany them during their complicated pursuit of asylum. If, in actual fact, the social professionals are unable to avail themselves of cultural mediators, adequately trained in the same issues as themselves and in the specific ability to work with them as a team, a situation of uncertainty and risk with respect to the outcome of pathways of protection remains.

The project teams suggested enhancing the workshops regarding gender-violence case studies (the Tuscan team) and the skills required by operators to recognise violence (markers, service support, the role of cultural mediation); analysing the main services available in the different contexts where the operators act, by focusing on good practices and the fragility of the context itself; increasing individual and collective work to avoid stereotyping migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, their traumas and the impact of these on mental health and resilience.

Both the French and the Italian project teams underlined the need to establish criteria and markers of stress and burn-out on the part of operators working with vulnerable migrants and victims of violence, just as they insisted on the fact that proximity and gender violence have become a reason for requesting and obtaining concession of asylum (French and Italian teams).

In short, the characteristics of the Provide project's training methodology which made it effective, innovative, repeatable and highly appreciated were:

- its simple and efficacious method;
- continuity between the lectures and workshops;

- the involvement of trainees as teams;
- the participation and involvement of the individual trainees;
- the ability of the class to work independently;
- the ability of the participants to work and reflect.

2.3 The significance of the experiential seminars

2.3.1 The experiential workshop

The choice of dedicating specific space within the training course to experiential practicals (called Workshops) stemmed from the study of reports regarding the issue (UNFPA et al., 2015; UNHCR, 2014;The Women's Refugee Commission, 2013; Human Rights Watch, 2010; the United Nations' Human Rights Council, 2012) and indications provided by various national and international bodies (Article 2 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, 2000; Directive 2011/95/EU, Directive 2013/32/EU, Directive 2013/33/EU, the European Parliament's resolution of the 8th of March 2016 regarding the condition of female refugees and asylum seekers in the EU (2015/2325 INI). In these, as also in all other homologous documents, the protection of migrant women, victims or at risk of violence, propose and advocate not only the identification of different reception and treatment procedures, but also and, above all, the training of operators in skills capable of responding adequately to the instances of this particular kind of vulnerability.

All these reports emphasise the urgent need to make operators aware of the risks inherent in standard reception procedures and of the urgency to train staff so they can implement specific procedures to prevent, identify and respond to sexual and gender violence, provide training and professional development so that operators in the field may be able to cope adequately with this emergency within the emergency (Di Rosa, 2018).

2.3.2 Aims and results of the experience

To implement the PROVIDE project it was decided to focus on training at the level of both content and the professional reflexivity of the operators. The objectives of the workshop were, therefore, the following:

- to provide space to listen to the professional needs perceived by the operators and to the effectiveness of their self-perception;
- to encourage group experimentation of the contents transmitted;
- to verify if from one module to the next what was learned during training was put into practice in the workplace;
- the group leader – an expert in group and cross-cultural relational dynamics and the mediating assistant trainer, followed the trainees for the entire duration of the course, precisely to ensure continuity within a space that provided the trainees with:
- an occasion to reflect on the theoretical stimuli received;
- an intra and interprofessional group within which to compare experiences, perceptions and concerns regarding professional experiences in the field of hosting.

From a methodological point of view, the group leaders elaborated some useful materials to re-elaborate with a view to defining the PROVIDE Protocol, in terms of the tools used and the contents which emerged regarding the methodology adopted (focus groups, role play), the contents discussed and training needs. Experiments were carried out using role play while, later, focus groups discussed the vital importance of paying attention to the awareness of signs of the distress experienced by people who underwent torture, violence, or trafficking (markers like difficulty of expression, possible memory lapses, difficulty in telling their story or narrating the events that occurred; inconsistencies within narrations, accounts of violence allegedly suffered by others; demonstrations of mistrust and closure; manifestations of a sense of powerlessness; feelings of anger and fear; demonstrations of shame, guilt and impotence because of having suffered shameful acts or for not having been able to prevent the perpetration of torture against loved ones). These elements, possible "clues" to untold experiences, need to be reported as a team in order to devise increasingly targeted support strategies to enable persons to bring experiences of torture or violence to the surface and express their own needs. It appeared evident, therefore, how support required to have violence brought into the open should be prepared and guaranteed by means of an integrated effort between the various components of the multidisciplinary team, work making each professional contribute to the enhancement of the skills and broaden the point of view of the individual professionals.

By arranging objectives according to levels of reflection, activities and objectives may be distinguished with respect to the subjects dealt with from

time to time: personal/professional reflections, team dynamics, networks and relationships with the context, the political-ethical impact of intervention.

The objective was, first of all, to provide a space where the professionals could question themselves regarding their ability/possibility of placing themselves in a position where they could listen while taking into account all the aspects set out in short above: the inability or impossibility for the female migrant who had been subjected to violence to narrate her own history; the victims' loss of trust in other human beings; the self-protection measures the victim might employ as a safeguard; the risks of breaking the alliance with and losing faith in those proving help.

Attention to self, as self-understanding, enables one to become a critically conscious presence: «Learning to exercise attention to self is a condition which permits us to pay attention to the other: to make his/her experience the object of our reflection» (Mortari, 2003: 143).

Furthermore, the activities developed in the workshop permitted the trainees to revise and update their competencies in terms of multidisciplinary intervention and teamwork aimed at fostering relationships with female victims of violence, but also at the construction and maintenance of a network of reference between hosting and territorial services. The importance of cohesion and solidity in teamwork was experienced with particular regard to the risks inherent in the fragmentation and in the lack of joint management of reception projects and services.

Again, awareness of the need to enhance work carried out through networks of public and private services in given areas grew stronger; networks capable of contributing to taking charge of vulnerable situations like those in which migrant women victims of violence find themselves. This regarded in particular situations where team competencies needed to be corroborated by external expertise (as in the case of victims of real of presumed trafficking) and when the health of the persons in need required targeted care, support and rehabilitation measures. It was held it was believed equally important that reception of vulnerable cases should trigger the activation of shared, jointly-planned social services, supported by collaboration between a territorial project and local health-care facilities, in order to provide operators with indispensable tools like training, refresher courses, supervision, consultation and continuous collaboration also through the comparison between the various communities (one's own and those of others) and the constant presence of linguistic-cultural mediators.

Last but not least, during the training course, the participants were able to rediscover the ethical roots of their professions, by not only by recovering

the ethical bases of their disciplines, but also by exploring their as yet unexpressed potential or that recuperated during encounters with the world of today (Dominelli, 2010).

One significant aspect of the training course was the creation of links between actors and experts already active in training in the sector to avoid duplicating the training provided and make collaboration between the actors involved in the sector a part of the system.

2.3.3 Group dynamics

Under the guidance of the trainers, who balanced the stimuli and guaranteed the possibility that all the trainees might intervene, the workshop proved to be a form of mutual co-training of the operators. This thanks to the fact that all the trainees shared their knowledge, professionalism and experience, with a view to improving the effectiveness of the experience and the self-confidence it boosted when it came to understanding highly complex and problematic issues like those arising from cases of the proximity violence undergone by migrant women and to improving global assessment of cases on the part of operators. All this was possible thanks to the contents of the various modules related to the personal, relational, family, cultural and social aspects of the phenomenon.

The considerable difference in levels of training and experience among the participants was considered a positive opportunity favouring exchange capable of revealing complementary factors. During the meetings, the trainees discovered a number of rather important issues: first of all, they experienced the course positively as a response to their training needs as far as the specific issues addressed by the course were concerned. These trainee-operators initially expressed their awareness of some of the limits of their previous training experiences, which, added to the "implementation deficit" of welfare legislation, did not always provide them with the opportunity of acquiring knowledge regarding the overall network of the various services and legal skills necessary to address the phenomenon.

In the light of the contents discussed and the work carried out with the group leaders, the operators gained a deeper awareness of the risks inherent in the difficulties of relationships between operators and foreign patients, actual or suspected victims of violence. In particular, the opportunity of establishing a relationship with colleagues belonging to the group, in a climate of trust, permitted the trainees to reflect also upon the critical personal and professional dimensions which might impact negatively upon their diagnostic

abilities, to the degree of invalidating the moment of reception and the pre-liminary interview, by producing significant bias when seeking to understand the distress borne by female victims, similar to that described by George in his studies on the issue, «Social workers' knowledge on their own biases, prejudices and subjective interpretations of others that are borne from differ-ent life experiences helps to prevent any transference or counter-transfer-ence. The degree to which the social worker can have a multicultural per-spective will affect the degree to which he or she can understand refugee clients' points of view, barriers, and strengths and incorporate effective in-terventions» (George, 2012: 433).

2.3.4 The dynamics within the course

The division of the course into theoretical lectures and practical work-shops was highly appreciated by the participants. The workshop became the place where views, opinions and good practices were exchanged and shared and where participants could establish cooperative networks.

The workshop adopted a training modality based on reflection on experi-ence (Consoli, 2005; Sicora, 2005; Fabbri, 2007) oriented as much in the direction of 'reflection *in* action' (attention to the context, to the situation, to unique cases, to problems, work on emotions to learn how to remain within uncertainty) as well as that of 'reflection *on* action' (reconstructing the pro-cess, analysing every event which took place, identifying the desires that triggered the action, determining whether the change took place or not and, if so, what practical implications it brought in its wake).

The involvement of professionals, though already trained, took into ac-count the fact that as the practice of a profession becomes routine and the knowledge becomes tacit through practice (Polanyi, 1979), the professional may lose important opportunities to reflect on what he/she does. Profession-als, as well as users, need support when adapting their own models to the specificities of the users, in the absence of which , the professionals feel the brunt of their loneliness, their own inadequacy and that of the means availa-ble to address the situations they are called upon to manage.

The provision of a laboratory aimed at developing the trainees' ability to ponder on experiences (Schön, 2006) starting from analyses of action taken, sought to stimulate reflection by focusing on the ideas (theories, opinions, judgments) examined during the workshop, by outlining the geography of the emotions experienced, evaluating the results achieved through the action undertaken to reveal tacit assumptions, ideas rooted in the cultural context

which informed the action taken to deal with cases of female migrants, victims of violence. The participants deemed the workshop carried out following this approach the feature which made the real difference between this course and others they had previously attended, since the Provide workshop was perceived as a space where the trainees were listened to and taken care of, meaning that the focus was on their needs, so much so, that some experienced it as a supervision group.

In some editions of the course strong investment on the part of the participants in group-work activities was observed. At times they became a space permitting horizontal supervision and inter-professional comparison. This investment was stronger in the smaller groups (of no more than 20) and was lower in the groups with greater numbers of attendees. The maximum number for the full future development of the protocol should be 20 operators per edition.

The mediators made a fundamental contribution to the workshop activities; they provided a different perspective regarding the case studies which led to a deeper understanding of specific situations.

The issue of protecting victims of violence certainly requires training professionals (social workers, legal advisors, psychologists, educators, etc.). But if these professionals cannot avail themselves of properly trained mediators or do not train with them, a situation of uncertainty and risk will continue to impact on the outcome of pathways of assistance. Protocols should be implemented paying particular attention to the massive involvement of mediators in order to guarantee that professionals in the field can always work with mediators with proper specific training.

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3. An overview of the profiles of the participants: "reception personnel" and "charge-takers"

by *Ignazia Bartholini* and *Lia Lombardi*[1]

3.1 The process conceived and correspondence with the trainees' profiles

The training course for "experts in proximity violence" was created with a view to defining and providing a set of contents aimed at promoting and strengthening specific skills capable of addressing the phenomenon. Although the creators of the course aimed at intercepting a group of professionals, as broad as possible in terms of age, profession and gender, the choice made previously by prospective participants to work in the social field, and in the specific sector of the reception of migrants, foregrounded some of the connotative features of the potential stakeholders already during the initial conception and design phase of the individual training modules thus bestowing direction on the overall design of the course conceived by the researchers.

As far as we are concerned, focusing on the skills to be reinforced, on those in need of mandatory further study, as well as designing the training modules, required an upstream implementation of a productive type of imagination. A kind of imagination which, incidentally, only those long engaged in contexts capable of providing the best, most useful and effective training courses are capable of exercising. The imagination in this case was no peregrine activity, detached from reality; on the contrary, it was an activity presupposing experience as an "*in-re* activity of knowledge acquisition". Imagination was, therefore, introduced as a specific pre-comprehension activity, justified, besides, by the experience already acquired in the field of immigration, and, therefore, integral to a living world seen as a *sphere of intersubjective relationships* where different individuals act as interlocutors both real and ideal. On the basis of the store of experience available to the

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[1] Paragraph 3.1 is by Ignazia Bartholini; paragraph 3.2 is by Ignazia Bartholini and Lia Lombardi; paragraph 3.3 is by Lia Lombardi.

researchers who prepared the scaffolding, the course was designed on the basis of what had been identified as behavioural styles and the constellations of values typical of those who work in the area of migrant reception.

The course for "Operators experts in proximity violence" proved to be, as early as during the stage when the call was issued, a magnet capable of attracting the energies of aspiring participants seeking objective and concrete orientation regarding the phenomenon of proximity violence and its direct implications for the psycho-physical health of asylum seekers. The need for knowledge was, therefore, combined with a request for professional training and the identification of appropriate skills. The first datum made available, about five months flowing the close of the last edition of the training courses, revealed that the number of requests to enrol was far greater than the courses could cater for, despite the fact that when they were repeated the numbers per course were extended from the initial eleven to the actual sixteen in order to meet the demand for training registered, above all, in Lombardy and Andalusia. The courses were held during first half of 2019 also in Tuscany, Sicily and in the French capital.

The choice of increasing the number of editions was prompted by the number of requests received, indicating the enormous widespread need for training felt among reception and charge-taking professionals, thus boosting the organisers' intention of directing the recruitment of trainees towards contingents of workers employed in the reception circuit for migrants. The calls for the selection of participants were addressed to doctors, social workers, psychologists, lawyers, linguistic mediators, law enforcement agencies etc., with a view to improving their skills/competence and the ability to implement them in given situations.

3.2 Differences of professional and gender roles

To the 16 editions of the course held in Italy, 7 in Lombardy, 5 in Sicily, 2 in Tuscany, we need to add the 2 held in the Paris region and the 2 in Andalusia, which involved an aggregate of 818 professionals in all.

As far as gender was concerned, as one might expect, in all the courses most of the trainees were females; the males accounted for an average of around 12%. The educational level of the participants was significantly high and included 70% holders of three-year bachelor's degrees (or equivalent qualifications in the cases of Spain and France) of which about 50% graduates in social work. In Italy, there was also a significant percentage of participants with a master's degree (about 50%). In Sicily, moreover, most of the

trainees had a five-year degree (51.9%). As regards the time spent in the migrant reception circuit, one third of the students held intermediary status (1-5 years), while the remaining two thirds regarded, in almost equal terms, the youngest trainees who had worked for one year or less and the older cohort which had been employed in the field for over five years. The ages of the participants ranged from 28 to 42. The participants were classed as follows:

Table 3 – The professions of the trainees

PROFESSION	NUMBER OF CASES
Non classifiable	46
Educators	301
Work-orientation consultants	3
Mediators	65
Social workers	194
Psychologists	80
Animators	29
Medical doctors	9
Legal operators	39
Law-enforcement representatives	9
Nurses	6
Area managers for the reception of migrants (Cas or Sprar)	26
Managers of facilities available for the reception of migrants (Cas or Sprar)	11

Source: own elaboration

As table 3 shows, the prevalent profession among the trainees was that of the educator (37%) followed immediately by the social worker (24%), the latter, however, reaching 50% both in Lombardy and in the Paris region. The presence of psychologists (10%) and cultural mediators (8%) was also significant. Among the participants, those indicated as "non classifiable" were Sicilian and Spanish students attending the final year of their Degree Course in Social Service or students working on theses focusing on the topic of proximity violence and who, as simple auditors, attended the entire seminar cycle of the courses, without, however, receiving the final certificate awarded to the regular trainees.

