



# GUIDELINES TO COMBAT VIOLENCE AGAINST MIGRANT WOMEN

**A transnational collection and analysis of  
best practices and indication for operators**



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# The presence of migrant women in Europe. A focus on Spain, Italy and Portugal

In the European Union, women constitute more than half of the migrant population and face a dual disadvantage due to the intersection of their gender and migrant status (European Migration Network, 2022). Over recent decades, the number of migrant women has increased significantly, driven by their growing pursuit of autonomy (Neves, Nogueira, Topa & Silva, 2016; Oliveira, 2022).

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines violence as the use of power or force, intentional or otherwise, that results in or threatens physical or psychological harm. Violence is categorized into three broad types: **collective violence**, **self-directed violence**, and **interpersonal violence**—the latter being rooted in relationships between individuals (Martins et al., 2018). Data on violence against women predominantly focuses on intimate partner violence (IPV). However, as Gonçalves and Matos (2016) argue, this focus is overly narrow and underestimates the prevalence of violence women face in other contexts. It is critical to consider different forms of violence, such as racism, discrimination, or workplace harassment, and assess these across diverse interpersonal, institutional, and structural settings, all while accounting for socio-cultural factors and dynamics.

Being a migrant is a significant risk factor for domestic violence, with prevalence rates alarmingly high among this population. Migrants encounter numerous challenges upon leaving their countries of origin, including cultural dissonance, social exclusion, poverty, and lack of documentation. Fear of deportation or loss of custody over children often prevents them from seeking help (Gonçalves & Matos, 2020). Moreover, many migrant, refugee, and asylum-seeking women and girls experience various forms of gender-based violence—whether in their country of origin, during transit, or upon arrival. This issue represents one of the most recurrent violations of women's human rights in Europe (Portuguese Platform for Women's Rights, 2027).

A study by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights revealed that one in three women (33%) has been a victim of physical and/or sexual violence since the age of 15, with migrant women reporting higher rates than native-born women (FRA, 2014). Gonçalves and Matos (2016) reviewed interpersonal victimization against migrant women and found: (a) a wide variability in prevalence rates across studies; (b) lower prevalence rates for interpersonal violence unrelated to IPV; (c) cultural and methodological differences influencing these variations; (d) a research focus

primarily on issues of conjugality; (e) a geographic bias in studies, predominantly conducted in the U.S. and Canada with ethnic minority samples (e.g., Latinas, South Asians); and (f) limited attention to victimization during migration, despite higher rates of victimization in host countries (53.3%) compared to countries of origin (23.3%) (Guruge, Roche, & Catallo, 2012).

Although migration is not a new phenomenon, the influx of refugees and migrants along European coastlines has prompted increased international cooperation. The 2016 United Nations High-Level Summit on large movements of refugees and migrants adopted the **New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants**, which paved the way for the 2018 Global Compacts on Refugees and on Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration. Portugal was the first United Nations member to create a National Implementation Plan for the Global Compact on Migration (PNIPGM), which came into effect in 2019. The Global Compact highlights the need for gender-sensitive migration policies that address vulnerabilities, empower women and girls, and combat the inequalities that drive forced migration (Gottardo & Cymment, 2019).

The EU legal framework incorporates the protection of human rights through the **Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union** and the Council of Europe system, which are integrated into member states' national legal systems (Khaligh et al., 2022). Several EU countries have implemented good practices for gender-sensitive and intersectional integration policies (European Migration Network, 2022).

Violence against women remains a grave violation of human rights, with devastating physical, psychological, and socio-economic consequences for victims. Rooted in gender inequality and reinforced by cultural norms and power structures, such violence places women in subordinate positions within asymmetric relationships. According to the WHO (2013), 35% of women globally experience violence at some point in their lives, with intimate partner violence being the most prevalent. Similarly, 33% of European women report physical and/or sexual violence since age 15, and 43% experience psychological abuse from partners or ex-partners.

While gender-based violence affects women universally, migrant women face heightened risks due to intersecting vulnerabilities. This includes exposure to additional forms of violence such as female genital mutilation, child marriage, and human trafficking. Their irregular migration status often exacerbates their precarious circumstances, leaving them vulnerable to exploitation and unable to seek assistance without risking deportation. In Spain, legislative reforms have sought to address these issues, but challenges persist. Despite progress in raising awareness and improving legal frameworks, efforts to eradicate gender-based violence are insufficient given the magnitude of the problem.



Combating gender violence requires a dual approach: prevention and professional training. Educational and social interventions are key to shifting perceptions and breaking the silence surrounding violence. Specialized training is crucial to ensure effective support for victims and avoid secondary victimization. Professionals must understand the dynamics of violence, its consequences, and appropriate intervention strategies, while recognizing and addressing their own biases.

The inclusion of a **gender perspective** in education and professional training fosters awareness of inequalities and equips future practitioners to address violence comprehensively. Integrating this perspective into university curricula is vital to empower students and professionals to combat gender-based violence effectively, offering holistic care to survivors and addressing the root causes of violence.

In the following analysis, we will examine the situation of migrant women in Spain, Italy, and Portugal—three European countries hosting significant migrant populations. We will explore the profiles of migrant women in these nations, the legislative frameworks protecting them, and the institutions offering assistance to victims of violence.

# The presence of migrant women in Spain

## Migrant women in Spain

In Spain, migration has gained significant relevance in recent years, largely driven by rapid growth in the construction and service sectors, which have generated abundant employment opportunities. These opportunities have attracted people predominantly from Latin America, Eastern Europe (notably Romania and Bulgaria), and the African continent.

At the same time, Spain is experiencing an aging population and a marked increase in women participating in the workforce. These demographic shifts have prompted changes in the organization of domestic and caregiving responsibilities, traditionally assigned to women. This dynamic has contributed to the “feminization of migration flows”, as women increasingly migrate to fill roles in emerging labor niches. This marks a qualitative shift in their roles within the migration process, posing significant social and scientific challenges as researchers strive to understand the specific vulnerabilities these women face in varying contexts.

A primary issue for migrant women in Spain is “job precariousness”, which exacerbates both personal and economic dependence. Many elderly Spaniards living alone, reliant on pensions, require affordable caregiving services but lack the financial means to hire formally. This often leads to reliance on immigrant workers employed informally, without adequate legal protections—a trend also evident in childcare arrangements.

Beyond domestic work, other industries absorbing female migrant labor, both formal and informal, include agriculture, livestock, hospitality, and textile manufacturing. These sectors often offer low wages, unstable employment, and limited rights, deepening the vulnerabilities of migrant women.

Another significant challenge is **social and family isolation**, which undermines their independence and increases their susceptibility to mistreatment. Experiences of racism further compound their hardships, as does irregular migration status, which creates a dependency that prevents many women from reporting abuse or violence due to fear of deportation.

The effects of these factors vary depending on the labor context. For example, in caregiving and domestic work, women may endure relationships akin to servitude, while in other sectors, such as sex work, they face the risk of severe exploitation and degradation.

In conclusion, migrant women in Spain are disproportionately vulnerable to violence and abuse due to the interplay of structural, socioeconomic, and cultural factors. These barriers restrict their access to protective resources and legal remedies, heightening their susceptibility to exploitation and mistreatment. Addressing these issues requires a nuanced understanding of their unique experiences and the systemic changes necessary to safeguard their rights and well-being.

## Profile of women victims of violence

Migrant women who are victims of violence in Spain represent a particularly vulnerable group, with specific characteristics that underscore the challenges they face in seeking support and justice. Their situation is shaped by a combination of social, economic, cultural, and legal factors, which intertwine to exacerbate their vulnerability.

### Key Contributing Factors to Vulnerability

#### 1. Geographical Origin

Migrant women victims of violence often come from regions with entrenched gender inequality and patriarchal norms, such as Latin America (e.g., Ecuador, Venezuela, Colombia), sub-Saharan Africa (e.g., Nigeria, Senegal), and North Africa (e.g., Morocco). These women often encounter a continuum of discrimination and abuse, starting in their home countries and extending to their experiences in Spain.

#### 2. Migration Status

Administrative irregularity significantly increases these women's exposure to exploitation and abuse, often by partners or employers. Those without legal residency face heightened risks of violence and are often hesitant to report abuse for fear of deportation or losing precarious employment opportunities.

#### 3. Socioeconomic Conditions

Many victims work in insecure, low-wage sectors such as domestic service or seasonal agriculture. Economic dependence on employers or partners, coupled with the lack of family or social support networks, limits their autonomy and heightens their risk of violence.

## Additional Factors Compounding Vulnerability

- **Dependence on Partners**  
In many cases, the abusive partner is also the primary provider of economic support or legal sponsorship for residence permits, further entrenching dependency.
- **Social Isolation**  
Without nearby family or friends, these women may not know where to turn for help.
- **Stigmatization**  
Cultural norms from their countries of origin often frame violence as a private matter, discouraging women from reporting abuse and even blaming the victim.
- **Fear of Authorities**  
The perception that institutions may act punitively, especially against irregular migrants, deters many from seeking assistance.

## Linguistic and Cultural Barriers

- **Language Difficulties**  
Many migrant women struggle to access social, health, and legal services due to limited Spanish proficiency.
- **Cultural Isolation**  
A lack of awareness about their rights in Spain often prevents these women from pursuing help.

## Forms of Violence Experienced

1. **Domestic Violence**  
Migrant women frequently endure physical, psychological, and economic abuse from partners, often from similar cultural backgrounds.
2. **Labor and Sexual Exploitation**  
Many face abusive working conditions, harassment, or violence from employers. Some are victims of trafficking and exploitation, including forced prostitution.
3. **Institutional Violence**  
Inadequate institutional responses, coupled with linguistic and cultural barriers, can amplify their trauma and prolong their victimization.

## Particularly At-Risk Groups

- **Unaccompanied Girls and Adolescents**  
These young migrants face a higher risk of sexual violence.
- **Victims of Trafficking**  
Trafficked women often experience extreme forms of exploitation and violence, including sexual exploitation. The clandestine nature of these crimes, combined with victims' fear and dependency, makes their plight one of the least recognized.
- **Women Traveling Alone**  
Young women traveling without companions are especially vulnerable to gender-based violence, including sexual assaults and coercion.

### Gender-Based Violence: Context and Statistics

Gender-based violence encompasses physical, psychological, and sexual violence, threats, coercion, and arbitrary deprivation of liberty. It is predominantly perpetrated by current or former partners (Organic Law 1/2004).

Although immigrant women constitute a minority of Spain's population, they represent **43.1% of gender violence fatalities** (Instituto de las Mujeres, 2023). This disproportionate figure highlights the intersection of structural barriers, such as job instability, occupational segregation, wage discrimination, language barriers, and social isolation, which compound their vulnerabilities.

In 2023, Spain recorded:

- **199,282 complaints** of gender violence (a 9.46% increase from the previous year).
- **67,695 foreign victims** of gender violence, constituting 34.78% of the total.
- **19,500 victims** refused to testify against their aggressors, with **7,299** being of foreign nationality.

### Legislative and Institutional Response

Spain's response to gender violence has evolved significantly since 1997, following the high-profile murder of Ana Orantes. This case shifted societal perceptions of domestic violence, prompting legislative reforms and greater media focus. The landmark **Organic Law 1/2004** introduced comprehensive measures to address gender violence, incorporating multidisciplinary approaches spanning legal, social, psychological, and educational perspectives.

Key measures include:

- **Specialized Courts** for gender violence cases.
- **Economic Assistance** programs for survivors.
- **Police Protection** through systems like VIOGEN, which monitored 83,341 active cases as of December 2023.
- **Restorative Justice** under Law 4/2015, which ensures victims are supported throughout legal proceedings to prevent secondary victimization.

Since 2003, when systematic data collection began, **1,240 women** have been murdered due to gender violence, leaving **431 minors orphaned**. In 2023 alone, **58 women** lost their lives, with 58.6% aged 31–50.

The fight against gender violence in Spain has seen substantial progress, with legal reforms, increased resources, and awareness campaigns leading the charge. However, migrant women remain disproportionately affected, facing unique challenges that require targeted interventions. By addressing the structural inequalities and barriers they face, Spain can better protect this vulnerable group and advance its commitment to eradicating gender violence.

### Spanish laws regarding access to the right to health for EU and non-EU citizens

The Spanish Comprehensive Law on Gender Violence represents a significant milestone in combating gender-based violence. Commonly referred to as the Comprehensive Law, it is recognized across Europe for its holistic and multidisciplinary approach, integrating justice, education, healthcare, and social policy to prevent, protect, and prosecute acts of gender violence. This legal and political framework ensures robust protection for women's rights, offering mechanisms for prevention, punishment, and assistance to women and their children.

#### Objectives and Definition

The law aims to address violence against women as a result of gender discrimination, inequality, and power imbalances. It specifically covers violence perpetrated by current or former spouses or partners, even without cohabitation. Article 1 defines gender violence as **“any act of physical or psychological violence, including sexual assaults, threats, coercion, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty.”** It also encompasses violence directed at children or relatives to harm the woman.

## Recognition and Impact

Despite initial controversy, the law was a long-awaited response to demands from women's associations and victims, providing a much-needed tool for prevention and protection. It has garnered international acclaim, earning an honorable mention in the 2014 Future Policy Award by UN Women, the World Future Council, and the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

## Institutional and Judicial Measures

The law established several specialized bodies and protocols:

- **Courts and Prosecutor's Offices for Gender Violence** ensure swift and effective legal processes.
- **Security Forces' Specialized Units** focus on victim protection and offender monitoring.
- **Collaboration Plans** enhance coordination between sectors like healthcare, social services, and law enforcement.
- **Forensic Action Protocols** standardize procedures in cases of gender violence.
- **VIOGEN System**, a centralized database, monitors victims' cases and coordinates interventions.
- **State Observatory on Violence against Women** evaluates and advises on policies and actions.
- **Special Government Delegation against Gender Violence** oversees implementation and coordination of public policies.

## Victim Protection and Rights

Victims have access to extensive protections and services, including:

- **Information Access:** A 24-hour helpline (016) for legal and social assistance.
- **Comprehensive Social Assistance:** Emergency housing, recovery services, and shelters.
- **Legal Aid:** Free, immediate, and specialized legal representation.
- **Employment Programs:** Support for labor reintegration and workplace protections.
- **Economic Assistance:** Financial aid, priority housing access, and support for alimony recovery.
- **Education Rights:** Immediate schooling for children in relocation cases.

- **Social Security and Labor Rights:** Benefits and protections to ensure stability.

## Orders of Protection

Law 27/2003 complements these measures by offering swift and comprehensive protective orders. These orders include:

1. **Criminal Measures:** Restriction of the aggressor's movement, communication, or weapon possession.
2. **Civil Measures:** Temporary decisions on family matters, such as custody and housing, valid for 30 days.
3. **Social Measures:** Financial aid, housing access, and integration programs.

## Special Provisions for Migrant Women

The legislation addresses the vulnerabilities of migrant women, including:

- Residency and work authorizations for those affected by violence.
- Access to healthcare regardless of legal status under Decree-Law 7/2018, which guarantees equitable access to the National Health System.
- International protections for Spanish women abroad through embassies and consulates.