The trainees were mainly (over 50%) operators working in CAS (Extraordinary Reception Center) and SPRAR (Protection System for Asylum Seekers and Refugees) facilities, the other half professionals working within the

territorial social services, the police, hospitals, municipalities, provincial of-fices. A significant number were subjects who worked with voluntary asso-ciations. The types of professionals who enrolled were mainly educators, so-cial workers, cultural mediators, psychologists, legal operators. Furthermore, the majority of the students had a five-year degree (51.9%), a smaller number a three-year degree or a senior-secondary-school diploma (49.1%). The over-view of the situation helped us discover, thanks to our investigations (see table 2), based largely to analyses carried out by the colleagues who drafted chapter 4 of this volume, more than half of those who responded to the survey had a range of relative work-experience with migrant women.

Table 4 – Experience with migrant women (in %)

Yes, a lot	16,8
Sufficient	55,8
Little	23,3
None	4,2

Source: own elaboration

Attendance at the courses was no chance option. For these students it was triggered by a need they came across in the field, derived from the situations they often found themselves having to tackle. The experience gained was not the only distinguishing feature of those attending the courses. Another was the quality of their relationships, as they themselves pointed out during the work-shops and seminars associated with the lectures contained in each module.

The "mixed-method" training course envisaged the creation of synergistic relationships between the teachers and the participants, between the legal and social-work trainers and the reception centres, between the doctors and those operating within the social and health services, between the psychologists who dealt with stress management and front-office operators. In general, it was observed that the participants invested massively in group work, which sometimes became an area of horizontal supervision and inter-professional discussion. This kind of investment was more intense in the less numerous classes (about 20). Furthermore, the trainees were attentive and interested, thanks to the continuum between the theoretical lectures and the practical workshops and the use of the case-study methodology. A high degree of sat-isfaction was observed as far as the teachers and the contents provided were concerned. Particular appreciation was expressed regarding those theoretical contents capable of deconstructing stereotyped representations of the phe-nomenon of violence and migration. The feedback from the territory during the promotion of the course and recruitment of the participants, also proved

consistent, thus creating a positive degree of integration between action aimed at fostering "top-down" awareness and spontaneous applications.

The quality of the relationship with the migrant women hosted in the reception facilities, according to most of the participants, was fairly good. This relationship of trust represented a resource, because it permitted the migrant women to tell the story of the episodes of violence they had experienced. This bond of trust fostered communication, at least after some time, according to about 70% of the participants (Tab. 2). It was precisely about the importance of preliminary relationships to the "charge taking" of migrant victims, that it was mandatory to highlight three elements of the reception circuit.

1. The first concerns the structure of the third sector itself. Society, as a hierarchically ordered system, consisting of strongly interpenetrating and complementary subsystems, is actually replaced by the horizontal structure of the third sector, by its network, whose pieces no longer depend on roles, but on bonds and social "worlds of life", the configuration of which can predict the behaviour of social actors (Di Nicola, 1998). It is no longer a matter of compliance with a role as a means by which to appraise degrees of cohesion and social integration; the concept of a "network strategy" emerges as a marker of the adaptability of the social actor.

2. The second, closely linked to the first, concerns the importance of the human capital incorporated in the very make-up of the third sector, particularly in the fiduciary effects that reverberate within relationships. Social capital, from this angle, rests on a double theoretical-empirical matrix (Andreotti, Barbieri 2003; Bagnasco et al., 2001; Donati, 2004; Tronca, 2003). If, in one sense, as Putnam (1993; 2002) intended, social capital is a collective resource (produced by a sense of belonging, rules, trust and civic commitment), of which the community and its institutions take advantage, on the other, according to J. Coleman (1990), social capital is a function of the very structure of relatively stable social relationships which permit individuals to attain goals they could never reach on their own behalf.

3. The third concerns the prevalence of female over male operators (Walby, 2005; Tiessen, 2007). If it is true that care has traditionally been entrusted to women as a "less important form of commitment" (Rao, Kelleher, 2003), and if working with migrants who have been subjected to proximal violence and affected by forms of motivational deficit is their task, one may observe that "women are able to help other women"

(Bartholini, 2015). Compared to the critical issues, most of the operators during the workshops reported that working with women was more difficult than working with migrants in general (Fig. 1). It also emerged that communications between the female operators and female beneficiaries of the reception facilities is the only possible solution. In this case, relationships based on a commonality of gender defies the objective criteria of scientific management and is typical of many "mature" care-providing professions, that is, those involved in mature construction of professional relationships that do not disregard the need for empathic rapports between beneficiary and operators. It is a matter of mechanical rationality and affective neutrality that yields to the trusting and empathic modality based on relationality and empathy that is, on an "emotional kind of work" required to address the complexity of migrants' needs and requiring a suitable amount of time and proper ways of building it up.

Figure 1 – How would you rate your relationship with the migrant women you work with? (in %)
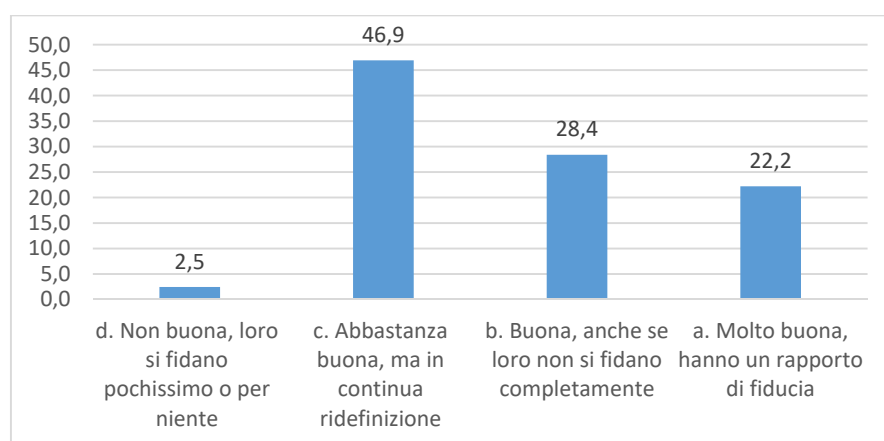
Source: own elaboration

Gender fatigue (Kelan, 2009) which still seems to "persecute" women in many professions – and which coincides with real forms of gender segregation – becomes a veritable advantage within the context of the migratory circuit and of trust relationships thanks to the use of *skills* more closely related to emotional and gender intelligence. *Gender-sensitive* connotations are, therefore, accompanied by professional, relationship-promoting skills. As

Martha Nussbaum sustains, this leads to a "fruitful functioning" of gender skills capable of "facilitating others" (2011: 138).

3.3 Regional profiles of training course: amid diversity and similarities

We conclude this chapter by providing a general profile of the training courses carried out within the project's various target areas and by pinpointing their common features and most salient differences.

As regards communications and dissemination of the information concerning the training and recruitment programmes for participants and trainers, all the partners used their own IT and digital resources, publishing both information and teaching materials on their websites and web pages, making them available to the trainees[2].

The training method used was appreciated by the trainees belonging to all the project's target areas and who – in most cases – participated in an intense manner showing that they were very much involved and capable of producing, from time to time, an excellent balance between the theoretical insights and concrete situations according to their own professional experiences. The role of the cultural mediators who played a profoundly important part in the training workshops held in Lombardy, Sicily and Tuscany, may be deemed of the utmost importance as their contribution to the workshops, provided a different view of the case studies leading to a deeper understanding of specific situations.

In the case of the courses held in the Paris region (Paris, Noisy-le-Sec, Ivry), the organisers decided to make some changes to the provision of training in order to cater for some of their operators' and stakeholders' needs, which emerged during the preliminary research phase. This meant changing the order of presentation of Module 2 (*human and migrants' rights within the framework of international and EU law*) and Module 1 (*gender inequality, gender violence versus proximity violence*) to clarify notions regarding migrants/refugees/irregular immigrants/asylum seekers before actually tackling the problem of violence.

For the second edition they chose to change the contents of module 3 from "health care" to "sexual and reproductive health", to avoid resembling module 4 on "mental health" too closely. For the conduction of this module, they

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[2] The ISMU Foundation and the University of Palermo have also created three lessons on video (modules 1, 2, 4) considered highly significant and which will be made available to the public at the end of the project.

involved experts from the "Gynécologie sans frontiers" association. In France, the mental-health modules were conducted by psychiatrists, unlike other target areas, where mainly psychologists (Lombardy, Tuscany, Jaen) and ethnopsychiatrists (Sicily) were recruited. The University of Jaen carried out, in addition to training designed for operators, an official "specialisation course in proximity violence", certified by the University of Jaén. This initiative obtained very high appreciation scores from the trainees. The male and female students who attended the course received an official university certificate following full attendance (25 hours) and after producing a final report. All the tutors, trainers and training managers found that the choice of trainers/experts needed to carefully vetted, to avoid the risk of giving rise to "blurring" and confusion between the contents of the mental-health, health-care and stress-management content. All the partners engaged in the project publicised the courses on their vast network of public contacts (municipalities, local police forces, health-care agencies and hospitals) and third-sector agencies (migrant reception centres, social associations and cooperatives, anti-violence centres), obtaining excellent feedback, demonstrating the strength of their reference grids.

Table 5 – Bodies involved in the training course

Area	Dissemination and collaboration
Sicily	- S.i.m.m. Italian Society of the Medicine of Migration; - CLEDU Legal Clinic for Human Rights, University of Palermo; - Società Italiana per lo Studio dello Stress Traumatico) Italian society for the study of Traumatic Stress); - Servizio di Etnopsicologia - Associazione Centro Penc (The Penc Centre Ethno-psychological Service); - Nucleo operativo di psichiatria transculturale ASP Catania (The transcultural psychiatric operative unit, ASP, Catania) rete SPRAR Sicilia) The Sicilian SPRAR network).
Lombardy	- Comune di Milano (Milan municipality); - Provincia di Bergamo (Provincial authorites, Bergamo); - Comune di Brescia (Brescia municipality); - Provincia di Cremona (Provincial authorites, Cremona; - Prefettura di Lecco (Police headquarters,Lecco); - Comunità montana area di Lecco (Mountain community, Lecco); - CAS e SPRAR delle province e comuni coinvolti (Facilities of the provinces and municipalities involved); - Servizi sociali dei comuni coinvolti (Social services of the municipalities involved); - Ufficio Protezione Minori, Lecco (Office for the protection of minors) - Ospedale di Lecco (Lecco hospital); - Forze di polizia (Police forces);

	• Ordine degli assistenti sociali (Order of social workers); • Ordine dei medici di medicina generale della provincia di Milano (General medical practitioners' order of the Province of Milan); • SVS-D Policlinico di Milano (Milan's General Hospital); • Centro di Etnopsichiatria dell'ospedale Niguarda di Milano (Milan's Niguarda Hospital's Ethnopsyhciatric centre); • Centro donne maltrattate, Milano (Abused women's centre, Milan); • Coop. La Strada, Milano (The "La Strada" cooperative, Milan); • Coop. Lotta contro l'emarginazione, Milano (The anti-emargination cooperative, Milan); • Croce Rossa Italiana, Bresso (Bresso red Cross); • Casa sul Pozzo, Lecco; • Rete antiviolenza, Milano (Anti-violence network, Milan); • Rete antiviolenza, Ticino-Olona (The Ticino-Olona anti-violence network); • - Fondazione Somaschi (The Somaschi Foundation).
Tuscany	• Rete SPRAR e CAS regionali- (Regional Facilities); • Prefettura di Arezzo (Police headquarters, Arezzo); • Prefettura di Firenze (Police headquarters, Florence); • Agenzia anti-tratta, Toscana (Tuscan anti-trafficking agency); • Centri antiviolenza province della Toscana (Tuscan Provinces' anti-violence centres).
Paris region	• CADA Centri di accoglienza per richiedenti asilo (Reception centres for asylum seekers); • HUDA-Accoglienza d'urgenza per richiedenti asilo- (Urgent reception service for asylum seekers); • Associazioni del Terzo settore (third-sector associations); • Municipal Services.
Jaen Region – Andalusia	• ONG dell'Andalusia; • Centri dei servizi sociali di comunità (Community Social Services Centres); • Local Police; • National Police; • Civil Guard; • Ordine degli assistenti sociali di Jaen (Jaen's Official Association of Social Work); • Ordine degli Psicologi di Jaen (Jaen's Official Association of Psychologists of Jaén); • Ordine degli infermieri di Jaen (Jaen's Official Association of Nursing).

Source: own elaboration

Thanks to the territorial networks, it was possible to identify locations in which to conduct the courses and thanks to the organisations (both public and private) which collaborated actively in:

1. organising the dissemination of the courses within their territories;

2. selecting local operators to enrol and attend the courses;
3. carrying out a rigorous and careful selection of the trainers and media-
    tors involved in the courses.

The above table n° 4 is a summary of the bodies involved in the dissemi-
nation and organisation of the different editions of the courses.

Despite all this, some critical points deserve mention in order to avoid
them in future. The waiting-list for enrolment in the courses proved a critical
issue both for Milan and the University of Jaèn: the extremely high numbers
of applications were all accepted in the long run. This was achieved, at times,
at the expense of the space available (especially in the case of the workshop
activities). Some enrolments in the courses in Lombardy proved unsuccess-
ful because, given the enormous interest shown, it was sometimes impossible
for some potential trainees to reconcile attendance with their working sched-
ules. In both Lombardy and the Paris region, some difficulties arose when it
came to involving representatives of the police. Furthermore, recent Italian
socio-political and regulatory changes and the consequent reorganisation of
numerous CASs and SPRARs did not favour the objectives of the training
courses which were aimed at increasing operators' ability to deal with highly
vulnerable subjects. These difficulties were encountered especially in Tus-
cany where the decrease in the quality of the reception system throughout
the entire region led to greater risks for victims of proximity and gender-
based violence. In France, the difficulty of curbing and preventing gender
bias and inequality emerged: most of the participants (as shown in the previ-
ous paragraph) were women and most of the facilities were staffed by
women. This figure deserves attention in order to prevent the issue of vio-
lence from becoming "a business for women". The French operators, who
attended the Provide courses, claimed feeling – especially during the course
of the module on "stress management" – a sense of frustration because of
their failure to implement solutions and changes at organisational level, since
they are not part of the decision-making management: they are obliged,
therefore, to address structural problems to which they are powerless to pro-
vide solutions.

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4. Processing the questionnaire: from the objectives to the formulation of the items to be included

by *Gaetano Gucciardo, Lia Lombardi, Matteo Moscatelli* and *Rafaela Pascoal*[1]

4.1 From research to indicators

4.1.1 Semi-structured and in-depth interviews

During the course of the PROVIDE[2] research project, 178 semi-structured and in-depth interviews were administered to local and third-sector stakeholders and workers operating in migrant reception centres, in the areas where project partners were engaged. This means that 78 semi-structured interviews were conducted in Sicily, 47 in-depth interviews in Lombardy, in particular in the city of Milan and the Brescia, Lecco and Monza areas, 13 semi-structured interviews were carried out in Tuscany, 12 in the Paris area and 28 in Andalusia.

The vast majority of the male and female operators interviewed in the project's various target areas had a university degree: mainly in social assistance, vocational education, cultural anthropology and psychology. Furthermore, the vast majority of the interviewees were women (see chapter 4 below).

The PROVIDE project's research involved, among many other commitments, assessing the training needs of the operators and stakeholders. These investigations actually permitted us to structure the training course (see chapter 2 above) and evaluate the training provided, by recourse to both ex-ante and ex-post assessments, and devise indicators useful for the formulation of the necessary questionnaires.