## Awareness, Prevention, and Education

The law also prioritizes societal change through:

- **Awareness Campaigns:** Promoting zero tolerance for gender violence.
- **Education Initiatives:** Integrating prevention into curricula.
- **Healthcare Measures:** Early detection and intervention protocols.

## Evolution and Future

The law continues to evolve, adapting to emerging challenges and incorporating amendments to benefit victims further, such as through laws addressing childhood and adolescent welfare. Spain's sustained commitment to combating gender violence is reflected in improved resources and professional training, ensuring comprehensive care and protection for victims and their families.



This robust framework has made Spain a leader in addressing gender violence, demonstrating the importance of a unified, multidisciplinary approach in eradicating this pervasive issue.

### Organizations and institutions offering assistance in Spain

The **Ministry of Inclusion, Social Security, and Migration** oversees social security, passive classes, and the development of government policies related to migration, inclusion, and the rights of immigrants and emigrants. Through the **Secretariat of State for Migration**, it implements migration policies focused on immigration, the integration of migrants, and the protection of Spanish citizens abroad. Its work includes managing systems for international and temporary protection as well as integration policies.



### Key Areas of Action

#### 1. International and Temporary Protection Reception System

This system ensures that individuals lacking sufficient economic resources, stateless persons, and beneficiaries of temporary protection receive adequate support to

meet their basic needs with dignity. Services include actions organized through a network of public resources and centers, such as:

- **Refugee Reception Centres (CARs)**
- **Reception, Care, and Referral Centres (CREADEs)**

These facilities operate alongside third-sector organizations across Spain. The management of these resources is outlined in **Order ISM/680, of July 9, 2022**, which structures the reception system into three phases:

1. **Initial Assessment and Referral:** Evaluation of personal circumstances.
2. **Reception Phase:** Assignment to resources based on individual profiles and needs.
3. **Autonomy Phase:** Support for full social integration.

## 2. Integration Policies

The ministry's integration policies promote **equal treatment**, combat **discrimination**, and encourage respect for diversity. Strategies are implemented through three main frameworks:

### 1. Subsidized Projects and Programs:

These initiatives, funded through calls for proposals, are open to entities meeting specified criteria. Types of projects include:

- Socio-occupational insertion for immigrants.
- Awareness campaigns against exclusion and hate crimes.
- Human rights protection initiatives.
- Facility improvement for better inclusion.

**Key organizations providing assistance** include ACCEM, CEAR, Red Cross, CEPAIM, and Fundación la Merced Migraciones, among others.

### 2. Spanish Observatory on Racism and Xenophobia (OBERAXE):

This body gathers and disseminates information on projects and studies to combat racism, xenophobia, and hate crimes. It serves as a platform for promoting tolerance and diversity.

### 3. Forum for the Social Integration of Immigrants (FISI):

The FISI acts as a consultative and advisory body for the government on immigrant integration. Its functions include:

- Recommending measures for integration.
- Gathering input from social organizations.

- Preparing annual reports on immigrant social integration.
- Coordinating with international and local bodies.

### 3. Programmes Supporting Women

The **Women's Institute of the Ministry of Equality** collaborates with local entities and sectoral organizations to support the socio-labor participation of women, particularly migrant women and victims of gender violence. Notable programs and organizations include:

- **SARA Program** (Red Cross and CEPAIM Foundation): Designed to improve the quality of life for immigrant women by addressing social and cultural barriers. It offers personalized training and insertion pathways tailored to each woman's circumstances.
- **Associations Targeting Migrant Women:** Examples include the Latin American and Caribbean Women's Network and Asociación Rumiñahui Hispano Ecuatoriana. These groups work to empower migrant women and defend their rights through training, advocacy, and community support.

The Ministry of Inclusion, Social Security, and Migration, alongside the Women's Institute and various civil society organizations, plays a crucial role in fostering the inclusion and protection of immigrants, refugees, and migrant women. By combining legal frameworks, structured reception systems, and inclusive policies, Spain continues to address the challenges of migration while promoting integration, equality, and human rights.

# The presence of migrant women in Italy

## Migrant women in Italy

The transformation of Italy's migration landscape during the late 1970s and early 1980s marked a pivotal shift from a historically emigrant to an immigrant nation, reshaping its social and economic fabric (Pugliese, 2006). While industrial employment declined during this period, the growth of small enterprises, especially in the tertiary sector, introduced new dynamics to the labor market and the broader economy.

Italy's immigration landscape is characterized by its extraordinary diversity, often described as an "archipelago of immigration." Migrants hail from regions as varied as Morocco, the Philippines, Tunisia, Albania, Egypt, Lebanon, the Balkans, Romania, Senegal, Sri Lanka, China, South America, and beyond. This ethnic mosaic is particularly striking given Italy's limited historical, cultural, and linguistic ties with many of these nations (D'Alconzo et al., 2002).

The female migrant population represents a significant yet often underappreciated segment of the immigrant community in Italy. These women navigate unique challenges, frequently finding themselves on the margins of society. Female migration brings distinct social dimensions, particularly evident in areas like reception and cultural mediation.

Women migrate for reasons that mirror those of men—cultural, political, economic, and security concerns—but their journeys are often marked by specific roles and circumstances. Women may migrate as wives, mothers, or individuals seeking autonomy after divorce or rejection. Their motivations frequently center on economic and social independence, aspiring to transcend traditional roles and pursue recognition beyond being mothers or spouses (Maronilli, 2020).

Migrant women exhibit remarkable resilience and determination, often seeking to escape inequality and subordination within marital or societal contexts. For many, migration represents an opportunity for personal and familial transformation:

- **Economic Empowerment:** Earnings are often sent back home to cover unexpected expenses, construct homes, or support children's education.
- **Family-Centered Goals:** Women's migration plans tend to prioritize family ties more deeply than those of their male counterparts.

Challenging the narrative of marginalization, these women emerge as active agents in their migration journeys, defying stereotypes that cast them as subordinate to men.

Immigrant women's experiences in Italy often align with Abdelmalek Sayad's "paradox of otherness," a concept that underscores the duality of presence and absence in the migrant experience (Sayad, 2008):

- **In the Host Country:** Migrants are physically present but frequently emotionally detached, perceived as outsiders and marginalized in their daily lives.
- **In the Country of Origin:** They remain emotionally connected but are physically absent, maintaining ties through remittances, communication, and shared aspirations.

This dual existence highlights the complexity of the immigrant experience, particularly for women who must navigate societal perceptions of inferiority and marginalization while asserting their agency.

The transformation of Italy into an immigrant nation is deeply intertwined with the experiences of migrant women, whose journeys are shaped by resilience, family priorities, and a desire for autonomy. Their presence challenges traditional narratives, underscoring the need to recognize their active role in shaping migration dynamics and the broader social landscape of contemporary Italy. By understanding their contributions and addressing the challenges they face, policymakers and society can better support these women as integral members of the Italian community.

### Profile of women victims of violence

The profile of women victims of violence in Italy, with a particular emphasis on immigrant women, reveals distinct patterns in the prevalence, types, and perpetrators of violence. This section synthesizes data from ISTAT (2015) to provide an in-depth understanding of these experiences, highlighting how factors such as nationality and relationships intersect with the prevalence and nature of violence.

The risk of experiencing sexual or physical violence is nearly identical for immigrant and Italian women (31.3% for foreigners and 31.5% for Italians). However, differences emerge in the **types and frequency of violence:**

- **Physical Violence:** More prevalent among immigrant women (25.7%) compared to Italian women (19.6%).

- **Sexual Violence:** Experienced more frequently by Italian women (21.5% versus 16.2% for immigrants).
- **Severe Violence:** Immigrant women face a higher prevalence of severe violence, such as rape (7.7%) and attempted rape (5.1%), while Italians are more likely to encounter less severe forms, such as harassment, often from strangers (ISTAT, 2015).

The perpetrators of violence vary significantly between immigrant and Italian women:

- **Partners and Former Partners:** Immigrant women are disproportionately affected, with 20.4% experiencing violence from a partner or former partner, compared to 12.9% for Italian women.
- **Historical Patterns:** Among foreign women, 27.9% report violence from a former partner, with nearly half of these cases (46.6%) occurring before their arrival in Italy (ISTAT, 2015).
- **Cultural Variations:** Women from Moldova, Romania, and Ukraine report the highest incidence of violence among the six largest foreign communities in Italy. Moldavian women, in particular, face elevated rates of rape and attempted rape (11.7%). Conversely, Chinese women, like Italians, often experience violence from individuals other than their partners (ISTAT, 2015).

Foreign women display unique patterns in seeking support and reporting violence:

- **Legal Actions and Support Services:** While 17.1% of immigrant women file charges against their partners, they more frequently turn to specialized support centers (6.4%).
- **Injuries and Fear:** Serious injuries (44.5%) and fear for their lives (44.2%) are commonly reported by immigrant women. Despite these severe consequences, a significant proportion express satisfaction with police responses (35.6%) (ISTAT, 2015).

A comparison of data from 2015 and 2006 highlights encouraging progress in awareness and reporting of violence:

- The number of women pressing charges rose significantly (11.8% in 2015 compared to 6.7% in 2006).
- Women are increasingly open about their experiences, seeking support from anti-violence centers and discussing violence more frequently.
- The perception of violence as a crime has nearly doubled, rising from 14.3% in 2006 to 29.6% in 2015 (ISTAT, 2015).

The profile of women victims of violence, particularly immigrant women, underscores the necessity of targeted and culturally sensitive interventions. Recognizing the diverse experiences of different nationalities and relationship dynamics is essential for designing effective strategies to combat violence. This includes:

- Strengthening specialized support services tailored to immigrant women.
- Promoting awareness campaigns to challenge cultural and societal norms that perpetuate violence.
- Enhancing the responsiveness of law enforcement and judicial systems to address the unique vulnerabilities faced by immigrant women.

By addressing these factors, Italy can advance efforts to combat violence against women and foster a safer, more inclusive society.

### Italian laws regarding access to the right to health for EU and non-EU citizens

Italy enshrines the **right to health** as a fundamental individual right and a community interest under **Article 32 of the Constitution**. This right applies to all individuals, including European Union (EU) and non-EU citizens, regardless of their residency status, and extends to their minor children. The **Immigration Consolidation Act** further defines these rights in Articles 34, 35, and 36.

### Healthcare Provisions for Women and Vulnerable Populations

**Article 35, Paragraph 3**, ensures healthcare access for all, with a specific focus on women's health. Key provisions include:

- **Pregnancy and Maternity Care:** Safeguarding maternal and child health.
- **Preventive Health Campaigns:** Including vaccinations and treatment for infectious diseases.
- **Access for Irregular Migrants:** Irregular foreign citizens can receive health services via the **STP code** (Temporary Foreigner Present), valid nationwide.

Further, **Article 18 of the Immigration Consolidation Act** establishes programs for the **assistance and social integration** of victims of violence and exploitation. These programs provide:

- Residence permits for "reasons of social protection."



- Access to welfare services, education, and employment opportunities.
- Specific support for women and adolescent girls, who represent a significant proportion of beneficiaries (IOM and GRETA data).

## Barriers to Healthcare Access

Despite robust legal frameworks guaranteeing healthcare equality, numerous obstacles persist, particularly for migrant women:

### Bureaucratic and Systemic Challenges

- **Administrative Delays and Waiting Times:** Extended bureaucratic processes undermine timely access.
- **Technical Language and Institutional Racism:** Communication barriers and discriminatory attitudes erode trust in healthcare services.

### Language Barriers

- Migrant women often require interpreters or cultural mediators, resources that are not always available.
- **Untrained Translators:** Family members or even minor children may serve as ad hoc interpreters, potentially compromising privacy and free communication. Research underscores that using untrained interpreters leads to poorer healthcare outcomes (Flores, 2004).

### Cultural and Religious Factors

- Norms prohibiting **premarital sex** or open discussions about sexual health can hinder access to contraception or preventive care (Metusela et al., 2007).
- **Menstrual Taboos:** Discussions about menstruation are sometimes considered shameful, limiting access to education about menstrual health.

### Cultural Expectations in Medical Encounters

Cultural differences significantly shape interactions between migrant patients and healthcare providers:

- Migrant women may expect a **more personal relationship** with doctors, contrasting with Western professional boundaries.



- A study of Somali women in the U.S. found that patients expected immediate prescriptions rather than detailed questions or investigations (Pavlish, Noor, and Brandt, 2010).
- Finnish healthcare professionals reported difficulties understanding Somali women's perspectives, such as expectations around physical contact and communication (Degni et al., 2011).

## Discrimination and Stereotyping in Healthcare

Experiences of racism and stereotyping further exacerbate challenges:

- A study of migrant women in London found varying attitudes among healthcare professionals. Some showed dedication despite language barriers, while others displayed disinterest or unconscious bias (Bulman and McCourt, 2002).
- Professionals often operated on stereotypes, assuming Somali women were naturally good mothers, resistant to painkillers, or preferred commands over detailed explanations.

## Utilization of Public Healthcare

Migrant women tend to rely heavily on public healthcare services, particularly during pregnancy (80% compared to 33% of Italian women) (Lombardi, 2004). However, systemic barriers limit access, creating a discrepancy between legal provisions and practical realities.

## Bridging the Gap Between Rights and Practice

While Italian laws guarantee equal healthcare access for all, including tailored support for women's health and victims of violence, migrant women face persistent disparities. Addressing these requires:

1. **Enhanced Language Support:** Expanding access to trained interpreters and cultural mediators.
2. **Cultural Competency Training:** For healthcare professionals to improve understanding of diverse cultural norms and expectations.
3. **Streamlined Administrative Processes:** Reducing bureaucratic delays to ensure timely access.

4. **Awareness Campaigns:** Educating migrant women about their healthcare rights and available services.
5. **Combatting Discrimination:** Promoting equity and inclusion in healthcare through anti-racism initiatives.

By addressing these barriers, Italy can move closer to realizing the constitutional promise of universal healthcare access and ensuring equitable care for all individuals, particularly vulnerable migrant women.

### Organizations and institutions offering assistance in Italy

The Italian government collaborates with Prefectures, specialized NGOs, and private entities to operate reception centers that support asylum seekers, particularly those facing financial difficulties. Managed by the Ministry of the Interior, these centers play a critical role throughout the asylum application process.

The reception system consists of various types of centers, each serving different purposes depending on the stage of the asylum application. Upon arrival, individuals undergo identification and receive initial assistance at first-aid centers. Depending on space availability, they may be transferred to either a first assistance center, a temporary reception facility, or directly to a Special Reception Project (SAI). Throughout the asylum procedure, asylum seekers are accommodated in facilities across the country, and these centers provide essential services, including social and psychological assistance, healthcare, cultural mediation, legal support, and Italian language courses (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees website).

The system, as outlined by Legislative Decree 142/2015, has evolved through various reforms. The original SAI-centered model encountered challenges, especially due to municipalities' voluntary participation. The 2018 "Salvini Decree" introduced significant changes to the system, which were somewhat adjusted by the "Lamorgese Decree" in 2020, partially restoring the previous structure. The current framework differentiates between first-aid activities, initial assistance centers, and reception in the SAI system. However, the 2020 reform (DL 130/2020) introduced modifications to access and services, including the temporary use of Extraordinary Reception Centers (CAS) when space in SAI centers is unavailable. Despite the legal framework, over 66% of asylum seekers are still accommodated in CAS, highlighting ongoing inadequacies in the reception system.

In May 2023, Law 50/2023, which converted Decree Law 20/2023, introduced further restrictive measures. Under this law, asylum seekers are excluded from accessing the SAI system, which is now reserved primarily for those granted protection.

Asylum seekers will instead be accommodated in collective government centers or temporary facilities, similar to the provisions of the 2018 Salvini Decree. This law also introduces criteria for accessing the SAI system for specific vulnerable groups (Asylum Information Database).

To gain access to a reception center, asylum seekers must apply through the Police Headquarters and Prefecture. While personal circumstances are considered, applicants cannot choose the location of their reception center, which depends on space availability within the national network (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees website). However, three persistent issues continue to affect the system's functioning:

1. **Voluntary Participation by Municipalities in the SAI Network:** Although reception measures are mandatory, municipalities can choose whether to participate in the SAI network, leading to an inconsistent distribution of available spaces across the country.
2. **Chronic Shortages of SAI Places:** The limited availability of SAI spaces forces many asylum seekers into CAS centers, which are often large, for-profit facilities that fail to meet the comprehensive needs of asylum seekers.
3. **Short-Term Emergency Approach:** The perception of reception as a temporary emergency measure, along with a policy of limiting arrivals, prevents the development of a robust and sustainable accommodation system.

As a result, the number of reception places often falls short of the demand, making access difficult for asylum seekers. Those arriving through search and rescue operations are typically directed to hotspot facilities, while spontaneous arrivals can face long delays before being allowed to begin the asylum process (Asylum Information Database).

The duration of stay in reception centers aligns with the asylum application process, with services like social and psychological support, healthcare, legal aid, and language courses available throughout. However, if an individual leaves the center without authorization, engages in violent behavior, or has sufficient financial resources, they may lose access to these services (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees website).

Once granted international protection, individuals are entitled to remain in a dedicated SAI project for six months, which may be extended for another six months, or they can seek private accommodation at their own expense (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees website).

The reception system's evolution since 2018 has seen significant changes. The introduction of new tender specifications in 2018 focused on reducing costs and eliminating core services, which led to the closure of over 3,500 reception facilities between 2018 and 2021, further decreasing available places. The voluntary nature of municipal participation in the SAI network exacerbates this issue, limiting the number of spaces in these programs (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees website).

Although the law mandates a limited stay in first reception centers before transfer to SAI, access to SAI is contingent on space availability. The vague definition of "time strictly necessary" gives public administration discretion, resulting in inconsistent implementation. Even after reforms, the SAI system primarily serves those with international protection status and unaccompanied minors, with others gaining access only when spaces are available (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees website).

Decree Law 130/2020 restored some access to the SAI system and improved services for asylum seekers, including the reintroduction of social and psychological support, cultural mediation, Italian language courses, and legal information. However, challenges remain in service quality:

- **Access to SAI Services:** Asylum seekers in SAI centers are limited to basic services and lack support for integration, job searching, and professional training. These services are generally reserved for those with international protection status, leaving most asylum seekers in CAS centers without the comprehensive support they need.
- **Quality of Services in CAS:** While CAS centers have reinstated essential services, new specifications for service provision suggest low-quality service delivery. Inadequate staffing hours limit the effectiveness of services, reflecting a lack of national investment in proper implementation.
- **Unaccompanied Minors:** Despite the assumption that unaccompanied minors should have immediate access to SAI, most remain in government-run centers, temporary facilities, or residential care homes.
- **Impact of Law 50/2023:** The new law removes access to essential services like healthcare, social assistance, and cultural mediation from government centers and CAS, which will further impact the quality of care asylum seekers receive.

The changes in reception policy since the 2018 "Security Decree" have shifted the focus to large CAS centers, primarily operated by for-profit companies, sidelining smaller cooperatives and local organizations. This shift has resulted in job losses and reduced positive impacts on local communities.

In conclusion, the Italian reception system for asylum seekers faces persistent challenges due to a combination of legislative changes, limited resources, and structural deficiencies. While reforms like Decree Law 130/2020 have improved access to the SAI system and reinstated critical services, issues such as a shortage of spaces, inconsistent municipal participation, and the restrictive provisions of Law 50/2023 continue to hamper the system's effectiveness. To improve the reception process, a more inclusive and well-resourced approach is needed, one that ensures equitable access and sustainable support for asylum seekers in Italy.

# The presence of migrant women in Portugal

## Migrant women in Portugal

Immigration to Portugal has grown significantly, particularly since the country's entry into the European Economic Community in 1986. Prior to this, the foreign population rarely exceeded 100,000. By the late 1990s, it neared 200,000, doubling again in the early 2000s. By 2009, there were 454,191 foreign residents, with Brazilians accounting for 25%, Ukrainians 12%, and Cape Verdeans 11%. A decline followed, with the foreign population dropping to 401,320 in 2013, reflecting an 11.6% decrease due to Portugal's economic crisis. However, post-2015, immigration surged, reaching an all-time high of 781,247 foreign residents in 2022. Brazilians remained the largest group (30.7%), followed by citizens from the UK (5.8%), Cape Verde (4.7%), and India (4.5%).

## Gender Dynamics in Immigration

The number of migrant women in Portugal has mirrored overall immigration trends, experiencing significant growth in absolute terms. Between 1990 and 2012, the female migrant population grew by 351%, compared to a 235% increase for men. By 2022, women made up 51% of foreign residents, though recent years have seen a decline in their relative proportion due to more male-dominated migratory flows from Asia. Among established communities, women are predominant, comprising 53.8% of Brazilians, 55.5% of Angolans, and 54.3% of Ukrainians. However, newer immigrant groups, such as Nepalese (37% women) and Indians (19.1% women), show a different gender balance.

## Challenges in Integration

Migrant women in Portugal face unique challenges intersecting with broader issues affecting immigrants. These include precarious employment, low wages, housing instability, and language barriers—particularly pronounced among arrivals from diverse linguistic backgrounds. These challenges often compound, creating multiple exclusions from essential services such as education, healthcare, and housing. Women are particularly vulnerable to intimate partner violence, further exacerbating their marginalization.

Despite legal protections under the Portuguese Constitution and international conventions like CEDAW and the Istanbul Convention, gender inequality persists. National initiatives such as the **National Strategy for Equality and Non-Discrimination (ENIND)** aim to address these issues through targeted action plans, but systemic barriers remain. Women frequently face risks of discrimination, exploitation, and violence throughout the migration process, often beginning in their countries of origin, where restrictive emigration policies can increase vulnerability.

### Socio-Economic Profile of Migrants

According to the 2021 Census, foreigners made up 5.2% of Portugal's population, with an average age of 37.3 years, younger than the Portuguese average. Over 68% of foreign nationals were economically active, with labor as their primary income source. However, migrants remain at higher risk of poverty and material deprivation compared to nationals. In 2019, 27.4% of foreigners faced poverty and social exclusion, compared to 21.3% of Portuguese citizens, although this marked an improvement from 2013.

### Policy and Legal Framework

Portugal's approach to immigration relies heavily on the nationality criterion, creating gaps in statistical and administrative tracking of migrant integration. In 2021, 698,887 individuals held valid residence permits, with nearly half (48.5%) being women. Migrants are predominantly in their working-age years, with large proportions concentrated in Lisbon, Faro, and Setúbal districts.

The **Foreigners and Borders Service (SEF)** reported that new residence permits in 2020 predominantly cited family reunification (35.7%), professional activities (29.7%), and study (12.3%) as reasons. However, the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted this upward trend, causing an 8.5% decline in permits compared to 2019.

### Persistent Gendered Inequalities

Migrant women often migrate for economic opportunities, family reunification, or to escape violence and cultural constraints, seeking autonomy. Despite their motivations, they frequently encounter exploitation, labor abuse, and human trafficking. Gender intersects with race, class, and migration status to amplify vulnerabilities, with language and cultural barriers further limiting access to essential services.



Efforts to improve integration show mixed results. Indicators such as educational success have improved, but significant disparities remain. Migrants experience higher rates of poverty and material deprivation than nationals, and systemic challenges hinder their access to rights and services, despite legal protections.

Portugal's immigration landscape illustrates dynamic growth tempered by systemic barriers to integration. While women play a significant role in migration trends and are a focus of national strategies, their experiences are marked by intersecting vulnerabilities. Addressing these challenges requires sustained, inclusive policies that prioritize equitable access to resources, protection from violence, and pathways to socio-economic inclusion for all migrants.

### **Profile of women victims of violence**

There is increasing interest in studying violence against immigrant women, though much of the focus remains on intimate partner violence (IPV). Unfortunately, findings for immigrant women are often diluted within broader studies of violence against women. In Europe, despite the development of reports and recommendations addressing the protection of immigrant women and their inclusion in some national plans against domestic violence (e.g., Spain, Portugal), immigrant women often remain overlooked due to insufficient integration of gender perspectives into immigration policies, gender equality frameworks, and related legislation.

### **Violence Against Migrant Women in Portugal: A Complex Issue**

In Portugal, the prevalence of violence against migrant women reflects the intersection of gender-based violence and vulnerabilities tied to migration. Migrant women face elevated risks due to factors such as social isolation, the absence of familial support, language barriers, limited knowledge of their rights, economic dependence, and fears linked to migratory status, including deportation or loss of residency rights (Miguel, 2019).

Most data on violence against women centers on IPV. However, Gonçalves and Matos (2016) argue that this narrow focus underrepresents the broader scope of violence, which also occurs in other contexts, including racism, discrimination, workplace harassment, and institutional violence. Expanding research to encompass these contexts, while accounting for socio-cultural and cultural dynamics, is crucial.



Migration further exacerbates vulnerabilities. Immigrant women often confront cultural differences, poverty, social exclusion, and legal precariousness that deter them from reporting violence due to fear of deportation or losing custody of their children (Gonçalves & Matos, 2020). Additionally, they face cumulative and intersectional discrimination based on factors such as social class, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and migratory status (Hennebry et al., 2016).

## Prevalence and Nature of Violence

Few studies in Portugal have exclusively focused on violence against immigrant women. A notable exception is Dias et al. (2013), who examined three immigrant populations (Brazilian, African, and Eastern European) and found that emotional abuse was the most common form of violence (11.4%), followed by physical (7.1%) and sexual violence (1.6%). Perpetrators were most often intimate partners (43.9%), with relatives being the second most frequent (17.5%). Violence also extended to workplaces (10.5%). Duarte and Machado (2015) highlighted that many migrant women from Brazil, Ukraine, Cape Verde, Guinea, and Angola remain in irregular or temporary residency situations, which discourages them from seeking help.

Studies indicate that 78.5% of migrant women report experiencing at least one form of victimization, with nearly half (48%) experiencing their first instance post-migration (Gonçalves & Matos, 2020). Black women of lower socioeconomic status with prior victimization in their countries of origin reported higher levels of victimization in Portugal, demonstrating the cumulative impact of intersecting vulnerabilities.

## Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is a significant form of violence against migrant women, constituting a public offense under Portuguese law. Since the introduction of Law 83/2015, FGM has been criminalized as a serious violation of physical integrity, punishable by two to ten years of imprisonment. Data from Portugal's National Health Service indicates 1,076 cases of FGM were recorded between 2014 and 2023, with 223 cases reported in 2023 alone. Most cases involved procedures performed in Guinea-Bissau and Guinea-Conakry, often on girls under nine years old (DGS, 2023).

Portugal's "Portugal + Igual" strategy includes measures to prevent and combat FGM, such as educational campaigns, professional training, and collaborations with countries where FGM is practiced. Awareness campaigns are also conducted at airports during school holidays to prevent the practice among returning migrants.

## Human Trafficking and Exploitation

Trafficking in human beings, particularly for sexual exploitation, disproportionately affects young migrant women from Eastern Europe, Latin America, and Africa. In Portugal, Article 160 of the Penal Code criminalizes human trafficking, and significant strides have been made in prevention, signaling, and victim support. The "Entre Ruas" project exemplifies efforts to prevent trafficking and support sex workers and potential victims by ensuring their access to rights and services (Amaral, 2021).

## Addressing Challenges and Future Directions

Despite some progress, challenges persist. Migrant women continue to face higher poverty rates and material deprivation than nationals (Oliveira, 2022). While strides have been made in education and healthcare access, a comprehensive approach integrating gender and migration perspectives remains crucial to combat violence, discrimination, and systemic barriers effectively. Initiatives must extend beyond IPV to encompass structural and institutional violence, ensuring that migrant women receive holistic support to achieve safety and inclusion.

## Portuguese laws regarding access to the right to health for EU and NON-EU citizens

Migratory flows are widely recognized as a global public health challenge (Oliveira & Gomes, 2018). Access to and utilization of health services play a crucial role in promoting integration, equity, and the protection of human rights for migrants (Oliveira, 2022). To address this, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the **Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration** in December 2018, urging member states to develop National Plans aligned with their specific migratory contexts.

## Portugal's Leadership in Migration Policy

Portugal has been at the forefront of these efforts, becoming the first UN member state to establish a **National Implementation Plan for the Global Compact on Migration (PNIPGM)**. This plan, operational since 21 August 2019, aligns with the 23 objectives of the Global Compact and its 10 guiding principles, including a people-

centered vision, international cooperation, respect for human rights, and a holistic approach to migration.

The **PNIPGM** outlines 97 measures structured around five core objectives:

1. Promoting safe, orderly, and regular migration.
2. Enhancing the management of migratory flows and border control.
3. Facilitating the reception and integration of immigrants in regular situations.
4. Supporting migrants' ties to their countries of origin.
5. Strengthening development partnerships with origin and transit countries.

Key initiatives include the **CPLP Mobility Agreement** (2021) to ease movement among Portuguese-speaking nations, enhanced mechanisms for combating child trafficking (e.g., the National Referral System), and the **Integrar Valoriza Network** to improve immigrant integration policies at the local level. Portugal has also encouraged diaspora engagement through the **National Programme to Support Investment in the Diaspora** and labor mobility agreements with countries such as India and Morocco.

## Legislative Framework Supporting Migrants

Portugal's comprehensive legal framework supports its migration policies:

1. **Aliens Act (2007):** Provides a foundation for the entry, stay, and exit of foreigners, with progressive amendments facilitating residence permits for professional and entrepreneurial activities.
2. **Asylum Law (1998):** Establishes asylum and subsidiary protection rights, incorporating EU directives to refine procedures and protections.
3. **Citizenship Law:** Portugal boasts one of the highest naturalization rates in the EU, driven by reforms like extending jus soli principles and reducing residence periods for eligibility.
4. **Anti-Discrimination Legislation:** Laws such as Law No. 94/2017 combat discrimination on grounds of race, ethnicity, and nationality.
- 5.

## Integration and Access to Services

Portugal emphasizes equitable access to essential services, particularly healthcare. The **Constitution of the Portuguese Republic** (Article 64) guarantees universal

health protection without discrimination, reinforced by legislation ensuring all residents, including migrants and those in irregular situations, can access the **National Health Service (SNS)**. Specific provisions include:

- **Law No. 95/2019:** Reaffirms universal access to healthcare.
- **Order No. 253/2012:** Regulates SNS registration for foreign nationals.
- **Decree-Law No. 67/2004:** Guarantees treatment for communicable diseases irrespective of legal status.
- **Law No. 27/2008:** Extends SNS access to refugees and asylum seekers.
- **Fee Exemptions:** Vulnerable groups, such as pregnant women and minors, are exempt from healthcare fees.