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[1] Paragraph 4.1 is by Lia Lombardi; paragraph 4.2 is by Gaetano Gucciardo and Rafaela Pascoal; paragraph 4.3 is by Matteo Moscatelli.
[2] Vedi: Bartholini I. (ed.), 2019, *Proximity Violence in Migration Times. A Focus in some Regions of Italy, France and Spain*, FrancoAngeli, Milano.

4.1.2 The training needs

In many cases, the interviewees, in the different areas targeted by the PROVIDE project, claimed not feeling sufficiently well-trained to handle the violence and abuse experienced by the migrant women and girls they had to deal with. The exploratory survey conducted during the implementation of the PROVIDE project highlighted the difficulties encountered by the operators employed by the services and the reception centres catering for refugees and asylum seekers. Some of the main challenges these operators had to address in the performance of their duties were the high migrant turnover rate; their own lack of skills specific to the management of gender and proximity violence; an understanding of the relationships existing between violence, forced migration and vulnerable migrants; the lack of specialised services and specific training available.

Better training was requested by the operators working in reception facilities during the entire period of their professional commitment. They demanded, above all, more information and better training before entering a community. Sociological and psychological, above all anthropological, training was also requested. The latter the participants believed would permit them to see "through the eyes of others", something that should be provided by means of a broader range of university courses designed to favour reception of migrants, a phenomenon that has now become a permanent feature of European societies. Another critical point the interviewees identified was the insufficient number of cultural and linguistic mediators available at the reception facilities, the lack of which makes the operators' hosting tasks even more difficult to carry out.

The cultural and linguistic mediators that support activities at the reception centres are often migrants and refugees who are more often than not devoid of any specific training in the field. They facilitate the interaction between migrants, local services and socio-medical personnel, but their lack of specific training can create difficulties when it comes to confidential and secure relations between the practitioners and the asylum seekers. Nevertheless, the work of cultural mediators remains central to the implementation of many of the activities available to refugees and the provision of timely support to women, men and children seeking asylum. Due to the low number of cultural mediators, it can be difficult to establish relations with the beneficiaries who are often, for various and understandable reasons, diffident.

The figure of the cultural mediator (male and female) guarantees the effectiveness of both intervention and the network which:

(...) might be improved by including professionals capable of mediating (in this case mediators), especially in hospitals and at police stations. Very often these institutions are not provided with similar figures, a fact that prevents [immigrants] from reporting possible violence or aggression or even more delicate and serious episodes to the hospitals. Sometimes the lack of a mediator can slow down the intervention by hospital staff due to the language barrier (interviewee No. 36, a female educator employed at a Fami facility).

The need for specific training courses providing knowledge regarding different cultures was keenly felt

The service would improve if professionals working in the same sector were better trained. Training aimed at acquiring knowledge of the beneficiaries' countries of origin and exploring the reasons that induce children to leave their country of origin, their families, etc. would be of great interest. (interviewee n. 36, female educator in a Fami structure).

It would help me immensely if there was a network in the area to tackle the problem of violence and provide a better understanding of the culture of the women's countries of origin (...). Mine is often a kind of emergency support, a relationship of proximity and assistance (a social worker at a Cas for women).

It is essential that, independently of the experience acquired in the field, that one possess a solid knowledge of the traditions and dynamics – including those of a family and cultural nature – typical of the countries of origin of the migrants. Furthermore, more information is required concerning the indicators to apply in order to recognise victims (interviewee No. 56, a male doctor).

Considerable emphasis was placed on the need felt by male and female operators to be better informed about and trained to recognise the "markers of violence suffered". The trainees also underlined the need to improve the charge-taking services, beginning with a greater presence of qualified intercultural mediators to ensure effective assumption of care by the health services and guarantee personalised treatment of victims of violence as well as the establishment of better and more effective communications between the social services, the police and the healthcare agencies.

In the same way, multidisciplinary knowledge and

the acquisition of multidisciplinary skills is recommended because distress often fails to emerge in places where preliminary interviews take place, even if they do so in everyday informal contexts. Each operator, regardless of their work, should acquire the basic skills in this sense (interviewee No. 38, a female educator at a Fami facility).

In the healthcare sector, several shortcomings and inconsistencies emerged, especially in some Italian contexts because:

> (...) in the medical/health-care sector in general, the quality of training in the specific professional skills required to provide assistance to migrants is still partial. The highly specific training of professionals entering the field, their already consolidated experiences and their knowledge, are often modelled on the cultural, anthropomorphic and psycho-social characteristics of Caucasian Europe. This leads potentially to limits due to the adoption of general parameters which ignore the peculiarities of the origins of migrants, causing, in turn, the attribution of "lopsided" importance (too much or too little) to the significance of some social attitudes or psycho-relational modalities, with the risk of losing the true analytical focus of the problem (interviewee n. 54, a female educator).

The importance of knowing about immigrants, their history and culture is emphasised because:

> (...) summary action based on a partial knowledge of this type runs the risk of losing sight of the overall picture of the single object of observation, as well as of the dimension of intimacy and the indispensable establishment of a direct bond of trust the professional charged with providing assistance and creating relationships needs to establish, even more so when it comes to the delicate issue of abuse and violence "(interviewee n. 54, a female educator).

Many interviewees stressed the importance of creating a relationship of trust between the migrants hosted by the centres and social workers, if social inclusion and the emergence of cases of violence are to be assured.

> I do my best to create instances of trust. They often come of their own accord because we spend a lot of time together, I keep other moments to monitor the situations where they live and to try to understand how they fare emotionally (a male social worker in a SPRAR for families).

To this end, one interviewee proposed, alongside constant and specific training, that single immigrants be entrusted to the care of another individual (a migrant like him/her), authorised to interface with a single highly qualified "third party". This, in short, would mean training migrants who would themselves become "carers" of other subjects, in a mutual relationship of trust. Some operators highlighted the lack of topics regarding migration and violence in the university curricula of social workers and educators. The charge-taking of victims of violence might be improved if the operators dealing simultaneously with migration and gender and proximity violence possessed a

more adequate basic knowledge, while their degree courses address these issues only marginally. Social workers should be trained in confrontation and collaboration, given that shared knowledge is essential for "integrated" action capable of fostering collaboration between social workers, psychologists, doctors and other professional figures in order to promote and guarantee the well-being of victims.

> I would suggest carrying out more dedicated internships in the various areas in which social workers operate, creating the conditions for concrete experience, thus laying the foundations for adequate and highly professional action when actually working in the field (interviewee No. 7, a female social worker, manager of a facility).

Several respondents believe that in order to provide and acquire a broader and more thorough knowledge of violence and migration, refresher courses need to be organised on the subject of female migration, which is constantly on the increase. The specific subjects related to the topic should also be included in university courses alongside multicultural workshops capable of promoting correct, adequate relations with migrant women.

> Hands-on experience in the field is the basis of everything, because by means of a theory-practice-theory process, trainees would be able to transfer into the field what they have acquired by study, assuming the reference theories acquired as a guide to performance. This because the current increasingly complex cultural environment is one of the most important challenges of the moment, especially for the social services. As a result, operators and social workers, in particular, will find themselves working more and more frequently in multi-ethnic communities and need to be prepared to update their practices and action, especially when addressing two complex phenomena like migration and gender-based violence (interviewee n. 7, a female social worker, head of a facility).

Many of the interviewees also held lifelong learning to be necessary, alongside the professional, psychological and psychoanalytic supervision of the operators working in the hosting sector obliged to deal with a range of psychological dynamics – conscious and unconscious – related to the traumas experienced by the migrants which can, consequently, prove stressful to the operator.

In France, as in Italy and Spain, there are no structured curricula catering for the issue of gender and proximity violence available to professional social workers who can receive appropriate training but only on the basis of staff availability.

Many stakeholders have designed programmes and/or intern training modules on gender violence, violence against women and/or child protection. The MIPROF (Mission Interministérielle pour la Protection Des Femmes Victimes de Violences et la Lutte Contre la Traite des Êtres Humains), the "Stop the violence" website, the Hubertine Auclert Centre all provide tools and self-training content on violence against women, and some universities also offer courses on gender-based violence – but none of them address the specificities of the right to asylum. The GISTI (Groupe d'information et de soutien des immigrés) provides short training modules on topics related to application for asylum and unaccompanied minors.

In recent years, the OFPRA (French Office for Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons) has endeavoured to include the gender approach and the identification of vulnerabilities in its programme, by setting up internal working groups. Furthermore, the initial programme for OPFRA officials consisted in a complete three-month training course where the new staff was tutored in legal issues, learnt how to conduct an interview, and other basic skills (OFPRA, 2018).

In France, however, the lack of training for staff (social workers mostly) dealing with the housing and reception emergency system (CADA – Center d'Accueil de Demandeurs d'Asile) is felt keenly especially when it comes to problems of asylum and exile. This greatly affects the ability of social workers to recognise problematic situations, identify needs and direct people towards appropriate or relevant care and agents. Furthermore, the personal beliefs and opinions of social workers may act as a serious obstacle when addressing gender-based violence and must be taken into account by facility managers when they hire staff, plan internal training and the management of the personnel. As the director of one CADA pointed out:

> (...) for some professionals it can be difficult to accept and/or understand that a person is homosexual or continues to stay with a violent partner instead of leaving, or has a taboo concerning sexual mutilation, etc. It is important, therefore, not to take for granted that the professionals who manage the centres and those who work there share the values underlying the action required and recommended when it comes to issues of this kind (a male CADA manager, France).

As for the Spanish situation, at present the Programme of Humanitarian Attention to Immigrants and Refugees aims to alleviating the vulnerability of migrants by providing them with accommodation, food and covering their basic needs. It also aims at equipping them with a minimum of social tools (language, training, orientation) to prevent, as far as possible, their personal

deterioration and social exclusion while also promoting their integration into the host society (CEAR, 2018). In May 2017, the Podemos political party presented a bill drawn up by the lesbian, gay, trans and bisexual state federation (FELGTB), to guarantee their rights, including those of asylum seekers.

During the research carried out in the field, a growing sensitivity towards migration-related violence was detected, but a recurrent lack of specific training capable of facilitating the detection of violence also emerged. In general, what emerged most was a feeling of dissatisfaction concerning the way operators worked with immigrants/ refugees. The interviewees held that situations of vulnerability involving victims of violence and abuse experienced during migration require more appropriate multidisciplinary tools such as to better detect physical and sexual violence. The help of native speakers or intercultural mediators (mostly NGO volunteers) alone is not enough since recognition of violence requires "accompaniment", a factor frequently overlooked.

> At normative level, in actual fact, neither the norms nor the protocols are bad; the real problem concerns the training of personnel. Training. A lot of training is necessary (...) But there is very little of it. Training must be constant, otherwise awareness cannot increase. Gender-based violence is a matter on our conscience. (Code: PJJ4, a male jurist with 25 years of experience in a Women's Help Centre).

Several of the interviewees pointed out that if it is quite difficult to detect trafficking-related violence, it is much more difficult to identify violence when "it is not named or remains invisible as proximity violence". Daily life in the event of emergencies due to arrivals, assignment to different centres, legal assessment, verification of age (in the case of minors) goes beyond the time available and the skills of social workers. In agreement with the data for the other areas involved in the project, the Spanish operators agree on the following the need to "provide training regarding migratory processes and establish networks between the institutions in order to make the social assistance provided to people suffering from proximity violence more effective".

Another significant point emerging from the Spanish interviews is that the transfer of knowledge between professionals may considered a facet of good practice. There is a lack of networking between professionals and local protocols enabling the management of violence and stress. A large number of health-care workers undertake training and attend awareness-raising courses on violence and gender-based violence on a voluntary basis in their free time, which indicates a considerable increase in the deficit of structured,

free training provided. It was also fundamental to understand the need to accompany the victim during the recognition phase and report situations of violence; even more so, when it comes to irregular/illegal migrants and /or those involved in trafficking networks.

4.1.3 Highlighting the points

A systemic, cultural approach within the reception centres is recommendable therefore especially when it comes to gender violence and, more generally, proximity violence, so that operators will be in a position to understand the experiences brought with them by migrants who have often experienced and suffered abuses falling into these categories. By way of summary we wish to highlight the main reflections and training needs concerning instruments and skills that emerged from the interviews with the operators (social workers, psychologists, professional educators, psychiatrists, lawyers and legal assistants). They regarded a thorough knowledge of the criteria and symptoms on the basis of which to recognize signs of gender or proximity violence in reception places (health and life histories; direct and indirect observation of verbal and non-verbal behaviour patterns; reported symptoms; circular communication between the beneficiaries and the operators, etc.).

- The need for support and skills permitting the operators to recognise and initiate a therapeutic pathway for migrants, victims of violence (women, men, adolescents).
- The need to understand the differences between the various types of violence experienced, but also, and above all, the meaning of violence for each of the subjects encountered and what it means to emerge from a context of violence. "Because what a Bengali woman requires is different from the model of escape from the violence that we provide" (PFG No. 2, social worker, SVS-D, woman).
- Have the guarantee that the psycho-social treatment provided is adequate, understandable and effective for migrants.
- Avoid construing and reproducing stereotypes and prejudices because "violence is not a culturally connoted phenomenon" (PFG n. 6 / P, a female official at municipality of Milan).
- The need to create networks and synergies between all the social actors local and national institutions, public and private organizations, involved.

- Courses and modules in legal-administrative training are required, including those addressing the issue of family reunification.
- Implement strategies for the management and prevention of crises and emergencies, favour networking and collaboration with other existing services active in the area and the importance of a multidisciplinary approach.
- Bureaucratic-institutional language needs to be addressed and accommodated because it is frequently far removed from the language adopted by the workers who work with migrants (see: police, social services, health-care services, local institutions, etc.). "Unfortunately, it has already happened that an immigrant woman who finally decides to file a complaint for ill-treatment, was expelled from Italy because she had no residence permit" (PFG No. 9, female worker at a reception centre for abused women), despite article 18bis of Law n. 119, 15 October 2013. Training is also essential, therefore, for those who perform high institutional roles, such as policy makers, administrators, judicial and police bodies.
- By means of training, it is necessary to activate "inclusion policies" of the local services, administrations and promote the spread of inclusive culture (PFG n. 7, a female official of Milan's municipal authority).

In conclusion, I think that, despite the territorial differences detected, the PROVIDE project highlights the need to plan training courses focused on three fundamental criteria: *identification, prevention, care*. This means:

a) receiving and hosting asylum seekers and refugees, victims of violence and/or of trafficking in adequate reception facilities; providing them with multi-professional care solutions (psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, educators, etc.);

b) training social and health-care workers in matters of gender-based violence, international and national law, regarding the routes travelled by forced migrants and the risks they faced during their journey (with reference to the specific risks faced by women, children, men, LGBTI);

c) providing the operators of the reception centres with the means by which to identify the needs of women and other vulnerable persons;

d) providing operators with the skills necessary to take charge of women and vulnerable persons, victims of violence;

e) preventing further acts of violence and abuse inside the reception facilities making them safe for women and vulnerable groups;

f) avoiding mixed environments; g) avoiding the hosting of women, children and LGBTIs in large reception facilities seeing that apartments or family dwellings, that is, the "widespread accommodation model" is preferable, provided it is not located in an isolated area;

h) preventing further abuse and violence by providing information to women and vulnerable people making them aware of possible dangers and helping them to acquire safe behaviour patterns and boost their self-confidence.

4.1.4 Indicators of proximity and gender-based violence

The analysis of the interviews held with operators and stakeholders together with the desk analysis of literature and international documents on gender violence and on what we have identified as proximity violence, has permitted us to build a set of indicators we have classed as Performance Indicators and Quality Indicators.

4.1.5 Performance indicators

The performance indicators were devised to measure the implementation of the course contents and changes made to their practice by the operators (performance) as a result of attendance at the course. The implementation and changes in question regarded identification and management of gender-based and proximity violence experienced by the migrants. The process used to gather evidence aimed at implementing the indicators drawn up and divided into two phases: 1. The first phase sought to verify the access prerequisites of those applying for the professional training course by means of a questionnaire (ex-ante). Data describing the profiles of the participants (at the beginning of the training/matriculation) were gathered. These data included the participants' education/background, their specific training and relevant professional experiences with GBV (see training course project). 2. The second phase regarded the customer satisfaction of the trainees: questionnaires were administered at the end of the training. During the third step of the research, the ex-post questionnaires were administered 1-3 months after the conclusion of the training course. In the figure provided below, the dimension of the indicators, their application, are presented in detail.

Tab. 6 – Performance Indicators

Dimension and contents	Indicators
Knowledge of different kind of GBV and forms of proximity violence.	Number of trained operators who are presumed to know the following types of GBV: ✓ Sexual violence; ✓ Physical violence; ✓ Psychological violence; ✓ Family violence; ✓ Minors abuse; ✓ Trafficking; ✓ Torture;
Ability to identify the different forms of GBV (gender-based violence) and PV (Proximity violence).	Number of trained operators to be able to identify the different forms of GBV and PV.
Ability to use instruments to detect forms of violence.	1. Number of trained operators to be able to use protocol for interviewing victims. 2. Number of trained operators to be able to identify a efficient procedure to detect forms of violence.
Ability to network with other facilities /services.	1. Number of trained operators who have a good knowledge of specific social services in their area. 2. Number of trained operators to be able to cooperate with other services (institutions, public and non-profit). 3. Number of operative protocols defined between institutions.
Ability of "take care" the victims.	4. Number of meetings with single migrants, been victims of GBV/PV. 5. Time between one meeting and another. 6. Number of activities identified by each operator for victim care and their duration.

Source: own elaboration

4.1.6 Quality indicators

Table 7 – Quality Indicators

Issues/contents	Indicators
National and local laws and rules	*Number of trained operators who have improved their knowledge regarding:* • Laws to combat different forms of GBV/PV; • Laws to protect victims; • Specific laws on protection of GBV/PV victims: e.g. recognition of asylum or humanitarian permit; • Specific legal pool for protecting and defending victims;
Policies	*Number of trained operators who have improved their knowledge about:* • Access of migrants, victims of violence to healthcare services; • Access of migrants, victims of violence to reproductive health services (abortion, childbirth, pregnancy, etc.); • Access of migrants, victims of violence to social services; • Access of migrants, victims of violence to education services; • Access of migrants, victims of violence to job training pathways; • Special policy aimed at enhancing the capacities of migrant victims, their autonomy and resilience.
Cultural and social issues related to migrant victims	*Number of trained operators who have improved their knowledge concerning:* • Family structure in the country of origin and the arrival country; • Gender relationships; • Cultural issues on gender roles and relationships • Specific cultural and social practices (e.g. - MGF, early and/or forced marriage); • Motivation and aim of migration;
Institutional violence (police, healthcare, legal, social and other public services)	*Number of trained operators who have improved their knowledge concerning:* • Type of reception (e.g. dedicated room for interview); • Protocol for interviewing victims; • Adequate and trained staff; • Communication set and language; • Using cultural mediators.

Source: own elaboration

At the second phase of the research-evaluation process, quality indicators were used, aimed at testing the usefulness of satisfaction with the training courses. It involved administering and collecting (at the end of the course) a questionnaire focused on achievement/improvement of the participants' knowledge regarding the subjects/issues taught. In the table No. 7 the issues/contents of the indicators are presented.

4.2 Building the ex-ante questionnaire

The ex-ante questionnaire was drawn up for those who attended the Provide course to outline their professional profile with a view, in particular, to detecting some aspects of the professional activities most closely related to the issues addressed by the course and those most requiring improvement during its conduction. The ex-ante questionnaire was, as a result, coupled with an ex-post questionnaire which, in turn, was intended as a kind of echo of its ex-ante twin, the purpose of which was to identify which of the trainees' professional activities underwent changes following their attendance at the course. The hope, but also the aim of the project, was to gather data attesting to improvements in terms of professional activity related to the issues addressed during the course.

The questions contained in the ex-ante questionnaire were geared to detect the trainees' opinions, appraisals of and attitudes towards certain aspects of their professional practice associated with the specific issues dealt with during the Provide course, at two different moments in time. The second survey was not administered immediately at the end of the course, but quite some time later (two, three months), to verify whether attendance at the course had changed these professionals' ways of carrying out their work, and if so, how and with regard to which aspects of their practice.

Basically, the trainees were asked the same questions, a few months after the end of the course, to see if their practice has changed and to evaluate the impact of the course on their professional conduct. This survey sought to measure the effectiveness of the course itself, that is, whether and to what extent it had proved useful not only when it came to modifying the professional conduct of the trainees but also to evaluate their opinions, their assessment of and attitudes towards the problems addressed by the Provide course and their perception of its effectiveness.

The ex-ante questionnaire contained four sections regarding: 1) the service/body/facility where the respondents worked; 2) their relationship with migrant women; 3) case management; 4) specific skills. It was preceded by

a brief presentation to provide the respondents with a clear idea of their task, the questions they would be asked as well as the purpose of the survey. Here is the text:

This questionnaire aims at gathering information regarding the presence of migrant women who are victims of gender and proximity violence and who pass through the Italian reception system and how those who work closely with them manage these complex situations. We also ask you to allow us to contact you a few months after the end of the course and ask you to answer similar questionnaire in order to understand if the training course provided you with tools useful to your daily practice. The questionnaire will not take you more than 15 minutes to complete, your answers will be treated anonymously and used only in relation to this research project. Thank you for your collaboration.

4.2.1 The trainees workplace

In the first section dedicated to the bodies and the kind of facilities for which the trainees worked (Hotspot, Hub, SPRAR, CAS, CIE / CPR etc.), how large, how many people availed themselves of its services, the kinds of people provided for (men, women, families, minors...); the respondent's role there; if they belonged to a team and how this was composed, in terms of numbers of professionals and skills required.

4.2.2 The relationships with migrant women

The second set of questions concerned the trainees' relationship with migrant women. These questions permitted us to enter into the dimension that interests us most as regards performance because the hope is that the ex-post survey may provide us with answers revealing improvements in relations with migrant women. On the bases of performance indicators, the ex-ante questionnaire was built. The questions first asked whether the respondents had any experience of working with migrant women, where these women come from. The key questions were: a) "How would you judge your relationship with the migrant women you work with?" b) "Do migrant women tell you about the violence they have undergone?" c) "As regards your work with migrants, how would you consider the experience of working with vul-

nerable migrant women? More demanding, equally demanding or less demanding?" d) finally we used a set of questions aimed at investigating the trainees' self-perception when addressing the gender violence suffered by women immigrants; the questions are:

1. it is difficult for me to understand what migrant women think;
2. it is difficult for me to understand what migrant women feel;
3. our cultural distance is vast;
4. the differences between our life experiences are vast;
5. however much I try, I cannot understand their choices;
6. i can't make them understand that I just want to help them;
7. they do not understand that what I am offering is the best for them;
8. there is a problem of trust between migrant women and host operators;
9. it takes a long time to establish a relationship of trust;
10. operators need more training to handle such complex cases.

4.2.3 The case management

The third section of the questionnaire focused on case management as conducted by the practitioners who took part in the training/research project and by the reception centres where they work. Therefore, question number 18 *When you acknowledge episodes of violence to whom do you turn*? was the first the practitioners were asked with reference to episodes of violence. The answers regarded three levels of involvement. The first regarded the practitioners' ability/inability to reveal the situation to another person *No one, I did not know whom to address,* the second level regarded inclusion of other practitioners working in the facility like, *the head of the facility, the facility's psychologist, a colleague with greater experience,* finally, the third level regarded bodies or services outside of the reception centre like *a social worker, a doctor, services specialised in gender-based violence* and *another figure.*

The following question, number 19, investigated the existence of a *specific procedure for cases of gender-based violence in the reception centre,* providing the respondents with the possibility of specifying the procedure foreseen in cases of gender-based violence in an essay question, or to appoint the existence of *a procedure for all cases of violence and distress.* In the same line, question number 20 interrogates the participant's opinion regarding the *procedure or the management of the cases* in the place of work, in a scale of

four possible answers, where the minimum is: *not foreseen any, thus it should be defined* and the maximum is established as *very efficient.*

Question number 21 aimed at defining the psychological traits of the practitioners, such as self-esteem, confidence and motivation. By assessing their self-evaluation and self-awareness of their reactions and abilities when confronted with situations of gender-based violence, on a scale from one to five, where 1 means to *fully disagree; 2: disagree; 3: neither agree nor disagree; 4: agree; 5: fully agree.*

Table 8 – Psychological traits of the practitioners

I possess the ability required to deal with the situation	1	2	3	4	5
It is difficult, since I did not know how to manage this kind of situation	1	2	3	4	5
My ability to deal with the situation is inadequate when confronted with this type of violence	1	2	3	4	5
I am powerless when called on to deal with a difficult situation, hard to change	1	2	3	4	5
I would have liked to be more competent when it comes to this kind of issue	1	2	3	4	5
I understood and learned things that I did not know regarding this type of situation	1	2	3	4	5

Source: own elaboration

Besides practitioners' self-perception, the inquiry also aimed at defining their level of awareness regarding women's exposure to gender-based violence as well as declining their concept of "vulnerability" and gender-based violence. The specification of these concepts was made possible through the kind of open-ended answer required to reply to *c. Yes, specify.* Besides this open-ended response, the question *do you think that all migrant groups of women are particularly vulnerable to gender-based violence?* included the answers *No, I think that all migrant women are exposed to this issue* and *I cannot tell, I do not have sufficient elements to affirm such thing.*

The practitioners' perception of gender-based violence or vulnerability in the culture of others (Bauman, 2013) is still dependent on the relevant role of the cultural mediator. According to Taft (1981: 53), "the cultural mediator is a person who facilitates communication, understanding, and acting between persons or groups who differ with respect to language and culture. The role of the mediator is performed by interpreting the expressions, intentions, perceptions, and expectation of each cultural group to the other, that is by establishing and balancing the communication between them". Therefore, the presence of the cultural mediator, especially in cases of violence, does not only

reveal particular potential indicators of trauma or violence, but it also deciphers signs of distress and other consequences of abuse and suffering.

On the other hand, the cultural mediator due to his "bicultural extent" (Taft, 1981) also facilitates an understanding of deviant behaviour in the victim, by activating a multicultural lens in the practitioner, so he/she can reach the best solution. The relevance of the cultural mediator, especially in the identification of the indicators of violence is revealed in question 23, *Have you got access to a cultural mediator, whenever you need one, even to manage cases of violence?,* which gave the respondent the possibility of choosing between the following answers*: Always; Sometimes; Rarely; Never.* However, the importance of the mediator is not limited to access alone, but also to types of intervention, which the researchers envisaged *by telephone; Face to face; both; Other.*

4.2.4 Specific competences

Over the past few years, Italy was confronted with a so-called emergency situation (Campomori, 2016) leading to an exponential increase in the country's reception system. Consequently, the need to set up improvised reception systems meant employing several practitioners who were not necessarily trained to address the specific needs of asylum seekers (Marchetti, 2016). In this context, the researches decided to introduce a set of questions dedicated to the specific skills practitioners would require, especially in cases of violence. The first question, number 25, of this set focused *on specific education regarding migrants,* including *training courses, master classes, degrees, etc,* and asked for at least two examples of the training courses the respondents had attended. Question number 26 asked the practitioners about attendance *at specific professional refresher courses* also providing them with the possibility to specify the topic/s covered by the course. As mentioned above, the relationship between migrants and practitioners is highly influenced by the latter's communication skills, since incomprehension of the migrant's language may create an obstacle against migrants' needs. Therefore, in question 27, the practitioners are asked to name a foreign language they are able to use to communicate with the beneficiaries of the services they provide. Some questions were also dedicated to the practitioners' personal qualifications like *native language*, in question 28, their parents' place of origin and as in question 30 regarding cases where the practitioners were born abroad, they were asked to state their place of birth. Question 31 asks about the *schooling/education received in Italy?* and provided answers like *from primary*

school; from junior secondary school; from senior secondary school; from university; other(specify). Finally, the last question, number 32, asked the practitioner to provide three examples on the *type of training they deemed necessary to improve the efficiency of their work?*

4.3 Evaluation and ex-post questionnaire: satisfaction and detection of the impact on the participants after attending the course

4.3.1 Evaluative survey of the participants' satisfaction

The team designed an evaluative survey, administered at the end of the course, to collect data regarding satisfaction with the different area of the training courses: 1) utility[3], 2) participation[4], 3) didactic materials[5], 4) organisation[6]. These crucial aspects of the course were analysed by asking the trainees to express their satisfaction on a scale from 1 to 4.

The aim of the survey was to try to understand, for example, whether the quality of the course concerned more the organisation and delivery of training or the congruity of the content of the modules and the objectives it intended achieving. In a training course, from the point of view of those attending it both areas may be important. The former is related to expectations and useful information, the latter to experiencing the course itself and the learning environment. It is important to check for feedback from the trainees' regarding their relationship with the staff and participation, sense of belongingness and degree of involvement of the whole class. The researchers also carried out an analytic exploration of each of the five modules and each of

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[3] The indicator was composed of a) Congruity of the course's contents and objectives; b) Correspondence between training-course content and initial expectations; c) Correspondence between training-course content and professional interest; d) Applicability of the topics discussed in the professional field; e) Correspondence of the subjects regarding the flagged necessity of updating.

[4] The indicator was composed of: f) How the trainee would evaluate his/her level of involvement (interest in the content, propensity to intervene during the course, etc.) during the entire duration of the course?; g) How the participants would evaluate the level of involvement (interest in the content, propensity to intervene during the course, etc.) of the other participants during the entire duration of the course?

[5] The indicator was composed of: l) Quality of the teaching material distributed, m) Completeness and ease of use of the materials supporting the didactics; n) Utility of the teaching material for work and study purposes.

[6] The indicator was composed of: r) Facilitated access to the places of training; s) Functionality and comfort of the spaces used; t) Adequacy of the equipment available (projector, board, etc.); u) Assistance from the non-teaching staff (secretary, technicians, etc.).

the five workshops comprising the course: proximity violence, migrants and human rights, human and health-care rights, mental health, and stress management.

Table 9 – Dimensions of the evaluation questionnaire about the five modules

1a. Congruity of the course contents and objectives
2a. Correspondence between the training content and initial expectations
3a. Correspondence between the training contents and professional interest
4a. Applicability of the topics discussed in the professional field
5a. Correspondence of the subjects regarding the necessity to update flagged by the trainees
6a. How would you evaluate your level of involvement (interest in the content, propensity to intervene during the course, etc.) for the entire duration of the course?
7a. How would you evaluate the level of involvement (interest in the content, propensity to intervene during the course, etc.) of the other participants during the entire duration of the course?
8a. How would you assess the teacher's teaching method?
9a. Time management of the presentation
10a. Time allotted to questions/active participation
11a.Teachers' mastery of the contents and the clarity of their presentation
12a. Class management: the teachers' ability to communicate and relate to individuals and groups (in cases of simulations, exercises)
13a. Organicity and sequencing in the presentation of the subject
14a. The teachers' ability to collaborate with other teachers and speakers of other modules
15a. The ability of the teacher to work /collaborate with the workshop organiser /tutor

Source: own elaboration

Calculating the average value for all the items it is possible to obtain the degree of participant satisfaction for each module (on a scale from a minimum of 1 to a maximum of 4) to see which they deemed the most useful and best related to their needs at work. Participants with more experience or those better qualified (working with migrants for more than 5 years) yielded results different from their less experienced and less qualified colleagues in terms of satisfaction and impact, which is why it was necessary to explore intersections between the variables and the different types of participants.