### Integration Policies and Initiatives

Portugal's approach includes strategic national and local initiatives:

- **Linguistic Support Programs:** Initiatives like *Portuguese for All* aim to improve language proficiency and civic understanding.
- **Youth and Adult Programs:** The *Choices Programme* supports young migrants, while other initiatives encourage immigrant entrepreneurship and intercultural mediation.
- **Local and Regional Activities:** Guided by national integration plans, these address health awareness, social interaction, and labor orientation, often through public-private collaborations.

Portugal exemplifies a comprehensive, inclusive approach to migration and integration, rooted in international cooperation and respect for human rights. By aligning national policies with the UN Global Compact's principles, Portugal fosters equity, enhances public health outcomes, and ensures migrants' well-being while upholding its commitment to sustainable development and social cohesion.

### Organizations and institutions providing assistance in Portugal

In August 2014, the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (commonly known as the Istanbul Convention) came into force. This landmark treaty acknowledges the role of gender stereotypes and prejudices in perpetuating societal norms that legitimize violence against women, girls, and young girls. In alignment with these principles, Portugal has adopted the National Strategy for Equality and Non-Discrimination "Portugal +

Igual" (2018–2030) - ENIND. This comprehensive framework serves as the primary public policy instrument for gender equality in Portugal and includes a specific Action Plan for Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (GIC, 2023).

Several Portuguese organisations actively address issues of integration and violence against migrant women. Among these are the Associação Portuguesa de Apoio à Vítima (APAV); the Comissão para a Cidadania e a Igualdade de Género (CIG); the Observatório das Mulheres Assassinadas (OMAR) under the União de Mulheres Alternativas e Resposta (UMAR); the Associação de Mulheres Contra a Violência; and the Organização Internacional para as Migrações (IOM). In the Leiria region, A Mulher Séc. XXI - Associação de Desenvolvimento e Apoio às Mulheres plays a pivotal role. Across Portugal, from the northern to the southern regions, numerous institutions address domestic violence, regardless of the victim's nationality. Their work spans direct interventions with victims, preventive measures, and multidisciplinary support services.

Key Institution: Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality (CIG)

The Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality (CIG) is a governmental body under the Ministry of Justice in Portugal, dedicated to promoting gender equality and safeguarding the rights of women and marginalized groups. Its activities are central to advancing gender equality policies and combating gender-based discrimination.

Core Objectives and Activities

1. Policy Development and Implementation
  - Formulating and executing national strategies to promote gender equality and combat gender-based violence.
  - Ensuring coordinated efforts across government bodies for a unified approach to these issues.
2. Support for Victims of Gender-Based Violence
  - Overseeing a national network of support services for victims, including shelters, counselling services, and legal aid.
  - Providing tools and resources to ensure effective protection and assistance for victims.
3. Research and Data Collection
  - Conducting studies on gender-related issues, such as domestic violence, economic inequality, and discrimination.
  - Gathering and analyzing data to guide policymaking and monitor progress in achieving gender equality.
4. Awareness Campaigns and Education
  - Leading public campaigns to raise awareness about gender equality, anti-discrimination, and women's rights.

- Offering training and educational resources for schools, businesses, and community organizations.
- 5. Advocacy and Coordination
  - Representing Portugal in international forums and negotiations advocating for gender equality.
  - Collaborating with NGOs, civil society groups, and stakeholders to create inclusive policies.
- 6. Legal Framework and Monitoring
  - Developing and revising laws to address gender disparities and combat discrimination effectively.
  - Monitoring the enforcement of legal frameworks to ensure the protection of individual rights.
- 7. Support Services
  - Providing accessible information and assistance on gender-related issues, including legal guidance and service availability.

The collective efforts of governmental and non-governmental institutions underscore Portugal's commitment to fostering gender equality and eradicating violence against women and girls, reinforcing the principles enshrined in the Istanbul Convention.

Following other resources and Initiatives on Support and Equality in Portugal.

### **National Network for Support to Victims of Domestic Violence (RNAVVD)**

The RNAVVD, managed by the Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality (CIG), is a coordinated system of services and resources dedicated to assisting victims of domestic violence. This network ensures comprehensive, nationwide support through partnerships with public and private entities.

#### **Key Services and Features:**

- **Support Centres:** Offer psychological counselling, legal guidance, and social support tailored to individual needs.
- **Shelters and Safe Houses:** Provide emergency housing for victims and their children, ensuring safety and access to essential services.
- **Crisis Hotlines:** Operate 24/7 to offer immediate assistance, advice, and emotional support.
- **Legal Assistance:** Help victims understand their rights, secure restraining orders, and navigate legal proceedings.
- **Social Reintegration Programs:** Focus on empowerment through education, job training, and economic independence.

- **Child Support Services:** Provide specialised care for children impacted by domestic violence.
  - **Collaboration with Law Enforcement:** Ensure coordinated responses to domestic violence cases.  
**Website:** [RNAVD Information](#)
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### Portuguese Association for Victim Support (APAV)

APAV is a non-profit organisation offering free and confidential support to victims of crime, including domestic violence, sexual abuse, and human trafficking.

#### Core Services:

- **Emotional and Psychological Support:** Help victims cope with trauma.
  - **Legal Guidance:** Offer support with legal processes, including filing complaints.
  - **Social Services Assistance:** Help victims access housing, healthcare, and employment.
  - **Crisis Intervention:** Provide immediate safety and assistance in emergencies.
  - **Prevention Campaigns:** Educate the public on victim rights and crime prevention.  
**Website:** [APAV PT](#)
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### Association of Women Against Violence (AMCV)

AMCV focuses on empowering women and children affected by gender-based violence through a variety of support services and advocacy initiatives.

#### Key Activities:

- **Support and Counselling:** Offer psychological, legal, and social support.
- **Shelter Services:** Emergency accommodation for victims of violence.
- **Crisis Response:** Operate hotlines and provide immediate intervention.
- **Advocacy:** Campaign for policy changes to protect women's rights.
- **Prevention Programs:** Educate communities to challenge societal norms perpetuating violence.  
**Website:** [AMCV](#)



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## Women's Union for Alternative and Response (UMAR)

UMAR is a feminist organisation advancing women's rights, addressing gender-based violence, and promoting gender equality.

### Key Contributions:

- **Support for Victims:** Provide legal, psychological, and social aid.
  - **Prevention Education:** Conduct workshops and campaigns on gender equality.
  - **Advocacy:** Participate in activism and legislative lobbying.
  - **Cultural Initiatives:** Promote feminist arts and preserve women's history.
- Website:** [UMAR](#)

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## Maria de Magdala Shelter

This shelter offers a safe haven for women and children fleeing violence, providing comprehensive support for recovery and reintegration.

### Primary Services:

- **Safe Housing:** Confidential locations for immediate escape.
  - **Psychological and Social Support:** Help victims regain confidence and rebuild lives.
  - **Empowerment Programs:** Offer skills training and employment assistance.
  - **Child Care Services:** Focus on psychological and educational support for children.
- Website:** [Casa Maria de Magdala](#)

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## Centres for the Care of Victims of Violence (CAVV)

These centres specialise in addressing violence-related trauma, offering comprehensive assistance to victims.

### Highlights of Services:

- **Counselling and Therapy:** Emotional and psychological support.



- **Legal and Social Support:** Help victims navigate systems and secure resources.
  - **Crisis Response:** Rapid intervention for at-risk individuals.  
**Website:** [CAVV Information](#)
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### SOS Racismo

This organisation combats racism and xenophobia through advocacy, education, and support for victims of racial discrimination.

#### Key Initiatives:

- **Awareness Campaigns:** Educate the public on diversity and inclusion.
  - **Support Services:** Provide legal and emotional aid to victims.
  - **Research and Policy Advocacy:** Influence legislation for racial equality.  
**Website:** [SOS Racismo](#)
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### International Organisation for Migration (IOM)

The IOM supports migrants globally, focusing on humane migration management, emergency assistance, and integration.

#### Notable Contributions:

- **Humanitarian Assistance:** Aid for migrants in crisis.
  - **Integration Support:** Language training, legal advice, and employment programs.
  - **Advocacy:** Promote positive migration narratives and protect migrant rights.  
**Website:** [IOM Portugal](#)
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### Additional Organisations

- **Women Without Borders Association:** Provides support for immigrant and refugee women, focusing on integration and empowerment.
- **Association for Community Intervention, Social and Health Development (AJPAS):** Promotes community well-being through social and health initiatives.

These organisations form a vital network addressing gender-based violence and promoting equality in Portugal. They provide critical resources for victims and advocate for systemic change to ensure a safer, more equitable society.

## Migrant women in Spain, Italy and Portugal and the challenges of combating violence

The presence of migrant women in Italy, Spain, and Portugal represents a crucial component of the socioeconomic fabric of these countries but also poses significant challenges, particularly concerning gender-based violence. While the three countries share cultural similarities and are key destinations for migratory flows, their approaches and policies for addressing violence against migrant women differ.

Migrant women in Italy, Spain, and Portugal often come from regions with high gender inequality, such as Latin America, Africa, and Eastern Europe. They are frequently employed in sectors like domestic work, agriculture, and caregiving, which expose them to labor exploitation, economic insecurity, and social isolation. These factors increase their vulnerability to both domestic and structural violence.

In all three countries, migrant women often find themselves in precarious situations due to common factors:

- **Economic dependency:** Concentrated in precarious sectors such as domestic work, elderly care, and agriculture, these women are vulnerable to exploitation and abuse.
- **Irregular legal status:** A lack of documentation heightens the risk of violence and limits access to support services.
- **Linguistic and cultural barriers:** These hinder access to essential resources and contribute to social isolation.
- **Institutional violence:** Inadequate institutional responses exacerbate their situation, especially for those who fear being reported or deported.

While the issues faced by migrant women overlap across these countries, the responses differ significantly.

- Spain is considered a leader in addressing gender-based violence, thanks to the **Ley Orgánica 1/2004**, which provides a robust legal framework to protect victims, including migrants. This law includes specific measures to ensure access to services regardless of legal status. Additionally, anti-violence centers (**Centros de Atención a Víctimas de Violencia de Género**) are widespread and offer multilingual support. Despite these advancements, migrant women continue to face challenges related to discrimination and a lack of social support networks. Spain's

approach, however, demonstrates a greater focus on prevention and awareness compared to other countries.

- In Italy, migrant women make up a significant portion of the workforce in care and domestic labor. However, their vulnerability is heightened by often irregular migration status, making it difficult to report violence without fear of deportation. Italian legislation includes measures to protect victims, such as granting humanitarian residence permits to women who report abuse. However, implementation is often hampered by bureaucracy and a lack of awareness of rights among migrants. Civil society organizations play a vital role by providing shelters, legal aid, and integration programs. However, fragmented initiatives and limited resources remain significant obstacles.
- In Portugal, efforts to combat gender-based violence are integrated into a broader vision of social inclusion and equality. The country has implemented the **National Plan for the Prevention and Combat of Gender-Based Violence**, which includes specific actions targeting migrant women. Special attention is given to integrating women through language courses, professional training, and awareness campaigns about their rights. However, resources to address violence against migrant women remain limited compared to demand, and shelters for victims are often insufficient. Civil society organizations complement governmental efforts, but economic challenges can hinder an effective response.

Across all three countries, migrant women are overrepresented in the most precarious economic sectors and face multiple forms of discrimination. The lack of social support networks and fear of reporting abuse due to migration status are pervasive issues.

At the same time, Spain and Portugal stand out for their more inclusive approaches compared to Italy, particularly in ensuring universal access to services and implementing anti-violence policies. Nonetheless, all three countries face a persistent need to improve coordination between public institutions and civil society organizations.

However, resources to address violence against migrant women remain limited relative to demand, and shelters for victims are often insufficient. Civil society has a complementary role in providing support, but economic challenges can hinder an effective response.

Despite progress, the protection of migrant women victims of violence remains an incomplete objective in all three countries. Addressing this challenge requires:

1. **Transnational policies:** Strengthening cooperation between EU countries to standardize access to services and protect migrants regardless of legal status.
2. **Resource improvement:** Investing in shelters, accessible and multilingual legal and psychological support.
3. **Empowering women:** Promoting awareness of rights, offering professional training, and creating support networks to combat isolation.

The following measures are crucial for improving the situation:

1. **Enhancing access to services:** Ensuring that all anti-violence services are accessible regardless of legal status.
2. **Institutional training:** Raising awareness among authorities about the vulnerabilities of migrant women to reduce discrimination and stereotypes.
3. **Strengthening support networks:** Creating safe and inclusive spaces for migrant women with linguistic and cultural support.
4. **Promoting integration:** Investing in programs that combine assistance with opportunities for social and economic integration.

With a coordinated and inclusive response, Italy, Spain, and Portugal can not only ensure greater protection for migrant women but also foster a more equitable and inclusive society.

This section explores the different needs of migrant women, based on interviews with frontline operators and the women themselves. The analysis reveals various challenges across practical, economic, cultural, health, legal, and psychological aspects. The identified needs reflect the complexity of migrant women's experiences, recognizing specific requirements. However, challenges persist, highlighting that diverse responses are common, even in official settings.

There are two main areas of analysis:

- General Needs;
- Health Needs.

## General needs

### Survival-Oriented Challenges

The challenges faced by migrant women in survival-oriented support centers reveal a complex interplay of factors that significantly impact their experiences. While these centers offer valuable emotional support and satisfaction, particularly in unfamiliar environments, women often struggle with key issues. A major concern is the lack of clear information about their rights and the available resources, which leaves many feeling vulnerable and uncertain. Despite some efforts from social initiatives, migrant women frequently experience social invisibility, hindering their integration and access to employment opportunities. The absence of recognition of their rights further contributes to their vulnerability and limits their potential for empowerment. Many women are often relegated to precarious, poorly paid jobs, reinforcing their economic dependency and social marginalization. On an emotional level, the process of rebuilding self-esteem and overcoming past traumas proves to be a significant challenge, impacting their ability to cope with everyday difficulties. Health-related needs are also a concern, ranging from basic medical care to mental health services that address the stress and anxiety inherent in their situations. Finally, professional development opportunities are severely limited, mainly due to language barriers and the non-recognition of their qualifications, which continues the cycle of job insecurity.

*"I focus on the emotional aspect. Because, as I tell you, when you arrive here as an immigrant, you feel completely unprotected. You encounter Spanish people with strong personalities, and you think they won't give you the attention you deserve. But then you realize that you are in a house with professionals who support you, both legally and psychologically, throughout the whole process."*

### Basic and Economic Support

The challenges regarding basic and economic support for migrant women in support centers are closely tied to their economic vulnerabilities. Although some degree of assistance is provided, many women face difficulties accessing resources and job opportunities. A key issue is the lack of clear information about their rights and available services, contributing to their precarious situation. The persistence of low-wage, unstable employment perpetuates their economic dependence. Moreover, the social invisibility and lack of recognition of migrant women's rights further limit their ability to empower themselves and improve their circumstances.