We also collected data on some topics to draw up a final evaluative summary of the course (mean values, 1 to 4) by the point of view of the participants.

Table 10 – Dimensions of the evaluation questionnaire concerning the five workshops

1b. Ability to interact with the teachers/speakers presenting each of the modules
2b. Integration between the organiser of the group and the assistant facilitator
3b. Mastery and clear presentation of the content by the workshop leader
4b. The workshop leaders' ability to manage, communicate with and relate to the individuals and groups (exercises, simulations, ...)
5b. Organicity and sequencing in the presentation of the subject
6b. Applicability of the issues dealt with in class to the trainees' professional practice
7b. Correspondence between the topics treated and the trainees' need to update
8b. How would you evaluate your level of involvement (interest in the content, propensity to intervene during the lessons/lecture, etc.) for the entire duration of the course?
9b. How would you evaluate the level of involvement (interest in the content, propensity to intervene during the lessons, etc.) of the other participants for the entire duration of the course?
10b. The tutor's' ability to coordinate the workshop
11b. How would you assess the trainers' workshop method?
12b. How would you assess the professional contribution made by the assistant facilitators?

Source: own elaboration

Table 11 – Summary of the assessment of all course area

Number of hours dedicated to the lectures
Quality of the teaching material
Adequacy of the duration of the training course to cover the aims and contents declared
Adherence to the training and professional needs declared (by whom, when?)
Number of hours dedicated to the workshops

Source: own elaboration

The questionnaire also explored whether the weaknesses of the training course exceeded its strengths. The participants were asked to express their opinions in their own words concerning aspects of the course they appreciated. The participants were then asked also if they would recommend this course to a colleague. Finally, the participants were asked to specify any critical issues they encountered and advance suggestions. Some complained about the contents others about some organisational aspects. The variables explored and the data collected indicated what was considered positive in need improvement, for example, better premises and facilities for the courses or a more practical, less theoretical approach to the modules.

4.3.2 Ex-post questionnaire and detection of the impact of the course on the participants

The selection of the variables to observe regarding possible significant impacts of the Provide course on the participants required considerable work on the part of the evaluation team, in order to appraise the hypothetical changes brought about by the project on the whole. The statistical evaluative approach adopted aimed at analysing specific changes in the recipients due to the course, observable after it had been completed.

This was done by comparing the ex-ante and ex-post data while considering other possible facilitating factors. The factors on which the course was expected to have some impact had to be defined with great precision, so that they might be measured appropriately by means of the surveys. Of the possible impacts upon participants attending a training course, one particularly interesting datum is the participants' psychological traits. However, self-esteem, confidence and motivation are concepts that cannot be measured easily by recourse to questionnaires. The team decided, therefore, to avail itself of a more pragmatic approach, focusing on the changes which some of the operators perceived in themselves and others inherent to their practice, as well as on the skills acquired due to having attended the course.

One problem that emerged during the survey regarded the numbers of trainees who actually compiled the questionnaires and the fact that the people who participated in the survey before and after the training course were not the same, due to withdrawals but also to the participants' scarce interest in the assessment (meaning low responsivity and a large number of uncompleted questionnaires). However, by means of the ex-post survey, which, in some cities involved in the project was administered online via e-mail, using the Qualtrics software, it was possible to observe with sufficient statistical significance some of the impact the participants acknowledged after the training course had ended. In the ex-post questionnaire the participants were asked to describe the type of services and the workforce operating in their reception facilities to see if they felt they had changed after the training course. New data on the relationship with migrant women were also collected: number of cases, quality of relations with them, establishment of a relationship of trust; and used to compare the data with the ex-ante questionnaire. The average values on the Likert scale for both questionnaires were compared to see if anything had changed. This procedure also checked whether and how the topics covered in the training course had provided information capable of improving relationships between the workers and migrant women.

A part of the questionnaire focused on the methodology and the evaluation of reception procedures and case management, to identify improvements. The participants were also asked about the aspects that would like to modify / introduce to better management of gender violence in the facilities where they work. The main result measured by the evaluative survey was the concept of self-efficacy (Bandura, 2000), pragmatically declined as how effective the participants feel they are in handling cases of gender violence having attended the course (if the participants feel they possess the skills necessary to face similar situations or feel powerless, if they believe they possess the skills necessary to deal with problems of this kind and if they have acquired new knowledge which permits them to understand these issues better).

Table 12 – Main outcome (ex-ante/ex post) regarding feelings of self-efficacy

I possess the ability necessary to deal with the gender proximity violence situation
It was difficult, since I did not know how to manage this kind of situation
I am/feel inadequate when faced with this type of violence
I feel powerless, when asked to deal with a difficult situation, that cannot be easily changed
I would have liked to have been better skilled in this area
I understood and learned things that I did not know previously regarding this type of situation

Source: own elaboration

The team then collected data also regarding the specific practical skills the course had improved. It evaluated whether the participants' increased awareness of the phenomenon of gender-based and proxemic violence in the context of migration, provided them with specific tools enabling them to manage cases of violence as well as specific knowledge on the subject. If it enhanced the services community's knowledge regarding other territorial services working with this type of situation, if it helped them to develop efficient strategies to manage these complex kinds of situations and increase their skill in dealing with them.

The last part of questionnaire collected proposals made by the trainees regarding the contents and educational needs from their answers to open questions. For example, whether they wanted more information regarding context analysis (user needs), the gender violence phenomenon or insight into the concept of vulnerability.

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5. Monitoring and evaluation of the Project: a description of the data detected

by *Belén Agrela Romero; Gaetano Gucciardo; Giulio Gerbino* and *Matteo Moscatelli*[1]

5.1 The ex-ante phase of the Training Course

5.1.1 An innovative focus

After having explained the research-evaluation process in chapter no. 3, in this section the analysis of the research results is highlighted. It was implemented during the nineteen editions of the training course for "Experts in proximity violence", held in the five territories involved in the Provide project.

The data gathered enabled us to perform a multidimensional, intersectional analysis (Anthias, 2012) of proximity violence in migrants, with an innovative focus on the operators and their means of responding (or not) to a situation as complex as the migration of women (Anthias et al., 2000; Kofman et al., 2001). At the same time, this is one of the limitations of the questionnaire itself: the issue at hand is a complex social phenomenon (Morin, 1990) not always amenable to the unidirectional data provided by this type of instrument. To study phenomena such as violence, surveys of a longitudinal nature are also necessary, if we wish to cover the transversal nature and temporal sequence of violence in relation to places of origin, transit and destination (aspects that exceed the scope of this study).

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[1] Paragraph 5.1 is by Belén Agrela Romero; paragraph 5.2 is by Matteo Moscatelli; paragraph 5.3 is by Gaetano Gucciardo and Giulio Gerbino.

5.1.2 Analysis of the results

The most relevant results from the four areas studied are presented below.

The first part of the questionnaire, on the *types of reception centres and services*, was intended to identify the type of institution where the professionals worked, its size, the number of professionals and their professional profiles, the type of facilities and the characteristics of the people assisted by the institution. Although great efforts were made to spread the word about the survey and contact *a wide range of centres* (hotspots, first reception centres, facilities belong to protection systems for asylum seekers and refugees, temporary reception centres, centres for identification and expulsion, centres for permanence and repatriation, migrant support offices, NGOs and general social services with immigrant assistance programmes, in the end, most of the institutions that took part in the training sessions were temporary reception centres (30% Milan and Brescia; 20% in Agrigento, Palermo and Trapani), general NGOs (like the Red Cross, very significant in Milan and Jaén), and facilities belonging to the protection system for asylum seekers and refugees (22% in Agrigento, Palermo and Trapani).

The *profile of the people taking part in the training,* mostly females, represented from 70 to 90% of the personnel of the institutions of all three countries. These figures corroborated a widely-known fact; the predominance of women in the social caregiving professions is gender-orientated and part of the social-mothering network (Perrot, 2008). We are, of course, referring to social work, social education, health care and mediation. This mainly female profile becomes even more noticeable in those areas of attention, such as migration, where *management tends to be decentralised to the tertiary sector*. This is certainly the case in the field of assistance to migrants, which is highly vocational and gendered.

In most cases the participating operators belonged to *local institutions with medium-sized facilities*, where between 2 and 3-5 people worked at the same time (26.9% and 33.3% in Milan and Brescia; 44% and 23.5% in Milan; 39.71% and 32.35% in Jaén). In Agrigento, Palermo and Trapani the institutions were predominantly small (60%). In Florence 40% of the participating institutions had at least 2 people working at the same time.

These figures confirm the fact that in all three countries assistance to migrants and refugees is provided mainly by institutions where *human resources are limited*, especially taking into consideration that a large part of their activity is carried out by *volunteers*. However, in all three countries some larger institutions that is, institutions with more than 6 professionals (32.1% in Milan and Brescia; 30% in Florence; 23.5% in Milan; 27.94% in

Jaén), also participated in the training course. In these cases, they were mostly highly relevant national and international bodies (such as the Red Cross) or national entities of a general nature whose activity includes work with immigrants (this is the case of hospitals, NGOs and publicly funded social services). Yet, in all of them, the assistance they provide goes to a highly variable number of beneficiaries within each institution. They report having periods when they assist 15 persons and others when they cater for up to 40,000. This is the case of Florence, Jaén, Agrigento, Palermo and Trapani. The data point to possible *discontinuity in the provision of assistance services* to migrants, who are at the mercy of the *temporality* or urgency of the needs to which the institutions respond. This is especially true in those emergency centres that receive new arrivals.

Figure 2 – No. of operators during each work shift

Number of operators during the each work shift

9%
24%
24%
44%

■ Only 1 person ■ Al least 2 ■ 3 to 5 ■ More than 6
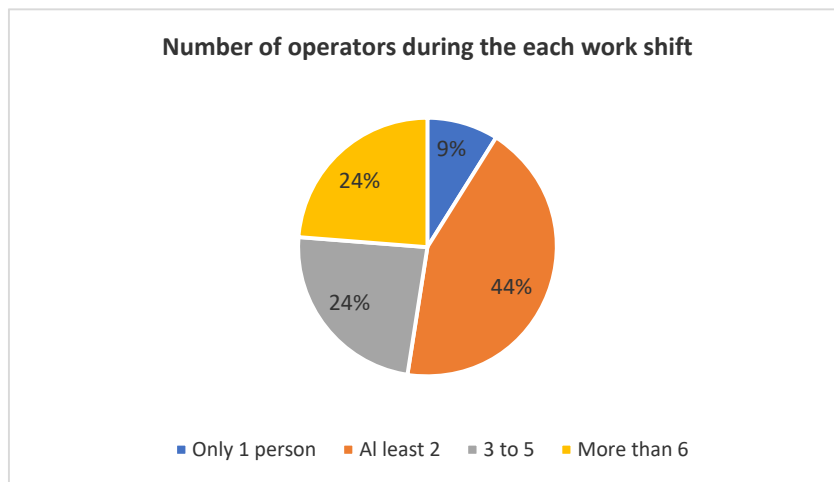
Source: own elaboration

In the *profile of the working personnel* in the facilities provided by the institutions involved in training, there is a clear predominance of the *social professions*, like *social workers* (the largest found in both Florence and Jaén), *educators* (the largest numbers found in Milan, Brescia, Palermo, Trapani e Agrigento, *psychologists* (the largest group in Milan, due to the size of *Telefono Donna*). However, in all of them, diversity prevails in terms of the social actors involved in the centres' operations, such as: *directors and coordinators* (most relevant in Agrigento, Palermo and Trapani), *cultural mediators* (present to a significant degree in all the bodies). *Health-care workers* like doctors and nurses, *legal advisors, social operators* and *interpreters* are also

present in all the institutions. In Jaén, some of the participants came from the *public protection services* (such as the police and the Civil Guard) while some *policymakers* also took part. Other professions represented in all three countries included *specialists in gender and gender-based violence* and *child protection*. Another distinctive feature was the considerable presence of *volunteers* (significant in all three countries).

Given the *plurality of the institutions and programmes offered,* the range of services, which are classified here by sex and family unit served, was extremely heterogeneous, as were the types of facilities. The greatest degree of service heterogeneity was found during the training course for the region of Andalusia, which was held in Jaén. In the case of Jaén, the high degree of diversity of the institutions is indicative of the breadth of coverage available: the greatest coverage goes to *family units* (33.8%). This includes global care (families 27.3%) and single-parent families (6.5%). Attention to individuals is mixed in most cases, meaning that services are available to both men and women (20.8%). In the case of one sex only being served, attention to women (14.3%) is more frequent than attention to men (1.3%). As regards unaccompanied minors, the services are clearly focused on males (1.3%). In Milan and Brescia, the reception centres are most typically apartments for a few people, located throughout the territory, they may be semi-autonomous, dedicated, for households or a single large building/centre. The facilities cater for different users: in about 50% of cases, only men or only women are housed the remaining half caters for families and/or men and women together. If the facility accommodates both men and women, privacy is ensured by the use of separate bedrooms and bathrooms in most cases. In Florence, the reception centres where the training participants work are dedicated to men and women (1 case), unaccompanied foreign minors, both boys and girls (9 cases), families (20 cases). In Agrigento, Palermo and Trapani more than half of the cases are reception centres. Over 60% of the participants at the course worked in centres serving only men, either adults or minors, and fewer than one out of ten work in a centre for women only (adults and minors). Those who work in facilities for minors account for more than a third (many professionals work in several facilities so the sum of the percentages may exceed 100%). The cases that differ most from Jaén are those found in Paris and Milan. In these two cities, the training courses were held for a large reception centre; in the case of Paris, moreover, the first course was available to the personnel of that reception centre only while the second course targeted a broader audience and was attended also by other institutions, some providing facilities for both single men and women, others serving a number

of families or single parents (men or women) with children, and one hosting minors.

The second part of the questionnaire looked at the operators' *relationship with migrant women*. Its aim was to find out how much experience they had working with women clients and the operators' assessment of the type of intervention they carry out, the profile of the women clients, the possibility of creating a relationship of trust that allowed the women to speak up regarding the situations of violence they were experiencing, and the type of obstacles that limited similar processes of revelation. Despite the diversity between the institutions a *dual profile of professionals can be clearly perceived* in the extremes of the data spectrum: *on the one hand, social operators who consider themselves as having "a lot" or "quite a lot" of work experience* (for example, 72.6% in Milan and Brescia; 52.17% in Jaén; and about a third of the professionals in Agrigento, Palermo and Trapani) while at the other end of the spectrum a considerable number of professionals with only *"a little bit of experience"* (for example, 43% in Milan; 21.7% in Agrigento, Palermo and Trapani; 37.60% in Jaén and 23.3% in Milan and Brescia). This is extremely significant because it reveals the dual profile of professionals which is so common in the immigrant services: a) professionals with a long career and therefore with plenty of experience and presumably a higher level of professionalism in the assistance provided, b) persons with little experience, most of them recent additions to the labour market (in cases where they are employees, not volunteers). There is another profile as well, that of professionals who work in several different institutions, but in both situations we are talking about professionals equipped with a better "tool box and experience" with which to attend to the needs of migrants. These data, along with the high percentage of volunteers in the institutions and the low number of staff members working at the same time, are indicative of possible job precarity and varying degrees of professionalism and experience upon which services addressing proximity violence are based.

The distribution of the most relevant countries of origin is also very diverse, depending on different factors such as the host country and its immigration profile, the location within the city of the services provided by an institution and the type of services it provides (whether it assists people without regard to their legal status) and the type of necessity it caters for: information, legal assistance, health care, emergency care, access to public social services, access to housing, etc.). The social operators were asked about large geographical areas rather than specific countries (forgetting that nationality often gives rise to significant differences in migration). Nonetheless, it was observed that *women from Africa, Eastern Europe and Latin America are*

overrepresented while other regions, such as Asia, are underrepresented. Roughly speaking, in the case of Milan and Brescia the users are mostly African, followed at a certain distance by women from Asia and Eastern Europe, small ethnic groups from the Middle East and Latin America; in Jaén the users come from Africa (33.7%), followed by various Latin American countries (28%) and then by Eastern European countries (20.6%); in Agrigento, Palermo and Trapani respondents cited Africa; in Milan they mentioned Africa (65%), Eastern Europe (31%) and, at a significant distance, Asia and South America (2% in both cases); in Paris most respondents mentioned African women.

The *self-assessment of the respondents regarding their relationship with migrant women* in their work shows that the vast majority consider it to be "Very good, we have a relationship of trust relationship of trust" (40.74% in Florence; 35.48% in Jaén; 31% in Milan; 22.2% in Milan and Brescia; 18.4% in Agrigento, Palermo and Trapani; 12.5% in Paris), or "Good, even if the women are unable to trust blindly" (49% in Milan; 46.9% in Agrigento, Palermo and Trapani; 32.26% in Jaén; 28.4% in Milan and Brescia; 75% in Paris), or "Good, but with ups and downs" (46.9% in Milan and Brescia; 32.7% in Agrigento, Palermo and Trapani; 25.93% in Florence; 29.03% in Jaén; 19% in Milan; 18.52%; 25.93% in Florence; 12.5% in Paris).

Table 13 – How would you evaluate your relationship with migrant women in your work? (An example from Agrigento, Palermo and Trapani area)

|	Frequency	Valid Percent
Not good, there is little or no trust	1	2
Good, but with ups and downs	16	32,7
Good, even if they are unable to trust blindly	23	46,9
Very good, we have a relationship of trust	9	18,4
Total	49	100
Does not answer	51	
Total	100	

Source: own elaboration

In general, reporting a (very) good relationship means a good starting point for detecting proximity violence in migrant women. However, as discussed in the training sessions, a relationship based on trust depends a great deal on certain factors, such as: the problem faced (the same woman may at

times be reluctant and at other times she trust blindly), her future plans for further migration, or the type of service/assistance and professional with whom she is dealing at the time. We think that this circumstance is influenced by two crucial factors: the rotation of staff (for example, periods of discontinuity, changes in department staffing or volunteer teams in NGOs) and the experience of the professionals and their ability to establish a good relationship with migrant women.

As a result, if a relationship of trust plays an essential role in enabling women to talk to social operators about violence, the answers received in relation to this particular matter follow the same lines: *migrants tell of the violence they have experienced "Sometimes, but only after a while"* (62.5% in Paris; 49.25% in Jaén; 45.5% in Agrigento, Palermo and Trapani; 44.9% in Milan and Brescia; 33.33% in Florence). Only in the case of Milan did a considerable number (51.9%) of respondents report that migrant women who are victims of violence "*Very rarely speak about this violence and they manage to do so only after building a strong relationship of trust*" with the operators. Taken on the whole, this datum suggests that in order that there be a good relationship between the professional and the migrant woman *both parties need time*: the professional needs time to build up work experience and dedication in the assistance they provide, while the migrant women need time to absorb their situation, deal with other necessities and build trust, a factor vital to the revelation of violence. Feeling prepared to reveal a situation of violence is also connected directly to the moment in which care is provided; the kind of violence experienced, the route the migrant intends taking or her future plans regarding migration. Bearing the structural context of the host countries in mind, the greater the mobility featured in a woman's migratory journey the fewer opportunities she will have to talk about the violence undergone.

Self-assessment of the nature of the work carried out by the operators is directly related to the considerations they have regarding the type of beneficiaries and her vulnerability which inform their ideas of migrant women. To the question "*Compared to your work with migrants, how do you consider the experience of working with vulnerable migrants?*" most responded, "*Very demanding*" (77.78% in Florence; 75.9% in Milan and Brescia; 70% in Agrigento, Palermo and Trapani; 65% in Jaén). However, in the case of the professionals participating in the course organised by Telefono Donna in Milan, 51.4% said "Equally demanding".

Figure 3 – experience of working with vulnerable migrant women

Compared to your work with migrants, how would you consider the experience of working with vulnerable migrant women? (Example of the Florence area)
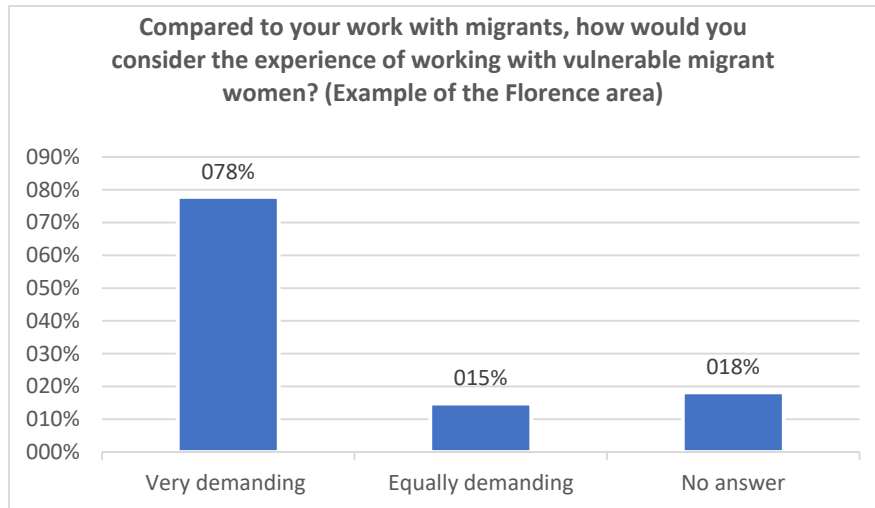
Source: own elaboration

These results appear to be coherent enough, taking into account that the process of social inclusion in which migrant women are involved, often while travelling alone or having exclusive responsibility for their children, is perceived by social operators as being more difficult and complex than that of single men. This is even more true when violence is part of their migratory experience. Women encounter traumatic experiences in their countries of origin and also during the journey. Furthermore, they have to face a lack of job opportunities in the host society and are often responsible for the care of dependent persons in their countries of origin, which conditions their decision-making. So, the establishment of a relationship of trust can help women begin a slow process of recovery characterised by advances and retreat. During the courses in all three countries, the social operators emphasised the fact that this oscillation can prove frustrating to migrant women as well as for the operators themselves.

One of the possible reasons that this type of intervention is believed to require a great deal of dedication and engagement may be found in the *number of obstacles believed to hinder the creation of a relationship of trust*. When we asked the social operators to assess (using a Likert scale, from 1 "I don't agree at all" to 5 "I agree totally") all possible obstacles that may hinder dialogue with migrant women who are victims of violence, they expressed agreement with – besides having dependent persons in their countries of

origin a factor conditioning their decision-making – the statement that "*Practitioners need more training in order to manage such complex cases*" (in Milan and Brescia, Agrigento, Palermo and Trapani, Jaén and Florence), followed by "*Time is needed to establish a relationship of trust* " (in Milan and Brescia, Agrigento, Palermo and Trapani, and Paris) and also the obstacle related to "*Our life experiences are very different*" (Jaén, Milan and Florence). The lack of specific training regarding migrant women affected by proximity violence stands out clearly, underlining the need for more training to help operators manage complex cases of violence and to improve their professional toolbox.

On the other hand, there was less agreement about obstacles such as "*Try as I may, I'm not able to understand their choices*" (Milan, Brescia and Jaén); "*Our life experiences are very different*" (Milan and Paris); "*They do not understand that what I'm offering is the best thing for them*" (Agrigento, Palermo and Trapani) and "*I am unable to make them understand that all I want is to help them*" (Florence). It is quite striking that when discussing obstacles, a significant number of the respondents focused on the operator's personal limitations, assuming that it is he or she who find it problematic (or difficult) to liaise with women who have been victims of violence. This emerges from some of the answers relating to different life experiences, although the experiential gap can never be bridged unless we are aware of it. The participants stated that, to build up a relationship based on the immigrants' precise opportunities and challenges, the differences and perspectives of the target group need to be taken into account.

The third part of the questionnaire, on *case management*, was designed to find out what action is taken when cases of proximity violence are detected. These data permitted the team to carry out an analysis of the processes activated when specific cases are detected, like case referral, specific intervention procedures, if any, professional assessments of such procedures, degrees of vulnerability and types of intervention, if any, undertaken by the cultural mediator. When episodes of violence come to light, in most institutions the professionals pass this information on to the director of the centre, the social worker and health-care team as well as to the law enforcement agencies. In other words, normally, the person in charge of the service/institution is informed, psychosocial intervention is activated, and the situation is reported to the police, so that possible legal actions may be taken. The cultural mediator is another relevant figure at this point, especially in the NGOs, which generally work face-to-face, and only rarely on the phone or availing themselves of a mixed approach.

However, this process varies considerably depending on the type of institution (general vs. specialised; public vs. private; areas of intervention) and the degree of institutionalisation of the procedures. Significantly, many reported *not having a specific procedure in their facility to follow in cases of gender-based violence* (54% in Milan and Brescia; 61.4% in Agrigento, Palermo and Trapani; 42.59% in Jaén; 34% in Milan; 40.74% in Florence; 75% in Paris). In many institutions there is a general protocol that is used in cases of gender-based violence (for example, Jaén and Milan, with over 50% of the institutions represented having one). In similar circumstances, these protocols were considered "*Quite effective, but could be improved*" (by 56.9% of the respondents in Milan and Brescia; 54.5% in Agrigento, Palermo and Trapani; 86% in Milan considered it ineffective; 60.71% in Jaén and 48% in Florence said it was sufficient but could be improved; 37% in Paris). So, it is evident that social intervention in response to gender-based violence is rather institutionalised in public and private social bodies in all three countries, although the existing protocols do not contain specific indications about the proximity violence which affects women refugees and migrants. Therefore, these protocols need to be improved and made more effective.

The respondents were also asked how they felt "*While managing the gender-based violence cases detected*" in order to understand their perception of their emotions and abilities when intervening in these cases. The responses provided by the range of possibilities offered by the Likert scale were very similar in all three countries, which mostly expressed full agreement with two statements: "*I would like to be more competent with regard to this issue*" and "*I have reached a better level of comprehension and learned things I did not know previously regarding this type of situation*". At the same time, in all three countries the respondents disagreed with the statement that they felt "*Inadequate when faced with this type of violence.*" This confirms the fact that, on the one hand, they acknowledged their ability to learn from the situations/problems they deal with, and, in addition, that they are aware that they required training. Especially noteworthy were the answers given when the respondents were asked if migrant women were particularly vulnerable when it came to gender-based violence; in Jaén 61.82% of the respondents said yes, in Milan the figure was 43%, in Milan and Brescia it was 32.3%. These cases show that the gender perspective is present in the intersectional analysis of how unequal power relations, abuse and vulnerabilities increase in the case of women. Despite this, many respondents answered, "*I cannot tell: I do not possess sufficient elements to affirm such a thing*" (65.5% in Agrigento, Palermo and Trapani; or 43.5% in Milan and Brescia). This might be due, first of all, to respondents being cautious with their assertions, trying to

avoid generalisations, or, that they are unfamiliar with or lack experience when called upon to interpret how gender-based violence affects migrant and refugee women especially. At the other end of the spectrum, 50% of the respondents in Paris and 38.2% in Agrigento, Palermo and Trapani said "No, I think that all migrant women are exposed to this issue".

Table 14 – While managing the gender based violence cases that you acknowledge, you felt: (1: I fully disagree; 2: I disagree; 3: I neither agree or disagree; 4: I agree; 5: I fully agree)*

I possess the necessary capacities to confront the situation	2,76
Difficult, since I did not know how to manage this kind of situation	3,01
Inadequate in front of this type of violence	2,80
Powerless, while dealing with a difficult situation, uneasy to change	3,11
I would have liked to have better competences regarding this issue	4,00
I understood and learned things that I did not know regarding this type of situation	3,82

*Example from the Milan and Brescia areas
Source: own elaboration

Finally, in the fourth part of the questionnaire, the social operators were asked about the *specific skills* they considered a necessary element of the training they received in the field of proximity violence. Our aim here was to become acquainted with previous training received in the field of immigration and violence, the languages they spoke, the country in which they had studied and the type of training they considered necessary with a view to improving the efficiency of their work. The responses in this section were quite varied, depending on the country and the institutions represented. For example, in Milan and Brescia, most of the participants had not received specific training regarding the reception of immigrants (training courses, higher diplomas, university courses). If they had received training of some kind it was based on thematic courses concerning transcultural clinical and 'ethnopsychiatric' issues, migration in general or trafficking.

Cases of participants having received in-depth education regarding legislative or sociological level were rare. However, 7% of the operators had recently attended specific training courses mainly on the issue of gender-based violence/genital mutilation/conflict management or on working methods (supervision; discussion meetings with staff; case work). In Agrigento, Palermo and Trapani 35% had not received specific training regarding migration; those who had received some training cited subjects such as violence (gender-based, trafficking in migrants), children (protection and reception), and

cultural mediation. In Jaén, 48.39% said their degrees did not provide them with any specific training, while 51.61% claimed the opposite. However, 80.28% said that they had attended specific, professional refresher courses as part of their work; the principal topics were: processes of migration and refuge; gender-based violence; unaccompanied minors; human trafficking, cultural mediation and project management. In other words, in the majority of cases, the theme of migration and refugees was not part of the undergraduate or master's programme they completed, probably because the programmes did not view them as a priority target. Yet, during their professional lives in over half of the institutions they are being given the opportunity to update their training in this specific area. This indicates the growing presence of this field of social intervention (due to its quantitative weight and greater socio-political awareness, supported by economic resources).

In all three countries the majority of the participants were native speakers of the languages they used, their parents were from the same country as them and they had university-level qualifications.

In relation to "*What type of training would you need to improve the efficiency of your work*", it is important to note that they answered this question prior to the training sessions, that is, before taking part in the theoretical and methodological sessions taught by experts. The question was "open-ended" and so the answers were highly varied. We have grouped them into 14 large headings: 1. Notions about proximity violence; 2. Updating the vulnerability and social exclusion notion related to migration; 3. Risk factors and causal factors of proximity violence; 4. Violence as a process in the victims' home countries, during transit and in the host countries; 5. Actors who exercise violence and the surrounding contexts; 6. Difficulties in detecting violence on the part of social operators; 7. Supervising and holding workshops with colleagues, working as a group on cases; 8. Psychological vulnerability and psycho-trauma; 9. Consequences of violence on health; 10. Cultural and linguistic mediation, anthropological insights and sociological knowledge; 11. Conflict management; 12; Experiences from other countries; 13. Humanitarian medicine; and 14. Institutionalisation of the notion of institutional violence.

5.2. Analysing the ex-post survey

5.2.1 The course impacted

The ex-post survey involved around 300 participants considering every area engaged in the project and regarded how the course impacted on them

some time after returning to their workplaces. In some cases, the question-naire was administered online to all the participants two or three months after the end of the course (in any case before August-September 2019). There was a drop in the numbers of the ex-post sample compared to the ex-ante sample, a feature typical of ex-post surveys. Due to this we were able to detect only some of the changes attributable to the efficacy of the course by comparing both surveys.