*"They should increase our €10... You want to go out, eat something, but €10 is not enough. It doesn't cover a decent meal, so you have to economize. You need to save it, because you need it."*

### Revictimization Risks

A significant concern in support centers is the risk of revictimization, which migrant women may face despite seeking refuge and assistance. This risk arises from a combination of factors, including the lack of recognition of their rights and the vulnerability tied to their migratory status. Insufficient protection and preventive measures expose them to potential exploitation and abuse, both inside and outside of support centers. The marginalization and social invisibility of migrant women exacerbate this risk, making it critical to implement proactive measures that ensure their safety and well-being.

### Cultural and Identity Dynaics

Migrant women often struggle to reconcile their cultural identity with the new social and cultural realities of their host country. Maintaining their cultural identity becomes an act of resistance against forced assimilation, but it can also create tensions, both internally and externally. Balancing the preservation of their cultural roots with the desire to integrate into the host society presents a constant challenge for recognition and acceptance. Support programs and institutions need to be sensitive to these dynamics, offering safe and empathetic spaces where migrant women can explore and affirm their cultural identity while navigating the adaptation process.

*"...Suddenly, there might be things that shouldn't adapt, but I adapt easily. They say Spaniards are very tough and will hit you hard, but I haven't experienced it that way. Maybe it's because I've been here for a short time, but the Spaniards say the same thing, right?"*

### Employment, Training, and Education

Access to employment, training, and education is a major challenge for migrant women, who often face additional obstacles such as language barriers, the non-recognition of their educational and professional qualifications, and discrimination in the job market. Training and education are crucial for improving their employment prospects and aiding their socioeconomic integration. However, the

lack of access to adequate training programs and equitable job opportunities can perpetuate their marginalization and economic dependency. Addressing these barriers and implementing inclusive policies that recognize and value migrant women's skills in the workforce and education is essential.

*"I: And that inability to move forward, what is it determined by?  
 Woman: By the NIE. If you don't have an NIE, nothing is offered to you for training.  
 I: Okay, so without an NIE, you can't access any work training?  
 Woman: Yes, that's right.  
 I: Once you have the NIE, are there training opportunities?  
 Woman: Yes, absolutely.  
 I: Does this training open up job opportunities?  
 Woman: Yes, but for limited jobs.  
 I: For example?  
 Woman: Cooking, cleaning, waitressing, hospitality, secretary work."*

### Post-Receiption Period Needs

During the post-reception phase, migrant women face increasingly urgent challenges. Many encounter difficulties such as securing housing, accessing adequate health care, and integrating into the local community. The lack of sustained economic and basic support further exacerbates their vulnerability and impedes their ability to rebuild their lives independently. Comprehensive support programs addressing these needs holistically are crucial to fostering the autonomy and social inclusion of migrant women.

*"Honestly, from this place, the most important thing is the psychological and emotional support, because you arrive here morally and psychologically devastated, and here you find unconditional support from professional women who are there to help you."*

## Health Needs

### Counselling and Emergency Services

Migrant women often face significant mental health and emotional well-being challenges, which are heightened by past traumas, migration-related stress, anxiety, and depression. The need for specialized counselling and emergency care services is therefore critical for this population. Providing tailored resources that address these specific needs is essential. These services should create a safe, supportive environment where migrant women can access the help and guidance they require.



## Mental Health Restructuring

For migrant women, mental health restructuring is vital to overcoming the emotional and psychological challenges of migration and adapting to a new environment. This requires access to culturally sensitive mental health services that are specifically trained to address the unique needs of this group. Mental health promotion through therapy groups, support activities, and individual counselling can help rebuild resilience and mental strength, empowering migrant women to manage their emotional well-being more effectively.

## Broader Perspective on Health

Migrant women's health needs extend beyond immediate medical care to encompass broader social determinants of health, such as housing, employment, education, and access to culturally competent healthcare services. A holistic approach to health should address these interconnected factors, promoting physical, mental, and social well-being. Effective interventions must consider these dimensions in order to improve migrant women's overall health outcomes and foster healthier communities.

## Sex Education and Reproductive Health

Access to reproductive health and sex education is critical for migrant women. They must be provided with accurate, culturally sensitive information and services related to family planning, prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases, pregnancy, and childbirth. Additionally, issues such as gender-based violence and limited decision-making autonomy in reproductive health must be addressed to ensure that women are empowered in their sexual and reproductive choices. A comprehensive approach in this area promotes the autonomy and well-being of migrant women throughout their reproductive lives.

## Linguistic and Cultural Sensitivity

To ensure linguistic and cultural sensitivity in healthcare and support services, it is essential to provide services in migrant women's native languages and respect their cultural practices. This includes offering interpreters and translators, as well as creating culturally competent care environments. Training staff in cultural diversity and linguistic sensitivity is key to building trust and fostering the engagement of migrant women in their healthcare.

## Prioritizing Health Areas

Migrant women's specific health needs include reproductive health, prenatal and postnatal care, mental and emotional health, as well as the prevention and treatment of chronic diseases. A holistic approach that considers both physical and emotional well-being is essential. Moreover, social determinants such as access to housing, stable employment, and education should be considered to address health disparities and promote equitable, person-centered healthcare.

## Legal Support Challenges

In addition to health-related needs, migrant women face significant challenges in navigating legal contexts, which impact their access to justice and labor rights. According to professionals working with migrant women, several key issues in legislation and labor rights create barriers:

1. **Lack of Clarity in Contracts:** The absence of clear and transparent contracts can hinder the defense of migrant women's rights. Bureaucratic obstacles and a lack of information about labor rights make it difficult to navigate the legal landscape.
2. **Employment Inequality:** Despite having relevant training, many migrant women end up in jobs that do not match their skills or qualifications. The difficulty of homologating foreign titles and finding appropriate work exacerbates this issue.
3. **Excessive Bureaucracy:** The administrative burden and inconsistent interpretation of immigration laws can create confusion and frustration for both migrant women and the professionals who assist them.
4. **Digital Divide:** The lack of access to technology and digital skills can further complicate the process, especially as many procedures are increasingly conducted online.

## Proposed Solutions

To address these challenges, several measures are needed:

1. **Clarity in Contracts:** Clear and transparent contract terms must be established to ensure that both employers and employees understand their rights and responsibilities.
2. **Support in Title Homologation:** Policies and programs should support the title homologation process and facilitate the search for employment that aligns with the qualifications and experience of migrant women.
3. **Administrative Simplification:** There is a need for streamlined administrative processes and consistent interpretation of immigration laws to reduce confusion and ease the bureaucratic burden.
4. **Equitable Digital Access:** Providing resources and training to bridge the digital divide is essential. This will ensure that migrant women have equal access to online services and can effectively engage with the necessary administrative procedures.

By addressing these legal challenges, greater inclusion and equity in the workplace and society at large can be achieved.

*"She didn't want anything. She said, when they give me my passport, I'll leave here. But they didn't help her with the paperwork. No, they didn't help us because they told us, 'You can be in Spain illegally.' There are many ways to be illegal. I said, 'Look, friend, I came to Spain to be legal. If Spain is giving us the opportunity to stay with asylum, with international protection, why would I choose to be illegal here?'"*

## Legal Support for Migrant Women

Legal support is a significant challenge for migrant women, impacting their access to justice and labor rights. Bureaucratic complexity often hampers the regularization of their immigration status, making it harder for them to access basic social services. This confusion is compounded by labor deskilling, where migrant women often work in positions that don't reflect their qualifications due to the non-recognition of foreign degrees and certificates.

Additionally, the digital divide creates further challenges, as many migrant women lack the skills or resources to navigate online systems for jobs, education, and social services.

To address these issues, it is crucial to establish clear policies that simplify bureaucratic processes, recognize foreign qualifications, and provide equitable

digital access. Legal counseling services tailored to migrant women, digital skills training programs, and labor policies that acknowledge the value of migrant women's education and experience will play a key role in promoting their inclusion and integration.

*"I think the legal aspect is most important because they help you with the paperwork. You arrive here, and even though things aren't clear, once you talk to a lawyer and they assist with the procedures, it really feels like the most important thing is to regularize your status here in Spain. And it wasn't just that, but when the police came, we had a lawyer by our side, and that made all the difference because you feel secure and stronger to continue."*

The next sections will explore how migrant women perceive violence and its impact on their lives.

# Migrant women's perception of the phenomenon of violence against migrant women. A view of the victims' perspectives

In discussions about migration dynamics, the voices of migrant women are often marginalized, particularly in relation to gender-based violence and discrimination. This section seeks to bring these critical issues to the forefront by presenting insights from qualitative interviews conducted with migrant women living in Italy, Spain, and Portugal.

The study's objective is to shed light on the complex experiences of migrant women, examining the intricate intersections of migration, gender, and violence. By delving into their lived experiences and perspectives, this research aims to identify practical and actionable strategies to combat gender-based violence and discrimination within migrant communities, fostering a more inclusive and equitable environment.

## Research method, Design and Participant Selection

To understand the perception and perspectives on gender-based violence against migrant women, field research was conducted across the countries involved in the study. A qualitative approach was employed, utilizing semi-structured interviews to capture the lived experiences and insights of migrant women.

The research adopted a purposive sampling strategy to ensure representation of diverse migration backgrounds and countries of origin, capturing a broad spectrum of experiences related to gender-based violence within migrant communities. Interviews were conducted either in person or via virtual platforms, prioritizing the safety and comfort of participants while enabling in-depth discussions.

Participants included migrant women with varying migration statuses, socio-economic conditions, and cultural contexts. This diversity aimed to reflect a wide range of perspectives and experiences. Selection criteria ensured that participants:

- Self-identified as migrant women residing in one of the research countries.
- Were willing to discuss their experiences and perspectives on gender-based violence.

- Could communicate effectively in the language chosen for the interview.

### **Ethical Considerations**

The study adhered to rigorous ethical standards to protect participants' anonymity and confidentiality. Informed consent was obtained from all participants before interviews commenced, detailing the study's purpose, voluntary participation, and privacy safeguards.

### **Methodological Goals**

The methodology was designed to provide a platform for migrant women to share their experiences authentically, offering valuable insights into the complex challenges of gender-based violence. By integrating diverse voices, the research aimed to contribute to a nuanced understanding of the phenomenon and to identify actionable strategies to combat violence and discrimination in migrant communities.

### **Research Findings and Contributions**

The interviews also included input from frontline operators working with migrant communities, enriching the analysis with professional perspectives. This dual approach highlighted the multifaceted nature of gender-based violence and its implications for migrant women in varying cultural and socio-legal contexts.

This section presents the key findings of the research, synthesizing the perspectives of migrant women and experts. Additional in-depth analyses can be found in the national reports prepared by each partner institution involved in the project.

### **Results. Violence against migrant women observed by migrant women**

From the interviews with migrant women, we noticed that their perceptions of the phenomenon and the violence they face vary, alongside the presence of laws, experiences, and organizations that support them. Here's a comprehensive summary based on the provided results.

## Perception of phenomenon and violence

Migrant women perceive migration and the violence they face through varied and complex lenses, shaped by their individual experiences, cultural backgrounds, and the societal contexts of their host countries. These perceptions reveal significant challenges, including systemic gender-based discrimination, entrenched societal stereotypes, and limitations on personal autonomy. Together, these obstacles contribute to feelings of invisibility, marginalization, and disempowerment.

### Key Challenges Faced by Migrant Women

#### 1. Gender-Based Discrimination

Discrimination against migrant women manifests in numerous areas of life, particularly in employment, education, and civic participation. Within labor markets, migrant women often encounter systemic bias in employment agencies, relegating them to low-paying, precarious jobs with little opportunity for advancement. These discriminatory practices, combined with societal stereotypes, undermine their credibility and restrict their access to essential resources and opportunities.

#### 2. Cultural and Social Constraints

Cultural norms and societal expectations in host countries may impose restrictions on migrant women's autonomy, including limitations on self-expression, such as clothing choices. These constraints can conflict with the norms of their countries of origin, fostering feelings of constraint, alienation, and disempowerment.

#### 3. Gender-Based Violence

Migrant women frequently face various forms of violence, both overt and systemic, across different settings:

- **Healthcare Settings:** Language barriers, cultural insensitivity, and discriminatory attitudes from healthcare providers can lead to neglect or mistreatment, severely impacting physical and mental health.
- **Workplace Violence:** Exploitative conditions, including wage theft, harassment, and unsafe environments, exacerbate vulnerability and perpetuate cycles of economic insecurity and marginalization.
- **Public and Private Spheres:** Migrant women encounter violence in both personal and public spaces, underscoring the urgent need for comprehensive protection measures.

## Addressing the Challenges

Tackling these issues requires a holistic, multi-layered approach:

- **Policy and Structural Interventions:** Efforts must focus on addressing systemic inequalities and dismantling structural barriers that perpetuate discrimination and violence. This includes implementing labor protections, ensuring equitable access to education, and promoting culturally competent healthcare systems.
- **Promoting Gender Equity and Social Inclusion:** Raising societal awareness and challenging harmful stereotypes are critical for fostering environments where migrant women can fully participate and thrive. Public campaigns and educational initiatives can help reshape societal attitudes and reduce gender-based bias.
- **Support and Protection Systems:** Strengthening legal frameworks and support services is essential. This includes providing specialized care for victims of violence, establishing safe spaces, and ensuring culturally sensitive and trauma-informed approaches in service provision.
- **Empowering Migrant Women:** Actively involving migrant women in the design and implementation of prevention and response measures is crucial. Their participation ensures that policies and programs are tailored to their needs and experiences, fostering a sense of agency and ownership.

## Insights from Interviews

Interviews with migrant women highlight the urgency and complexity of addressing gender-based violence. They emphasize the importance of:

- Recognizing and making visible the various forms of violence faced by migrant women in both public and private spheres.
- Promoting a culture of respect and gender equity in all areas of society.
- Strengthening protective and support systems to aid victims of violence effectively.

## Best Practices and Recommendations

1. **Comprehensive Policy Development:** Address the structural causes of gender-based violence through policies that promote equity, integration, and inclusion.



2. **Cultural and Gender Sensitivity Training:** Equip professionals working with migrant populations with training in cultural competence and gender sensitivity to improve their effectiveness and empathy.
3. **Specialized Support Services:** Expand access to tailored care and resources for migrant women, including shelters, counseling, and legal aid.
4. **Engagement and Advocacy:** Foster active participation by migrant women in policymaking and advocacy efforts to ensure their voices are heard and their needs addressed.

By addressing these challenges through targeted strategies, society can better support migrant women, enabling them to overcome barriers, rebuild their lives, and contribute meaningfully to their communities.

The experiences of migrant women with gender-based violence are deeply multifaceted, shaped by cultural influences, workplace dynamics, and varying levels of awareness. Drawing from interviews with frontline support operators, this analysis aims to shed light on their perceptions, challenges, and the mechanisms available to support them.