For around 90% of the respondents, in every area engaged in the Provide courses, the facility where they worked after the course was the same as that where they operate when starting the training course. This was indicative of a high level of employment stability, a reasonable datum when taking into account the participants' professional profiles. A small number of respondents changed jobs and workplaces before taking part in the ex-post survey. In most cases this change was due to personal choice, but also to the dynamic nature of immigration services in Italy. In one case, for example, the primary reception service had been closed, in another the worker's contract had been suspended for the duration of the summer months, in two further instances the their fixed-term contracts had terminated.

Only a very small proportion of the ex-post sample (considering all the Italian and Spanish centres) claimed having changed work since compiling the ex-ante survey due to some gradual structural changes relating to human resources (depending on management teams and funding).

The number of people who worked in the same facility was from the start of Provide project, quite constant. Some changes occurred in the Italian sites due to some CEO directives, but also because numbers of volunteers varied according to the different rates of annual availability.

5.2.2 The participants' relationship with the migrant women (ex-post data)

Migrant women accounted for about 40% of the total cases catered for by the operators in the Northern Italian area (Ismu) and in Palermo, while in Spain and in the *Telefono Donna* area migrant women represented a smaller percentage: around 20%. The percentage were greater for the Oxfam area, standing at 60% of all the cases they addressed. The numbers differed between areas but remained constant as far as ex-ante and ex-post data were concerned. In Spain the number of cases depended largely on the type of organisation involved: it was the NGOs which served the immigrant women most, while access to the public social services was more limited.
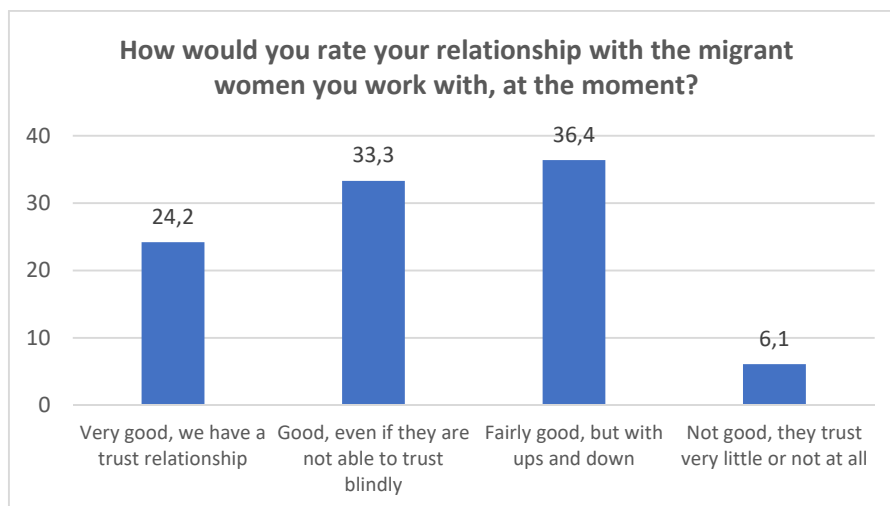
As regards the outcome of the survey relating to trust and the quality of the participants' relationship with the women hosted, when comparing the data of the second with the first questionnaire, we detected very few changes: sometimes good, as in the case of the Fondazione ISMU area where we detected an improvement of 7 % relationships of trust, while only 3,6 % claimed that relationships had deteriorated. The fact that most Italian operators work in small facilities and have several years' experience, makes it easier to establish relationships of trust. Nevertheless, in some areas of Italy we detected no changes at all (for example in the Palermo area) or negative changes (the Oxfam area) where many participants felt less confident when it came to case management. This may be due to changes in perspective regarding their daily work (because of acquisition of new professional tools as well as changes in the beneficiaries the operators deal with, a factor requiring them to establish new relations and devise new individual projects).

In Spain, the answers given by the social operators, reveal how 60.35% considered their relationship good. At the opposite end of the spectrum, however, 39.66% of the Spanish respondents, a percentage higher than that for Italy, claimed that their relationship was "not good, they trust very little or not at all", underscoring once more the fact that the burden of trust is an indispensable tool when initiating a supportive, protective relationship.

What changed favourably in Spain was the view of working with vulnerable migrant women: while in the first questionnaire 65.15% considered the task very difficult, in the third questionnaire 69.35% considered similar work not so demanding. We feel we may attribute this change in perspective to the tools provided in the course or to deeper awareness of how participants may and do carry out their work. Also, in Northern Italy (the Ismu area) the participants sustained that working with migrant women was now a little less demanding than before the course. No significant change was found in the other areas.

A positive indicator of the efficacy of the course emerged from the trainees' self-evaluation of the improvements in their relationships with migrant women, they noted after the course, and which they attributed to the training received. For most of the sample in each of the areas there was a small or significant improvement. In Palermo a high number of the participants claimed that the changes due to the course were good or sufficient. In Spain, around 53.12% (that is, more than half) of the trainees claimed that the course helped improve their relationships with the migrant women.

Figure 4 – relationships with migrant women

How would you rate your relationship with the migrant women you work with, at the moment?

- Very good, we have a trust relationship: 24,2
- Good, even if they are not able to trust blindly: 33,3
- Fairly good, but with ups and down: 36,4
- Not good, they trust very little or not at all: 6,1

Source: own elaboration

5.2.3 Case management (ex-post)

As regards appraisal of the operative methodologies and procedures applied, differences emerged between the various territories. There seems to have been a morpho-genetic impact on the procedure in a small number of cases, only around 9 % of them regarding the Northern Italian Ismu area, for example. The application of procedures proved more critical when it came to cultural issues and when paying greater attention to the dynamics between beneficiaries in the facilities. In Spain, most of participants said that there had been some changes regarding procedures in cases of gender-based violence. As can be seen below, these improvements referred to ways of understanding types of violence as a step preliminary to the implementation of a methodology and design of programmes /services.

On the one hand, they claimed that their view, knowledge and sensitivity towards the problem had increased, meaning improvements in their professional practice, in their working tools, as well as in the instruments used to detect violence. For the Oxfam trainees there were no significant changes in procedure due to two factors: changes in legislation regarding reception centres (the new Decree on Security in Italy); less awareness at management/coordination level in the reception centres of the importance of *ad hoc* procedures.

In both questionnaires, most of the operators agreed with the idea that procedures might be improved. In Italy, the main aspects that participants would like to modify/introduce into procedures for managing cases of gender violence in the facilities where they worked, concerned collaboration between their facilities and anti-violence centres.

Table 14 – Types of improvements cited in the Spanish Sample

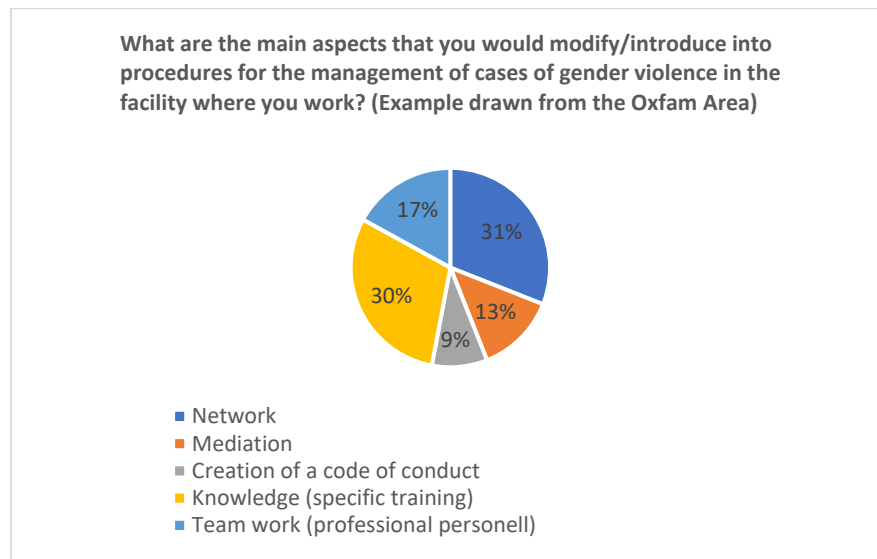| Types of improvements	Frequency
Greater sensitivity/awareness of the problem	10
Improvements in professional intervention	8
Broader view of the problem	7
More knowledge/information	6
Improvement of working protocols/instruments	6
More tools to work/detect proximity violence	4
Improved coordination with other bodies	1
Did not apply	1

Source: own elaboration

Most of them also proposed more widespread use of cultural mediation. With reference to the main changes proposed by professionals operating in Spain, the need for operators with a more thorough training in the specific issue was highlighted as the prime option, in line with what has been stated above. As a second option, they considered it essential to create protocols of the care for victims of proximity violence, that is, the need to design specific procedures for the institutions. Thirdly, they foregrounded the need to improve coordination or networking, changes that the participants considered essential for the management of cases of gender-based violence/proximity violence in the institutions where they worked as well as at municipal level. The multidimensionality of proximity violence, and the difficulties encountered when addressing it, required permanent collaboration between institutions. This aspect, moreover, was clearly the result of the very design of the course where the diversity of participants (at both professional and institutional levels) was fostered and chosen in a very precise manner.

In the Oxfam area course (Italy) the class comprised different professionals reflecting the need of the different professional tools required to manage gender-based violence. Most of the respondents recognised the acquisition of competences through training and the creation of a specific procedure/code of conduct as more important. In the Palermo area the most frequent proposal was "more training", indicating the importance of the Provide Project.

Besides the mentioned changes in the Fig. n°10, the need for improvement, expressed two months after the end of course, was sometimes the respondents assessed better (Italy: Ismu area and Oxfam area) and with greater efficacy, also thanks to sharing knowledge during the course. This is good news for the Provide project. In the northern-Italian Ismu area, the final data regarding the skills required to handle cases of gender-based violence changed for the better, confirming that the positive effects produced.

Figure 5 – Procedures to change

What are the main aspects that you would modify/introduce into procedures for the management of cases of gender violence in the facility where you work? (Example drawn from the Oxfam Area)

- ■ Network
- ■ Mediation
- ■ Creation of a code of conduct
- ■ Knowledge (specific training)
- ■ Team work (professional personell)
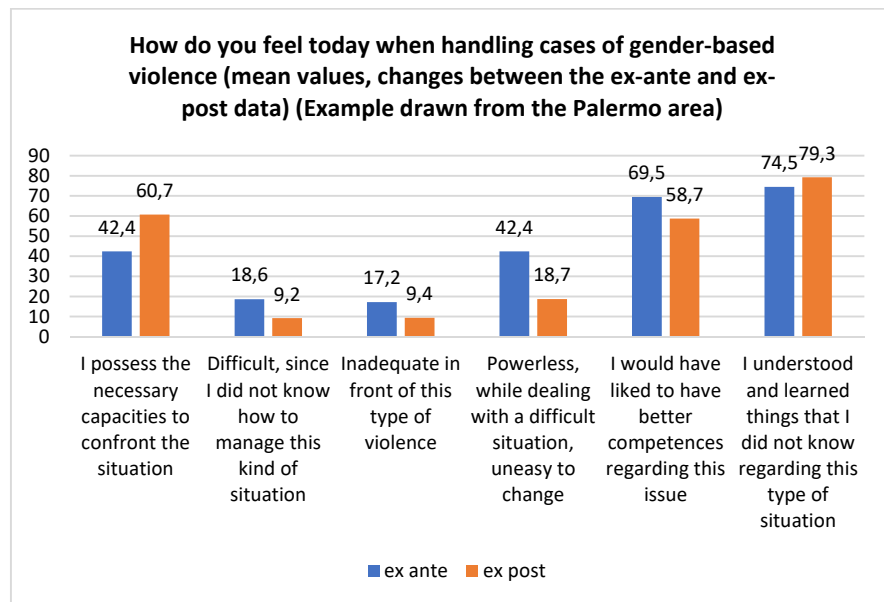
Source: own elaboration

There was an improvement on the Likert scale of 0.5 regarding *"possession of the ability necessary to tackle the situation"* between and the ex-ante and ex-post post surveys, and a 1-point increase on the Likert scale for feeling *"less inadequate when faced with this type of violence".* These responses reveal that the operators felt more empowered when acting in given situations. In the case of the Oxfam course (Italy) too, after training, the participants acknowledged the fact that they had improved the tools they required to manage gender-based proximity violence: their perceptions of being powerless, inadequate and in difficulty decreased by 0.5, in some cases by 1 point. They also felt they were better able to confront the situation after the course (an average increase from 3 to 3.5 out of 4).

In the Telefono Donna area (Italy) when comparing the averages for the first questionnaire with those for the ex-post survey, it appeared that the

PROVIDE training courses were perceived as useful for the management of cases of gender violence. In particular, the operators reported feeling they now possessed the skills and knowledge necessary to manage these cases and claimed not feeling inadequate when faced with certain kinds of situation.

In the Palermo area, too, a few months after the course, the trainees felt they possessed more of the skills necessary to manage these situations. They claimed encountering fewer difficulties, feeling less inadequate, and power-less, less in need of greater skills and claimed having learned about issues of which they had previously been unaware.

Figure 6 – Handling cases of GBV

How do you feel today when handling cases of gender-based violence (mean values, changes between the ex-ante and ex-post data) (Example drawn from the Palermo area)

Source: own elaboration

5.2.4 Specific skills (ex-post)

In Italy (the Ismu area, Northern Italy) the skills perceived as improved best were thought to have done so thanks to the theoretical and informational level of the course, issues regarding knowledge and awareness and infor-mation about other services in the area dealing with this type of situation. There was also a positive result regarding practical skills, though not so high on tools and effective strategies. In Spain too and in the other Italian areas the

course provided the trainees with the possibility of increasing their knowledge on the issue as well as their awareness of gender-based and proximity violence involving migrant women managed by their facilities and services.

Tab. 15 – What specific skills do you think the training course has given you? (mean values, min 1=nothing max 4 = much)

	ISMU (Northern Italian area); VA 50	Telefono Donna (Italy); VA 23
It provided you with specific knowledge on the subject	3,16	3,04
It increased your awareness of the phenomenon of gender and proximity violence against migrants	3,13	3,52
It increased your skills on the subject	3,10	3,30
It introduced you to other services in the area that deal with this type of situation	3,06	3,30
It provided you with specific tools useful when managing cases of violence within the context of your work	2,81	2,91
It helped you find effective strategies to manage this type of complex situation	2,77	3,09

Source: own elaboration

In Spain, very high percentages of the participants valued all the issues covered during the training course (and relating to the Provide project) with an "a lot" or "quite a lot". In neither case, the sum of these two values ("much" and "a lot") concerned fewer than 85% of the trainees. The specific competences the participants signalled as improved thanks to the course were legal skills, a methodological approach, more careful investigation of cases, greater relational and interpretative ability to deal with given situations, the ability to listen. The also held that it provided them with in-depth insight into the role of mediation, of how to work on trauma, awareness of the need to include new tools in professional training. Efficiency when dealing with individual cases was also mentioned.

The participants also found levels of culture of great interest when learning about and how to address proximity violence. In Spain, one participant believed that it was necessary to acquire "*greater ability to tackle the problem also at theoretical level*", another, *"greater understanding of the phenomena and problems of migration"* Another effect signalled regarded the need to become acquainted with other services dealing with this type of situation. One Spanish participant held that it was important *"to compare myself with other professionals, examine other approaches or learn about new experiences"*.

The qualitative responses to the specific competences provided by the course were often quite diverse The 6 main contents of the questionnaire administered in Spain were ability to identify and analyse cases of proximity/gender violence; knowledge of types of violence; global and more thorough view of the phenomenon; greater knowledge of the migratory process and of the immigrants' experiences; enhancement and application of legal and juridical knowledge; ability to collaborate with other resources for comprehensive care.