## Stereotyping and Discrimination in the Workplace

Workplace stereotyping and discrimination significantly impact migrant women's employment opportunities. Common challenges include:

- **Gender Stereotypes:** Migrant women are often funneled into feminized, low-paying, and precarious roles, primarily in domestic or caregiving sectors. These jobs, typically undervalued, offer little opportunity for career advancement, perpetuating systemic gender-based discrimination.
- **Barriers to Advancement:** Family responsibilities often take precedence over professional aspirations for migrant women, compounded by limited access to training and education.
- **Intersectionality of Challenges:** Migration status, particularly irregular documentation, further intensifies difficulties. Discriminatory hiring practices and a lack of secure housing exacerbate vulnerabilities.

To address these issues, it is essential to implement:

1. **Tailored Support Programs:** Career guidance, vocational training, and language education to enable migrant women to access diverse employment opportunities.

2. **Advocacy for Workplace Equality:** Policies combating gender stereotypes and promoting equal opportunities.
3. **Systemic Reform:** Efforts to eliminate barriers such as irregular documentation and exploitative hiring practices.

A poignant testimony from a migrant woman underscores these injustices:

"I find it very unfair. Because we are immigrants, we also have the right to work and perform. Yet, they question us. It's not fair that we face so many barriers—validating qualifications, studying again, starting over—while others in our countries thrive with their diplomas and qualifications. It feels like a shackle, not freedom."

### Awareness, Cultural Factors, and Perceptions

Awareness and cultural perceptions play a crucial role in how migrant women experience and navigate gender-based violence. Key insights include:

- **Cultural Sensitivity in Support Systems:** Collaborative efforts, such as culturally tailored educational programs and inclusive community initiatives, are vital in raising awareness and providing effective support.
- **Combatting Stereotypes:** Projects like *Inmigracionalismo* focus on addressing media-driven stereotypes about migrants, which can reinforce discriminatory narratives.
- **Fostering Social Cohesion:** Initiatives promoting multicultural exchange, such as intercultural education and community events, help challenge misconceptions and foster understanding.

### Building Trust and Support Networks

Migrant women's testimonies highlight the importance of culturally competent support mechanisms:

"When they bring you to a shelter, you find yourself surrounded by people from different backgrounds. You don't know what to expect. Sometimes, cultural differences in communication hurt unintentionally. It's essential to coordinate and adapt how we interact to avoid misunderstandings."

To improve support mechanisms:

1. **Education and Advocacy:** Raise awareness about gender-based violence within migrant communities and provide accessible resources for victims.

2. **Culturally Competent Services:** Train professionals to recognize and respect cultural differences while offering sensitive, tailored assistance.
3. **Policy Development:** Enforce regulations that prioritize gender equality and the rights of migrant women.

## A Path Forward

The challenges faced by migrant women in the context of gender-based violence are exacerbated by systemic inequalities and cultural divides. Tackling these issues requires:

- **Comprehensive Support Programs:** Designed to meet the unique needs of migrant women, emphasizing empowerment, education, and integration.
- **Community Engagement:** Collaborative efforts to challenge stereotypes, promote inclusion, and ensure equal opportunities.
- **Policy Reforms:** Targeting systemic barriers in the workplace, housing, and access to legal protections.

By addressing these layers of complexity, society can create a more inclusive and supportive environment where migrant women feel valued, safe, and empowered to thrive.

## Support available

Support centers and organizations are pivotal in providing critical assistance and advocacy for migrant women, particularly as they navigate the challenges of settling into a new country. These institutions address the multifaceted needs of migrant women, offering services that promote their well-being, integration, and empowerment.

## Essential Services for Migrant Women

Support centers offer a range of vital services that address immediate and long-term needs:

1. **Housing**  
Safe and stable housing ensures that migrant women and their families have a secure place to reside, providing the foundation for their integration journey.
2. **Basic Needs**

Access to nutritious food and medical aid is crucial for safeguarding the health and well-being of migrant women, addressing immediate nutritional and healthcare concerns.

### 3. **Legal Assistance**

Navigating complex legal processes, such as asylum applications and residency permits, requires specialized guidance. Legal aid ensures that migrant women can access social services and understand their rights.

### 4. **Community Support**

Programs such as language classes, cultural workshops, and peer support groups foster a sense of belonging, helping migrant women build connections, share experiences, and reduce isolation.

## **Challenges in Support Services**

Despite their importance, support centers often face limitations that reduce their effectiveness:

- **Overcrowding**

High demand can lead to cramped living conditions, compromising privacy, dignity, and comfort.

- **Inadequate Financial Resources**

Limited funding restricts access to essential resources and hinders the provision of comprehensive services, leaving many migrant women vulnerable.

- **Gender-Based Discrimination**

Instances of unequal treatment, lack of accommodations for women's specific needs, and biases within these facilities exacerbate the challenges faced by migrant women.

## **Addressing Barriers and Enhancing Services**

To overcome these challenges, a coordinated and inclusive approach is necessary:

### 1. **Improving Infrastructure and Resources**

- Reduce overcrowding in support centers by expanding facilities and ensuring adequate living conditions.

- Increase financial support to enhance the quality and scope of available services.

## 2. **Combating Gender-Based Discrimination**

- Implement gender-sensitive policies to ensure equitable treatment and tailored support for migrant women.
- Train staff in cultural competence and gender awareness to provide respectful and inclusive care.

## 3. **Strengthening Support Networks**

- Establish comprehensive care centers offering counseling, psychological support, legal assistance, and social services.
- Strategically locate these centers in areas with high migrant populations and ensure accessibility through public transportation.

## 4. **Building Partnerships**

- Foster collaboration between civil society organizations, government agencies, and other stakeholders to improve service delivery and resource allocation.
- Promote cross-sector coordination to streamline support and avoid duplication of efforts.

## 5. **Cultural Sensitivity and Language Accessibility**

- Offer services in multiple languages to ensure accessibility for diverse populations.
- Design programs that respect and accommodate cultural practices while promoting integration.

## 6. **Public Awareness and Advocacy**

- Conduct campaigns to promote solidarity, inclusion, and understanding of migrant women's contributions to society.
- Advocate for policies that protect their rights, ensure fair treatment, and foster socioeconomic integration.

### **Promoting Best Practices**

To maximize impact, support centers should adopt best practices tailored to the unique needs of migrant women:

- Establish holistic, well-coordinated care models that integrate legal, psychological, and social support services.
- Ensure services are adaptable, inclusive, and accessible to all, regardless of language or cultural background.
- Leverage public-private partnerships to expand resources and improve service delivery.

By enhancing the accessibility, quality, and inclusivity of support services, society can empower migrant women to overcome barriers, achieve self-sufficiency, and actively participate in their communities. These efforts not only improve individual outcomes but also contribute to building more equitable and cohesive societies.

### Particular laws or experiences to support migrants

Efforts to support migrant women through legal assistance and the recognition of their rights upon arrival in Europe are essential for safeguarding their dignity, well-being, and integration into society. Legal representation plays a crucial role in enabling migrant women to navigate complex legal systems, secure their rights, and protect themselves from exploitation and abuse, particularly during critical processes such as asylum applications and appeals.

### Importance of Legal Support

Access to competent legal assistance empowers migrant women to understand their rights, present their cases effectively, and make informed decisions about their futures. This support is vital for ensuring that they are treated fairly and equitably within migration systems, contributing to their overall safety and stability.

### Challenges in Accessing Legal Assistance

Despite its importance, migrant women often face significant barriers to obtaining legal representation and protection, including:

#### 1. Delays in Permits and Documentation

Bureaucratic inefficiencies, understaffed immigration offices, and systemic obstacles can cause lengthy delays in obtaining necessary permits and legal documentation. These delays leave migrant women in vulnerable situations, exposing them to heightened risks of exploitation, abuse, and uncertainty.

## 2. Regional Disparities in Legal Support

The availability of legal resources varies significantly across regions, with some areas offering robust support networks while others lack adequate services. These disparities result in unequal access to legal assistance, disadvantaging migrant women in under-resourced regions and compromising their ability to assert their rights.

## 3. Information Gaps

Limited dissemination of information about legal rights and processes often leaves migrant women uninformed and unable to access the support they need. This lack of awareness increases their vulnerability to rights violations and exploitation, further marginalizing an already at-risk population.

## Strategies for Addressing Challenges

A coordinated and proactive approach is necessary to overcome these barriers and ensure equitable legal protection for migrant women:

### 1. Streamlining Legal Processes

- Implement measures to reduce bureaucratic delays and improve the efficiency of legal procedures.
- Increase staffing and resources at immigration offices to address backlogs and enhance service delivery.

### 2. Enhancing Accessibility of Legal Support

- Allocate resources equitably across regions to ensure that all migrant women, regardless of location, have access to competent legal assistance.
- Develop mobile legal aid services to reach migrant women in underserved areas.

### 3. Improving Information Dissemination

- Conduct outreach campaigns, community workshops, and information sessions to educate migrant women about their legal rights and available resources.
- Provide multilingual resources and culturally sensitive materials to ensure accessibility for diverse populations.

### 4. Strengthening Collaboration with Civil Society

- Foster partnerships between government agencies, civil society organizations, and advocacy groups to enhance legal support services.
- Leverage the expertise of women's rights organizations to address gender-specific challenges faced by migrant women.

## Promoting Best Practices

To advance legal counseling and advocacy efforts for migrant women, targeted policies must address their unique needs, particularly in preventing and responding to gender-based violence:

### 1. Enforcing Laws to Safeguard Rights

- Implement and rigorously enforce legislation protecting the human rights of migrant women.
- Establish clear mechanisms for reporting abuse and discrimination, ensuring access to justice and support services.

### 2. Inclusive Policy Design

- Involve migrant women in the development and implementation of policies through advisory committees or working groups, ensuring that initiatives are informed by their lived experiences.
- Develop needs-centered programs that reflect the realities faced by migrant women in diverse contexts.

### 3. Capacity Building for Legal Professionals

- Provide training for legal practitioners on the specific challenges faced by migrant women, including cultural competence and gender sensitivity.

### 4. Public Awareness and Advocacy

- Promote campaigns to raise awareness of migrant women's rights and advocate for policies that foster inclusion and equity.

By addressing systemic barriers and adopting these strategies, stakeholders can create a more inclusive legal framework that upholds the rights of migrant women, supports their integration, and contributes to building equitable societies where they can thrive.



## Specific organizations working to support migrant women

Various organizations and reception centers have implemented social initiatives designed to promote inclusivity, build community, and provide holistic support to migrant women. These programs address diverse needs and facilitate their integration into Italian society, offering a range of services such as staff support, community engagement, integration assistance, and training opportunities.

### Key Social Initiatives

#### 1. Staff Support Programs

Personalized assistance is at the core of staff support initiatives, where trained personnel provide emotional support, practical guidance, and advocacy services. These programs help migrant women navigate the complexities of settling in a new country, connecting them with essential resources, addressing challenges, and fostering community ties.

#### 2. Community Engagement Activities

Activities like cultural events, social gatherings, and collaborative community projects create opportunities for migrant women to build relationships and foster a sense of belonging. These initiatives not only support social integration but also promote cross-cultural exchanges that enhance mutual understanding among diverse community members.

#### 3. Integration Facilitation Services

These services focus on breaking down barriers to education, employment, and other avenues of personal and professional growth. Migrant women receive assistance with job placement, school enrollment, and access to social and legal services. By navigating bureaucratic processes and overcoming systemic obstacles, these programs empower women to build stable, independent lives.

#### 4. Language and Vocational Training

Language proficiency and practical skills are vital for successful integration. Language courses help migrant women communicate effectively and participate fully in society, while vocational training programs equip them with skills for meaningful employment. These opportunities enhance their economic independence and enable them to contribute to their communities.

## Challenges Faced by Initiatives

Despite the positive impact of these programs, several challenges limit their effectiveness:

- **Resource Limitations:** Funding constraints and understaffing can reduce the scope and reach of support services, leaving some needs unmet.
- **Cultural Barriers:** Language differences, unfamiliarity with Italian systems, and cultural misunderstandings may hinder effective engagement and service delivery.

## Strategies for Enhancing Impact

To address these challenges and strengthen the effectiveness of social initiatives, the following strategies are recommended:

### 1. Collaborative Efforts

Enhanced collaboration among government agencies, non-profit organizations, and community groups can maximize resources and expertise. By pooling their strengths, stakeholders can develop comprehensive support systems tailored to the unique needs of migrant women.

### 2. Incorporating Feedback

Listening to migrant women's voices is critical. Their insights can inform the design and implementation of initiatives, ensuring services are responsive to their needs, preferences, and aspirations. This participatory approach fosters empowerment and relevance.

### 3. Expanding Resources

Increasing funding and staffing for support programs ensures greater accessibility and quality of services. Addressing financial and operational limitations is essential for scaling up initiatives.

### 4. Cultural Competence Training

5. Providing cultural sensitivity training for staff enhances their ability to understand and address the specific needs of migrant women, bridging cultural gaps and fostering more effective service delivery.

## Moving Forward

The efforts of support centers and organizations illustrate a commitment to creating inclusive environments where migrant women can thrive. By addressing existing challenges and strengthening collaboration, these initiatives can continue to evolve, ensuring migrant women receive the comprehensive support they need to build empowered, fulfilling lives in Italian society.

## Migrant women's perspectives on combating violence

Migrant women's experiences with gender-based violence are complex and shaped by a multitude of factors, including cultural background, workplace dynamics, and varying levels of awareness. This section synthesizes insights drawn from interviews that shed light on these diverse influences.

### Stereotyping and Discrimination in the Workplace

The interview data reveals a troubling reality for migrant women, particularly those of Nigerian descent, who often face deeply ingrained stereotypes linking them to illegal activities and prostitution. These harmful stereotypes, perpetuated by societal prejudices, contribute to systemic discrimination, limiting their access to socio-economic opportunities. The intersection of racial and gender biases amplifies these challenges, creating an environment of hostility that hinders their integration into various sectors of society.

Gender-based violence is closely tied to workplace dynamics, as noted by one operator who said, "Foreign women are paid less on a contractual level. Almost all migrants get a job through temporary employment agencies, which offer very short work contracts." Migrant women disproportionately face barriers to employment, including limited job opportunities and lower pay. The interviews highlight how these women not only contend with gender-based discrimination but also face racialized expectations that perpetuate harmful stereotypes. The intersectionality of gender and migrant status intensifies these difficulties, with second-generation migrant women experiencing even greater discrimination in the workplace.

Furthermore, the interviews reveal that gendered perceptions within support services can hinder open communication. One operator shared their struggles in establishing rapport with Nigerian women, who were reluctant to discuss the stereotypes imposed upon them, possibly due to the operator's gender. The operator reflected, "I have worked especially with Nigerian women who are stereotyped as prostitutes or engaged in illegal activities. They didn't talk to me about it explicitly, perhaps because I'm a man." This highlights the need for gender-sensitive communication within support services to ensure that the experiences of migrant women are appropriately addressed. The intersectionality of gender and cultural biases becomes crucial in crafting interventions aimed at dismantling stereotypes, reducing workplace discrimination, and creating a more inclusive environment for migrant women.

## Stereotyping and Discrimination in Employment

Migrant women are frequently steered toward feminized, precarious jobs, often in domestic work or caregiving, roles that are undervalued and offer limited advancement opportunities. The perpetuation of gender-based discrimination is further exacerbated by the prioritization of familial responsibilities over professional aspirations. Challenges such as limited access to education and vocational training deepen their vulnerability in the labor market. The intersection of gender and migration status, including issues like irregular documentation and inadequate housing, compounds these barriers. To address these challenges, it is vital to provide comprehensive support, including career guidance, access to skills training, advocacy for gender equality in the workplace, and initiatives that challenge stereotypes and promote equal opportunities for migrant women.

## Awareness, Cultural Factors, and Perceptions of Gender-Based Violence

Cultural factors significantly influence migrant women's understanding of power dynamics between genders. In some migrants' countries of origin, male supremacy is often accepted, which can contribute to the normalization of domestic violence. Power imbalances, including instances of domestic abandonment, are identified as key sources of suffering among migrant women.

The interviews highlight the complex relationship between cultural awareness and gender-based violence. One respondent explained, "In their country of origin, they were aware of this issue. Some had escaped situations of repression and mistreatment, so they knew they were in a bad situation. But before, they had accepted it." Many migrant women come from backgrounds where gender-based violence is not only recognized but normalized. Upon arriving in Europe, they experience a shift in awareness, as they begin to see certain behaviors as unacceptable, influenced by exposure to different societal norms.

However, responses to gender-based violence vary widely among migrant women, depending on factors such as their cultural background, educational level, and time spent in the host country. Some women adopt Western concepts of gender equality and gender-based violence quickly, while others require specialized programs to build awareness.

## Addressing Gender-Based Violence through Collaborative, Culturally Sensitive Approaches

The analysis of cultural factors and awareness highlights the need for collaborative, culturally sensitive interventions to address gender-based violence among migrant women. Inclusive educational programs and community engagement initiatives play an essential role in fostering understanding and support networks for these women. Projects like *Inmigracionalismo*, which examines media representations of immigration, stress the importance of combating harmful stereotypes and discriminatory narratives spread by the media. Creating opportunities for cultural exchange, such as multicultural events and intercultural education in schools, can help challenge stereotypes and promote social cohesion.

Moreover, raising awareness of gender-based violence and offering culturally competent support services are key steps in empowering migrant women to access resources and advocate for their rights. It is crucial to address misconceptions, promote gender equality, and provide education, advocacy, and policy initiatives that challenge discriminatory attitudes, both within migrant communities and in the broader society. By fostering collaboration, promoting cultural understanding, and combating stereotypes, communities can create environments where migrant women are better supported and protected from gender-based violence.

# Challenges faced by migrant women: Insights from interviews

This section examines the diverse needs of migrant women, drawing insights from interviews with both frontline operators and the women themselves. The analysis reveals a range of challenges across practical, economic, cultural, health, legal, and psychological domains, highlighting the complexity of migrant women's experiences. While specific needs are identified, the persistence of significant challenges underscores the diversity of responses, even within official support settings.

## General needs

### General Needs and Survival-Oriented Challenges

The interviews reveal substantial difficulties related to bureaucratic processes, including documentation, court appearances, and applications for international protection. The need to balance immediate survival concerns with psychological distress emerges as a critical issue. Many migrant women express a sense of inevitability regarding the violence they face, which complicates efforts to prioritize mental health amidst the urgency of addressing basic survival needs.

Women's individual aspirations vary widely, ranging from wanting to transition from being service users to pursuing professional careers. The decision-making process around continuing education or entering the workforce is particularly complex, as it is often influenced by their roles as mothers and caregivers. This conflict between family responsibilities and personal career ambitions reflects the broader challenges migrant women face in navigating their new lives. A key gap identified is the need for clearer communication channels within support centers, which would help migrant women better express their needs and access the assistance available to them.

### Survival-Oriented Support in Support Centers

While migrant women value their participation in support centers as a source of emotional support and community in an unfamiliar environment, several weaknesses persist. One significant issue is the lack of clear information about their rights and available resources. Despite some social initiatives within the centers, many women feel invisible in the receiving society, which hampers their ability to integrate and limits their access to job opportunities. Furthermore, the lack of

recognition for migrant women's rights exacerbates their vulnerability and constrains their ability to empower themselves.

Many women are relegated to precarious, low-paying jobs, perpetuating their economic dependency and marginalization within society. Emotionally, they face considerable challenges in rebuilding their self-esteem and overcoming past trauma, which can affect their ability to manage everyday difficulties. Health-related needs are also a major concern, ranging from basic medical care to mental health services, as many women experience stress and anxiety due to their precarious circumstances. Professional development opportunities remain limited due to linguistic barriers and issues with the recognition of qualifications, which further reinforces their cycle of job insecurity.

In sum, migrant women's experiences are shaped by a complex web of survival needs, emotional struggles, and barriers to integration, with substantial gaps in information and support services that limit their opportunities for empowerment and self-sufficiency. Addressing these issues requires a more comprehensive and coordinated approach that takes into account the multifaceted nature of their needs and the broader societal challenges they face.

The key aspects highlighted in the experiences of migrant women are as follows:

1. **Control**

Migrant women often feel their movements are tightly regulated. They must report every action, creating a sense of constant surveillance that restricts their personal freedom.

2. **Surveillance**

There is a pervasive feeling of being watched. While authorities may view surveillance as necessary, it fosters an atmosphere of distrust and discomfort for migrant women.

3. **Uncertainty**

Ongoing uncertainty about their future and legal status is a constant concern. The lack of clear information about legal processes and the prolonged waiting times negatively impact their psychological well-being.

4. **Patience and Delay**

Migrant women often mention the need for patience, though the lengthy delays in legal processes remain a significant obstacle. The prolonged waiting for residence permits and other legal resolutions generates frustration, affecting their daily lives.



## 5. **Legal Advice**

Legal support is essential for migrant women, helping them navigate complex legal systems and ensuring their rights are protected throughout the migration process.

## 6. **Asylum Application**

Although asylum is a right, the application process is often hindered by institutional inefficiencies. Women feel their rights are not always respected, and there is inadequate support to complete the necessary procedures.

## 7. **Blame**

Migrant women sometimes feel blamed for their legal status. The lack of assistance in regularizing their situation, coupled with the implication that they may have to remain in the country illegally, leads to feelings of guilt and frustration.

## 8. **Adjustment of Expectations**

The reality of life in Europe often falls short of the expectations many migrant women have. They must adjust their hopes and prepare for the challenges they will face.

## 9. **Institutional Collapse**

10. The collapse of institutions due to high demand and insufficient resources is a significant issue. Migrant women often feel disoriented and desperate, sensing that the system cannot meet their needs.

## 11. **Intimacy**

The need for personal space to process thoughts and emotions without interruption is crucial. In reception centers, the lack of privacy creates an overwhelming, stressful environment.

## 12. **Communication**

Language barriers are a significant challenge. Migrant women need opportunities to communicate in their native language while also improving their local language skills to better integrate into the community.

## 13. **Language**

Beyond the necessity of learning the local language, practicing it in real-world contexts is equally important. Formal classes alone are insufficient, and social interaction is key for effective language acquisition.

## 14. **Rest**

Adequate rest is a fundamental need, especially for those fleeing traumatic

situations like war. Accumulated stress makes sleep and downtime vital for emotional and physical recovery.

#### 15. **Stability**

The search for stability is a top priority. Migrant women are willing to accept humble jobs and any form of assistance that provides a secure and steady foundation.

#### 16. **Autonomy**

Having control over their own space and daily life is vital to migrant women's sense of autonomy. Independence in everyday activities significantly contributes to their emotional well-being.

#### 17. **Empathetic Care**

Women highly value empathetic care and humane treatment. Respect and understanding are crucial for their emotional and social well-being.

#### 18. **Friendship**

Forming friendships and social connections is essential for helping migrant women adapt quickly and feel included within their new communities.

#### 19. **Coordination**

Better coordination and clarity in the procedures of aid institutions are necessary to ensure that support is effective, consistent, and timely.

#### 20. **Flexibility**

Migrant women appreciate flexibility in the rules and schedules of reception centers, which allows them more control over their time and helps reduce stress.

#### 21. **Prioritization of Needs (Sexuality)**

The repression of emotional and sexual needs is a common issue faced by migrant women. Their feelings may be dismissed as frivolous or irrelevant due to the migration process, adding to their sense of isolation.

#### 22. **Discretion**

Maintaining discretion and privacy in treatment is vital for preserving dignity and respect. Reprimands or corrections should be made privately to avoid public humiliation.

#### 23. **Self-Knowledge**

Migrant women must be able to identify and express their own needs and vulnerabilities to seek and receive the support they require. This self-awareness is crucial for accessing appropriate services and ensuring their well-being.

These aspects collectively highlight the multifaceted challenges faced by migrant women, underscoring the need for more comprehensive, sensitive, and tailored support systems to address their diverse needs.

## Basic and Economic Support

Migrant women face a range of articulated needs, beginning with essential requirements such as food, clothing, and economic necessities. Navigating bureaucratic processes becomes a matter of survival, often overshadowing the ability to address psychological discomfort and trauma. Economic and social autonomy, particularly through stable employment and secure housing, is identified as a critical need. Independence—both social and economic—is a common aspiration, with employment playing a central role in achieving self-sufficiency. Among the most pressing needs are general support and the fundamental necessity of securing employment to ensure financial independence. Emotional support, effective coping mechanisms, legal documentation, and good health are key contributors to overall emotional well-being.

The challenges related to basic and economic support for migrant women reveal a complex interplay of factors that shape their experiences in support centers. While some women benefit from basic assistance, many struggle with limited access to economic resources and job opportunities. The lack of clear information about their rights and available services increases their vulnerability, while the persistence of precarious and low-wage jobs perpetuates their economic dependence. Additionally, social invisibility and the failure to fully recognize migrant women's rights hinder their empowerment and ability to improve their situation.

A key aspect of their struggle is:

### 1. Economic Solvency

Economic solvency is vital for achieving independence and stability. Financial difficulties have a profound impact on migrant women's ability to meet their basic needs and plan for the future. Without economic autonomy, they face significant barriers in their efforts to secure a better life for themselves and their families.

## Revictimization Concerns

The pervasive risk of migrant women establishing relationships that echo past traumas emerges as a significant concern. Women engaged in prostitution, for instance, frequently face stigmatization, victim-blaming, and inappropriate

comments during interactions with authorities, exacerbating fears of secondary victimization. Seeking institutional support often yields unfavorable outcomes, adding complexity to their experiences. Instances of secondary victimization—encompassing racism, discrimination, and challenges with institutional interactions—are frequently reported. Specific cases, such as the removal of children from Black mothers, underscore disparities in treatment and highlight the resilience needed to prevent revictimization.

In support centers, this issue remains persistent. Despite seeking refuge and assistance, migrant women face vulnerabilities stemming from unrecognized rights and the inherent precarity of their migratory status. The absence of effective protection measures often exposes them to exploitation and abuse, both within and beyond institutional environments. Social invisibility and marginalization further compound these risks, creating conditions that foster revictimization. Proactive measures are crucial to ensure the safety, dignity, and well-being of migrant women, both in support centers and in society at large.

### Key Aspects:

#### 1. **Perception of Non-Discrimination**

Some women report positive, welcoming experiences, noting the absence of discrimination in certain settings.

#### 2. **Experiences of Openness**

Encounters with local communities marked by openness and kindness have positively impacted some women's sense of belonging and acceptance.

#### 3. **Stigmatization**

Despite positive interactions, many women endure derogatory comments and stereotyping based on their immigrant status.

#### 4. **Blaming**

Systemic issues, such as the saturation of asylum systems, are sometimes unjustly attributed to migrant women, increasing their sense of vulnerability and injustice.

#### 5. **Administrative Empathy**

Empathetic behavior from officials can significantly improve the experiences of migrant women, fostering a sense of dignity and support.

#### 6. **Administrative Insensitivity**

Conversely, insensitive or rude treatment by officials generates frustration, devaluation, and further emotional strain.

#### 7. **Judicialization**

Legal processes can be retraumatizing, forcing women to relive painful past experiences.

#### 8. **Avoidance**

Some women choose not to recount their past to avoid reopening wounds, prioritizing healing over revisiting trauma.

#### 9. **Stereotyping and Sexual Objectification**

Certain nationalities of women are disproportionately subjected to harmful sexual stereotypes, leading to dehumanization and objectification.

#### 10. **Objectification on Digital Platforms**

Online advertisement platforms are frequently misused to target women with inappropriate proposals, reinforcing their objectification.

#### 11. **Social Insensitivity**

A lack of sensitivity in everyday interactions often leaves migrant women feeling undervalued or viewed as burdensome.

#### 12. **Widespread Stereotyping**

Negative stereotypes, generalized to entire communities, affect the perception and treatment of migrant women.

#### 13. **Repetition of Stories**

The repeated recounting of personal histories in official settings is exhausting and emotionally taxing for many women.

#### 14. **School Harassment**

The children of migrant women often experience discrimination, adversely affecting their emotional well-being and academic success.

These multifaceted challenges necessitate systemic reforms and culturally sensitive interventions to prevent revictimization and foster environments where migrant women can thrive with dignity and equality.

## Cultural and Identity Dynamics

Anthropological considerations, including the concept of "Sayad's Syndrome" or the double absence, highlight the fluid and evolving nature of identity in migratory contexts. Migrant women express a deep desire for an improved status quo, showcasing the adaptability of identity throughout their journeys. The importance of cultural and linguistic mediation is underscored, particularly in healthcare, where mediators go beyond mere translation to bridge cultural divides and ensure access to vital services, such as gynecological care. These mediators play a pivotal role in enabling comprehensive health literacy and facilitating effective communication.

Preserving cultural identity is both an act of resistance against assimilation and a potential source of tension, internally and externally. Striking a balance between honoring their cultural roots and adapting to the host society's expectations reflects a struggle for recognition, belonging, and acceptance. Institutions and support programs must remain sensitive to these dynamics, creating safe and empathetic spaces for migrant women to explore their identities and adapt without losing their sense of self.

### Key Aspects:

#### 1. **Adaptation to Cultural Dynamics in the Host Country**

Migrant women strive to integrate into the cultural and social norms of the host country while maintaining their identity. This process involves both acknowledgment of differences and active adaptation.

#### 2. **Self-Affirmation and Humor**

Humor and daily interactions serve as coping mechanisms, helping women maintain positivity, strengthen social bonds, and mitigate stress.

#### 3. **Occupation**

Staying busy offers structure and purpose, alleviating negative thoughts and promoting emotional well-being.

#### 4. **Family Responsibility**

Supporting family members, both locally and in their countries of origin, motivates migrant women to seek stability and security.

#### 5. **Clandestinity**

Operating without legal status exposes women to isolation and heightened risk, limiting their access to essential resources and increasing vulnerability.

6. **Vulnerability**

The lack of stability and constant risk of exploitation weigh heavily on migrant women, with personal safety concerns extending to their children.

7. **Commitment**

Migrant women exhibit significant commitment to supporting institutions, valuing the assistance provided while balancing gratitude with personal autonomy.

8. **Sincerity**

Transparency and honesty are key values for migrant women, although they often encounter reluctance from others to share information or offer genuine support.

9. **Oppression**

Strict control in reception centers, combined with systemic power imbalances, fosters feelings of suppression and compliance under duress.

10. **Deception**

Experiences of exploitation, non-payment, and unfair treatment in work environments are common, compounding financial and emotional struggles.