Finally, with respect to the specific skills that the course provided, the participants reported greater knowledge of the phenomenon and of the tools required and deeper awareness of the cross-cultural aspects associated with the phenomenon and a more thorough knowledge of the law and how to manage difficult, stressful situations.

In conclusion, we can say that the data gathered showed how positive the impact of the project was on the participants as far as knowledge was concerned. It also seems to have had a significant effect both on the professional outcomes of intervention, and on feelings of self-efficacy capable of preventing the burnout of the operators. Finally, there were some other quite surprising effects regarding organisation: changes in procedures, teamwork, efficiency.

On the basis of the data emerging from the final questionnaire, in order to improve the results of training, regarding the quality of the centres where the trainees work/ed, we suggest:

- *fewer changes in the work force and more stable functioning of the facilities;*
- *finding more time for operators to work on their relationships with migrant women;*
- *finding more time for supervision by professionals;*
- *working more on different "ad hoc" procedures for specific cases.*

5.3. Assessment of the course after its conclusion

5.3.1. A premise to the analysis of the results

By administering a second questionnaire, at the end of the last module of each course, we intended to assess the satisfaction of the participants regarding the various aspects of the training courses, on the basis of the following thematic areas the survey took into consideration: overall usefulness of the course with respect to the role played by the respondents in their facilities;

interest and participation, by the respondents and the other participants, during the course; educational material provided; organisation and services (the course location, equipment, staff); analytical evaluation of the modules and workshops; global assessment.

This chapter presents the overall picture emerging from the reports concerning the courses held in the various locations involved in the project. The local reports, while presenting a certain want of homogeneity in structure and contents, provide sufficient data regarding the opinions expressed by those who attended the courses[2].

Below is a presentation of the main results of the questionnaire, divided into 6 topics.

5.3.2 Usefulness

The indicators relating to the usefulness of the course as perceived by the participants[3] generally denote considerably high levels of satisfaction.

The participants from Oxfam, in particular, expressed an average score for satisfaction of 3.26 out of a maximum of 4; the modules whose utility were most appreciated were the 4th (mental health) and the 2nd (human rights), while the 5th (stress management) and the 1st scored the lowest averages; the average score for satisfaction with the remaining modules stands at a little above 3. Those who attended the Telefono Donna course declared feeling quite satisfied on the whole – with average scores of over 3 – as far as aspects regarding this set of indicators are concerned. For the two editions of the course held by the University of Jaén, the percentages of respondents stating they feel satisfied or very satisfied, for each of the five items, border on maximum rates. The three editions of the course carried out by the University of Palermo received very flattering average ratings, always higher than 3 out of 4, in particular as regards the point concerning compliance of

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[2] The numbers of those who responded to the questionnaires were:
• OXFAM: the report does not provide this datum.
• Telefono Donna: 34.
• JAÉN: the report does not provide this datum.
• ISMU: an aggregate of 85 for two locations: Milano and Brescia.
• UNIPA: an aggregate of 73 for three locations: Agrigento, Palermo and Trapani.
[3] a) Congruity of the course content with the objectives proposed; b) Compliance of the training-course content with the participants' initial expectations; c) Compliance of training-course content with the participants' professional interests; d) Applicability in the workplace of the topics dealt with; e) Compliance of the training contents with the need to update signalled by the participants.

the contents with professional interests. There was a quota of dissatisfied participants (16.9%) higher than the average degree of dissatisfaction expressed concerning the correspondence between the contents and initial expectations; the highest percentage of dissatisfaction refers to the premises in Palermo where the course was held (18.8%, in Agrigento 14.3% and in Trapani 17.4%). The Ismu course's participants expressed a high average satisfaction, equal to 3.28 out of 4; the highest scores regarded the consistency of the course contents with the objectives stated and the correspondence between the training-course contents and expectations.

5.3.3 Interest and participation

The indicators for this section of the questionnaire [4] like the previous, one yielded high average scores. On the whole, the participants of the Course held by Telefono Donna expressed average scores of over 3 out of a maximum of 4). Participants in the two editions of the course held by the University of Jaén expressed extremely positive assessments (for the first index, 94.3% were satisfied or very satisfied, for the second index 98.6% of the respondents declared being satisfied or very satisfied. The Ismu trainees expressed a high average degree of satisfaction, with scores of 3.21 out of 4. In the Courses held by the University of Palermo the appreciation expressed by the participants regarding interest and participation scored vary high values, both at personal level (97.2% of respondents) and as regards perception of the same aspects by their course colleagues (95,8%); the average score for satisfaction was between 3.35 and 3.53 out of 4.Those who attended the Oxfam course for these same indicators expressed, on average, an average degree of satisfaction equal to 3.32 out of the maximum of 4.

5.3.4 Teaching material

The satisfaction the participants expressed regarding the teaching material provided was generally quite high. In particular, those who attended the Oxfam course expressed, on average, for these indicators, a satisfaction of 3.32 out of a the maximum of 4, in line with the participants of the course

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[4] f) How would you rate your degree of involvement (interest in the contents, propensity to intervene during the lesson, etc.) for the entire duration of the course ?; g) How would you rate the degree of involvement (interest in the contents, propensity to intervene during the lesson, etc.) of the other participants for the entire duration of the course?.

held by Telefono Donna (average values higher than 3). Equally favourable was the appreciation expressed by the participants of the courses held by the University of Jaén, satisfied or very satisfied with values exceeding 95% of the respondents for all three indicators. The participants at the Ismu course expressed a high average level of satisfaction, equal to 3.25 out of 4. Between 86% and 89% of the participants in the courses conducted by the University of Palermo declared themselves satisfied or very satisfied with the teaching material for the three indicators (average satisfaction between 3.19 and 3, 3 out of 4).

On the whole participant satisfaction regarding the teaching material provided[5] was high enough.

5.3.5 Organization and services

The course participants, on the whole, also assessed these aspects positively, albeit with some exceptions, as in the case of the course held by Oxfam, with respect to which there was an overall average evaluation of 3.1 out of a maximum of 4, due mainly, as explained by some respondents in one of the open answers, to the distance between the course premises and the railway station. Something similar occurred in two other situations: the first regarded the Telefono Donna course: in this case, however, the satisfaction score for functionality and comfort of the premises, despite being the lowest for this set of indicators, averaged 3.5.

The second referred to the course taught by Ismu (average satisfaction score equal to 3.2), where some issues regarding functionality, comfort and equipment were signalled, due to the number of trainees higher than expected, although, on the other hand, the average satisfaction regarding assistance from non-teaching staff obtained for this course, the maximum, even with respect to indicators regarding different areas of the questionnaire, with 3.54 out of a maximum of 4. In the three courses organised by the University of Palermo the overall average satisfaction score for this set of four indicators stood at between 3.37 and 3.41 out of 4; the percentage of satisfied or very

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[5] The indicators were the following: l) Quality of the teaching material distributed; m) Completeness and ease of use of the study-support material provided; n) Usefulness of teaching materials as aids to study and work.

Variables related to the modules:

1a. consistency of the Content with respect to the course objectives;

2a. compliance of Content with initial expectations.

satisfied participants ranged from 87.3% for the functionality and comfort of the premises to 93% for assistance from non-teaching staff.

5.3.6 Analytical evaluation of the modules and workshops

In this section we will present a summary of the analytical assessments of the individual modules and workshops. The indicators 1-7 echo those relating to the course on the whole in part. Those from 8 to 15 concern the teachers[6].

In the course held by Oxfam, module 5 (stress management) met with the least satisfaction, with average scores slightly above 2.5 and the module 1 workshop (GBV and proximity violence) with an average value of 2.94, a part that was deemed in need of improvement for future editions of the course. Satisfaction with the other modules was high, with average scores above 3.

The theoretical parts were judged to be better than the practical ones. Trainees attending the Telephone Donna course expressed greater satisfaction with modules 1 (GBV and proximity violence) and 5 (stress management), corroborated by the data collected by the ex-ante questionnaire, from which two important aspects emerged: 1) the participants felt the need to penetrate more deeply into the dimensions of the phenomenon of gender and proximity violence as well as the protocols to apply when seeking to help people to evade violence; 2) the participants felt inadequate with as regards the skills required to handle more complex cases. Those who attended the

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[6] *Variables regarding the modules' workshops*
1a. Consistency of the content with the course objectives;
2a. Compliance between the content and initial expectations;
3a. Compliance between the content and professional interests;
4a. Applicability in the workplace of the topics covered;
5a Compliance between the content and the need to update;
6a. How would you rate your degree of involvement (interest in the contents, propensity to intervene during the lesson, etc.) for the entire duration of the module?
7a. How would you rate the degree of involvement (interest in the contents, propensity to intervene during the lesson, etc.) of the other participants for the entire duration of the module?
8a. How do you judge the teaching style of the teacher on the whole?
9a. Time management with respect to presentation;
10a. Time allotted to questions / interventions;
11a. Mastery of content and clear presentation by the teachers;
12a. Classroom management: teachers' ability to communicate and interact with individuals and groups (exercises, simulations...);
13a. Organicity and sequentiality in the presentation of the topics;
14a. Ability to cooperate and interact with the other teachers / speakers;
15a. Ability to interact with the workshop leader (s).

courses held by the University of Jaén appraised the modules with average scores of over 3. Most of the averages for all the modules exceeded 3.5 and some came close to the maximum score of 4 The satisfaction and utility perceived by those participants were therefore quite high. In the courses taught by the ISMU, the applicability in the hands-on professional field of the topics taught was the aspect which ranked lowest in satisfaction for module 1 (GBV and proximity violence), while the amount of time devoted to discussion was much appreciated, on these issues.

Compliance of the contents with the need for update was not considered excellent in the case of module 2 (migrants and human rights); however, the consistency of the contents with the objectives of the course was appreciated.

As regards module 3 (Human care and health care), on the one hand, the participants considered it necessary to improve the applicability to the workplace of the topics dealt with, as well as the correspondence between the contents and the need to update, on the other hand average personal involvement (interest in the contents, propensity to intervene during the lesson, etc.) was appreciated along with that of the other participants.

The main problem with module 4 (mental disorders) reported by the participants concerned the applicability to the workplace of the topics taught, on the other hand, mastery of the contents and clarity of exposition by the teachers ranked high for satisfaction.

Module 5 (stress management) obtained very positive appraisals for all the indicators and was considered by the participants to be the most useful and corresponding most and best with their professional needs. As far as the courses held by the University of Palermo were concerned, the satisfaction expressed was medium-high and fairly evenly distributed as regards the items assessed and the single modules. The maximum level reached concerned the consistency between the contents and objectives of the course, while module 1 (proximity and violence) was that most appreciated, with over 95% of participants satisfied or very satisfied, differences between the rating for the three locations of the course (Agrigento, Palermo, Trapani) were minimal.

Module 2 (Migrants and human rights) obtained very high scores; the aspects considered less satisfactory were personal involvement (around 15% declared being dissatisfied with their own involvement), and, with an above-average level of dissatisfaction concerning the issue of compliance between the contents and initial expectations, especially as far as Agrigento was concerned (with an average of 35.7% of the students dissatisfied with the correspondence between the contents and initial expectations and 28.6% of them

with the personal involvement); here, however, 100% of the course participants said they were satisfied or very satisfied with the way the teachers managed the course.

Very high levels of satisfaction emerged for modules 3 (Human care and health care) and 4 (mental disorders). Module 5 (stress management), although achieving high ratings, ranked slightly below others (less than nine students claimed being satisfied or very satisfied); the aspects considered less satisfactory – in Palermo and Trapani only – were applicability of the contents to the workplace and the management of the course by the teacher (14.5% dissatisfied with both). Satisfaction with the remaining modules achieved high satisfaction ratings with averages above 3. The theoretical parts of the course were judged better than the practical ones.

5.3.7 Overall evaluation

The last section of the questionnaire deal with variables relating to the assessment by the participants of some elements of the design[7], the relationship between the strengths and weaknesses of the course, its recommendability to colleagues, as well as open questions to elicit comments, suggestions, proposals. In the course carried out by Oxfam, the hours scheduled for the theoretical parts were considered sufficient, as well as that allotted to the workshops, although 15% of the participants said they were dissatisfied with the latter; the workshops, in view of future editions of the course, should be increased. The content and the skills acquired were judged satisfactory or very satisfying by over 80% of the respondents. The expectations and training needs of the participants were seen as having been largely met. The strengths were considered much more relevant than the weaknesses.

The course was deemed recommendable for professionals in the sector. A second edition, scheduled for after the completion of the first, saw a further 40 professional operators apply. As regards the *Telefono Donna* course, for the aspects rated, the average scores were all higher than 3 out of the maximum of 4 allotted, reflecting largely positive evaluations. One hundred per cent of the participants believes the strengths exceeded the weaknesses, es-

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[7] The number of hours dedicated to lectures and workshops; the quality of the teaching material provided; duration of the course with regard to the goals established and the contents dealt with; the adherence of the course contents to the true needs and in-field exigencies established.

pecially because of the interactive nature of the workshops and would recommend colleagues to participate because of the considerable relevance of the course's and the multidisciplinary approach to the phenomenon.

As regards the courses held by the University of Jaén, all told, the general items assessed by the final section of the questionnaire obtained scores of around 90% (satisfied or very satisfied), confirming the success of the experience. A very large percentage of respondents (98.6%) are of the opinion that the strengths of the course were greater that the weaknesses and, logically, 100% of the participants, social services professionals working with migrants who face possible situations of violence of proximity, would recommend colleagues to participate. Forty per cent of the participants in the courses held by ISMU deemed that the number of hours devoted to lessons was very satisfactory, while only 29% considered the number of hours devoted to the workshops adequate, expressing the hope that the course may be more practical and hands-on in approach, with a greater number of sessions devoted to exercises.

The quality of teaching materials was considered high. The answers provided by the small group of participants with greater experience or higher qualifications (engaged in work with migrants for over 5 years) showed that the younger operators appeared more satisfied with the course than the veterans. Nevertheless, all the data expressed a high degree of satisfaction, in particular as regards the course's adherence to the training needs expressed. Among the various editions of the course, that held in Milan obtained a slightly higher rating than that of Milan 2; the number of hours devoted to workshops and the quality of teaching materials was highly appreciated at Brescia.

Ninety-five percent of the participants believed that the weaknesses were fewer than the strengths and 98% suggested that colleagues and other operator can be enrolled in similar courses in the future, specifically for the contents and the issues addressed. Among the few who expressed dissatisfaction were those who held that the contents were not really useful when dealing concretely with migrants. Some appreciated the presence of the cultural mediators above all else. When discussing the problems encountered some trainees complained that the modules were overly theoretical and suggested that a number of organisational issues be solved. One small group complained about the excessive length of the evaluative questionnaires.

In conclusion, it is possible to claim that the course proved rather successful especially for the younger cohort of operators and for those with less experience with migrant women. For future editions the following changes and improvements were suggested: better premises and venues for the

courses; more time devoted to practice and less to theory; the involvement of cultural mediators. The final overall evaluation of the courses held by the University of Palermo was in line with the general satisfaction expressed concerning the courses on the whole, individual modules and single elements. In particular, the participants expressed positive appraisals of both the hours devoted to the lessons and those allotted to the workshops.

This probably contributes to explaining one of the strengths of the course and that is the satisfactory and effective distribution of the teaching load between lectures and workshops. There was less satisfaction with the quality of the teaching material: almost two students out of ten complained about it.

Finally, for the vast majority of the trainees (nine out of ten) the strengths of the course exceeded the weaknesses. It is curious that those who would recommend this course to a colleague were more numerous than those who held that the strengths prevailed over the weakness, just as it is equally curious that no one said they would not recommend it: as if saying that every experience is worth having, because, as one critical trainee put it: "It's always possible to gain new insights".

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