11. **Loss of Autonomy**

Limited recognition of individual preferences and interests erodes self-esteem and a sense of personal agency.

12. **Restriction and Rules**

Overly strict regulations in reception centers, such as needing permission for basic actions, contribute to feelings of oppression and dependency.

13. **Coping with Building New Friendships**

Emotional adaptation and forming connections are slow, hindered by stress, uncertainty, and mistrust.

14. **Institutional Helplessness**

Rejection or mistreatment by institutions and NGOs fosters helplessness and diminishes confidence in the system.

15. **Isolation**

Social disconnection, compounded by language barriers and limited support networks, deepens feelings of loneliness and exclusion.

#### 16. **Anxiety**

Fear of the unknown, including legal outcomes and vocational challenges, significantly affects emotional well-being.

#### 17. **Neglect and Restriction**

Experiences of being treated unfairly, such as denial of basic services at points of entry, contribute to indignity and dehumanization.

#### 18. **Uncertainty and Shock**

Sudden rejections of asylum claims and unclear processes amplify emotional distress and disorientation.

#### 19. **Nostalgia**

Longing for the familiarity of home, including cultural traditions and food, adds emotional weight to the migration experience.

#### 20. **Unmet Expectations and Emptiness**

The gap between initial hopes and the realities of migration creates a sense of limbo, eroding self-esteem and belonging.

#### 21. **Cultural Shock**

Navigating new cultural norms and diverse backgrounds is challenging, often leading to miscommunication and social barriers.

#### 22. **Group Belonging**

Support groups and collective activities significantly enhance self-esteem, providing a sense of community and solidarity.

#### 23. **Loneliness**

Separation from family and the struggle to form meaningful connections in a foreign environment intensify feelings of alienation.

#### 24. **Helplessness**

Prolonged stays in temporary facilities and insufficient resources exacerbate frustration and dependency.

#### 25. **Frustration**

Bureaucratic hurdles, particularly in securing permits and services for children, lead to profound disillusionment.

#### 26. **Self-Improvement**

Despite hardships, many women demonstrate resilience by focusing on personal growth, striving for autonomy, and rebuilding their identities.



By addressing these diverse needs and challenges, support systems can foster environments where migrant women feel valued, respected, and empowered to navigate the complexities of their journeys with dignity.

## Employment, Training, and Education

Employment and education emerge as central to the financial independence and empowerment of migrant women, particularly those seeking autonomy after leaving partners or other challenging circumstances. A strong desire for training and education highlights their motivation to improve their professional prospects and achieve personal growth. Language learning and overcoming linguistic barriers remain pivotal, as these are essential for navigating employment, education, and integration in a new cultural context. The integration of transcultural perspectives, particularly in areas like healthcare, is crucial for addressing systemic barriers and facilitating access to services.

Challenges such as discrimination, lack of credential recognition, and limited access to training programs further complicate their pursuit of socioeconomic stability. Bridging these gaps through inclusive policies and targeted support is essential to recognize and harness the skills and contributions of migrant women in the labor and education sectors.

### Key Aspects:

#### 1. Lack of Information and Guidance

- Migrant women frequently lack clear information on navigating university admissions, language requirements, and career pathways.

#### 2. Restricted Access to Education

- Credential recognition and the necessity of legal permits, such as a *NIE* (Foreigner Identity Number), often create barriers to accessing education and training opportunities.

#### 3. Digital Gap

- Limited familiarity with or discomfort in using technology hinders access to online learning platforms and digital resources.

#### 4. Desire for Self-Realization

- Many women express a strong aspiration to pursue higher education and develop skills aligned with personal and professional goals.

## 5. **Job Search**

- Migrant women actively seek employment in sectors like cleaning, hospitality, and security, often out of necessity rather than preference.

## 6. **Limited Access to Employment**

- Structural barriers, including the lack of credential recognition and the requirement of work permits, restrict access to meaningful employment opportunities.

## 7. **Job Insecurity**

- Informal and precarious work conditions, such as the absence of contracts and experiences of labor exploitation, are common challenges.

## 8. **Workplace Discrimination**

- Migrant women face workplace discrimination tied to their migration status and the undervaluation of skills gained in their home countries.

## 9. **Institutional Support**

- Adequate support and guidance from educational and labor institutions are essential to enable access to training, career development, and equitable job opportunities.

## 10. **Personal Overcoming**

- Despite challenges, many women demonstrate resilience and determination to achieve their educational and professional aspirations.

## 11. **Access to Health and Wellness Services**

- Concerns about accessing comprehensive medical care, particularly in culturally sensitive contexts, highlight the need for improved health and wellness support.

## 12. **Adaptation to the New Environment**

- Adjusting to unfamiliar educational and labor systems, as well as cultural and linguistic differences, poses significant hurdles.

## Recommendations:

To support migrant women in overcoming these challenges:

- **Expand access to information and resources:** Develop programs to provide clear guidance on educational and career pathways, including credential recognition and language acquisition.
- **Promote equitable policies:** Advocate for the recognition of foreign qualifications and the creation of pathways for legal employment and education access.
- **Bridge the digital divide:** Offer training in digital literacy to enhance access to online learning and job opportunities.
- **Strengthen institutional frameworks:** Provide targeted support through educational and labor institutions to foster integration and professional growth.
- **Combat discrimination:** Enforce workplace equity and foster inclusive practices to recognize the skills and contributions of migrant women.
- **Integrate transcultural approaches:** Include cultural and linguistic mediators in healthcare and education to address the diverse needs of migrant women.

By addressing these areas, migrant women can be better empowered to achieve independence, stability, and personal fulfillment.

## Post-Reception Period Needs

The post-reception period emerges as a pivotal phase where targeted support becomes essential. During this time, migrant women often grapple with adapting to a new environment while addressing critical needs such as securing housing, gaining stable employment, accessing healthcare, and integrating into the local community. Challenges such as insufficient economic and relational support, insensitivity from healthcare providers, and the absence of effective mediation for their concerns further heighten their vulnerability.

This phase underscores the importance of fostering autonomy and providing comprehensive programs tailored to the evolving needs of migrant women. These programs should address practical necessities while promoting social inclusion, emotional well-being, and independence.

## Key Aspect:

### 1. **Employment and Economic Stability**

- Securing stable and fair employment is a priority, enabling women to achieve financial independence and rebuild their lives.

### 2. **Housing Access**

- Safe, affordable, and stable housing options are essential to ensure security and dignity during the transition to independent living.

### 3. **Healthcare Accessibility**

- Addressing barriers in accessing healthcare, including insensitivity and lack of cultural competence among staff, is critical to meet physical and emotional health needs.

### 4. **Relational Support and Integration**

- Building networks of support within the local community fosters belonging and eases integration into a new cultural and social environment.

### 5. **Autonomy and Empowerment**

- Creating spaces for autonomy where women can exercise control over their lives and decisions strengthens their resilience and promotes empowerment.

### 6. **Sensitivity and Mediation**

- Effective mediation to address grievances, paired with empathetic and respectful treatment from institutions, helps prevent alienation and builds trust in the support system.

## Recommendations:

- **Holistic Support Programs:** Develop initiatives that address housing, employment, health, and relational needs in an integrated manner.
- **Cultural Competency Training:** Equip healthcare and service providers with skills to offer sensitive and inclusive care.
- **Community Engagement:** Foster opportunities for migrant women to build connections and participate in community activities to enhance social inclusion.
- **Empowerment Initiatives:** Focus on skill-building, education, and leadership programs to promote autonomy and self-reliance.

- **Accessible Mediation Services:** Establish clear channels for women to voice concerns and resolve issues effectively without fear of reprisal.

By addressing these areas, the post-reception period can become a transformative stage, supporting migrant women in achieving stability, independence, and a sense of belonging.

## Health Needs

The health needs of migrant women are multifaceted, encompassing physical, mental, and nutritional well-being, as well as the health of their children. Addressing these needs requires an accessible, culturally sensitive, and responsive healthcare system that promotes their integration and improves their overall quality of life. By bridging gaps in healthcare access and ensuring equitable treatment, migrant women can experience a smoother transition into their new environment.

### Key Aspects:

#### 1. Integration into the Healthcare System

- Access to the healthcare system is perceived as a significant advantage, enabling women to receive medical tests and essential medications.

#### 2. Primary Healthcare Access

- Many migrant women value the opportunity to access primary healthcare, particularly when compared to limited options in their countries of origin.

#### 3. Delays in Medical Attention

- A recurring challenge is the lack of timely medical care, especially during emergencies, which can exacerbate health concerns.

#### 4. Medication Challenges

- While medical consultations may be free, financial constraints often limit the ability to purchase prescribed medications.

#### 5. Health Card Acquisition

- Securing a health card is a major milestone, granting migrant women access to consistent and reliable medical care.

#### 6. Children's Health

- Mothers express significant concern for their children's health, especially when faced with persistent or recurring illnesses, underscoring the importance of pediatric care.

## 7. Diet and Nutrition

- Adjusting to a new diet while maintaining proper nutrition is a critical concern, with many women struggling to access culturally familiar and nutritious foods.

## 8. Mental Well-Being and Training Opportunities

- Engagement in educational and training activities helps prevent psychological distress, offering a sense of purpose and security.

## 9. Physical Activity

- Access to physical activities is vital for maintaining health and alleviating stress, contributing to overall well-being.

## 10. Positive Healthcare Experiences

- Some women report favorable interactions with the healthcare system, appreciating the care and services they received.

## 11. Healthcare Prioritization Challenges

- Issues with prioritization in medical treatment, particularly during critical events like childbirth, highlight the need for a more efficient and equitable system.

### Recommendations:

- **Cultural Competency in Healthcare:** Train healthcare providers to understand and address the specific needs of migrant women, including cultural and linguistic considerations.
- **Timely and Equitable Care:** Improve response times and ensure fair treatment, particularly in emergency and priority cases.
- **Affordable Medications:** Expand programs to subsidize or provide free access to essential medications.
- **Nutritional Support:** Offer guidance on maintaining a balanced diet and provide access to culturally appropriate foods.
- **Mental Health Resources:** Establish programs focused on mental health support, incorporating activities that promote emotional resilience.

- **Child Health Services:** Strengthen pediatric care options to address the unique health needs of children in migrant families.

By addressing these aspects holistically, healthcare systems can become a cornerstone for the successful integration and empowerment of migrant women, fostering their physical and emotional well-being.

## Counselling and Emergency Services

The analysis of frontline operations and interviews with migrant women highlights a significant gap in healthcare counseling centers specifically dedicated to their needs. This shortfall underscores the urgent requirement for specialized, non-judgmental first aid and emergency services tailored to critical situations. Establishing such resources would create a safe, supportive environment, encouraging migrant women to seek assistance without fear of stigma or societal judgment.

Migrant women often face profound challenges related to mental health and emotional well-being. Experiences of past traumas, migration-related stress, anxiety, and depression are common, amplifying the need for comprehensive counseling and emergency care services. Addressing these issues requires a holistic approach, providing targeted support and culturally sensitive care that empowers women to rebuild their lives with dignity and resilience.

### Key Aspects:

#### 1. Specialized Healthcare Counseling Centers

- Recognition of the need for dedicated spaces to address the complex healthcare and emotional well-being of migrant women.
- Importance of culturally competent staff trained in trauma-informed care.

#### 2. Non-Judgmental Emergency Services

- Availability of first aid and emergency services designed to provide immediate and empathetic responses to critical situations.
- Emphasis on maintaining confidentiality and reducing stigma.

#### 3. Mental Health Support

- Acknowledgment of the prevalence of trauma, anxiety, and depression among migrant women.
- Provision of targeted counseling services, including one-on-one therapy and support groups.

#### 4. **Past Trauma and Migration Stress**

- Recognition of migration-related challenges as significant contributors to emotional distress.
- Tailored programs to help women process trauma and adjust to their new environment.

#### 5. **Fear of Judgment and Stigma**

- Understanding the barriers migrant women face when seeking care due to societal or cultural stigmas.
- Creation of safe spaces where women feel empowered to access support without fear.

#### 6. **Accessibility and Inclusivity**

- Development of multilingual resources to ensure women from diverse backgrounds can access services.
- Implementation of outreach programs to inform migrant women about available resources.

#### 7. **Childcare and Family Considerations**

- Integration of childcare services to enable mothers to attend counseling and medical appointments without stress.
- Recognition of the dual role many women play in caring for children and addressing their own health needs.

#### 8. **Community Integration**

- Programs that foster a sense of belonging, reducing isolation and encouraging community-based support networks.

#### 9. **Proactive Health Interventions**

- Implementation of preventive care initiatives, such as workshops on mental health awareness and stress management.
- Collaboration with local NGOs to offer comprehensive health education tailored to migrant women's needs.



## 10. Follow-Up and Long-Term Support

- Establishment of follow-up systems to ensure sustained support for migrant women transitioning from emergency services.
- Continuous evaluation and improvement of counseling and health programs to meet evolving needs.

### Recommendations:

#### 1. Specialized Healthcare Counseling Centers

- Establish dedicated centers focusing on the unique healthcare and emotional needs of migrant women, equipped with trained professionals and culturally competent staff.

#### 2. Non-Judgmental First Aid and Emergency Services

- Develop emergency response services that prioritize confidentiality, empathy, and non-discrimination, ensuring accessibility for all migrant women in critical situations.

#### 3. Mental Health Support

- Create programs tailored to address trauma, anxiety, and depression, offering counseling, group therapy, and individualized care plans.

#### 4. Safe and Supportive Environments

- Design spaces within these services that promote trust and inclusivity, encouraging women to seek help without fear of judgment or stigma.

#### 5. Awareness and Accessibility

- Increase awareness about the availability of these services and simplify access through multilingual resources and outreach initiatives.

By implementing these measures, healthcare systems can bridge the existing gaps, delivering essential support and promoting the overall well-being of migrant women.

## Mental Health Restructuring

### Restructuring Mental Health Support for Migrant Women

The need for a comprehensive restructuring of mental health support for migrant women is a pressing concern. Their disadvantaged starting points, compounded by

high rates of somatization, reflect the critical gaps in the current healthcare framework. Effective measures must prioritize culturally sensitive and trauma-informed mental health services tailored to the specific experiences of migration and integration challenges.

Access to mental health services should not only address immediate needs but also foster long-term emotional resilience. This entails creating an ecosystem of support activities, therapy groups, and individualized counseling that empowers women to rebuild their psychological well-being. By addressing these challenges holistically, healthcare systems can better support migrant women in navigating the complexities of their new environments.

## Key Aspects

### 1. Emotional Support

- Psychological assistance is paramount for migrant women, many of whom arrive bearing significant trauma.
- Dedicated services aimed at helping women process their experiences and regain emotional stability.

### 2. Transparency and Honesty

- Clear communication of available services, rights, and processes is essential for informed decision-making.
- Avoidance of misinformation or unrealistic expectations that could exacerbate distress.

### 3. Culturally Sensitive Mental Health Services

- Training mental health professionals to understand and address cultural differences and migration-related stress.
- Inclusion of interpreters and cultural mediators to bridge communication gaps and ensure effective care.

### 4. Trauma-Informed Care

- Implementation of practices that prioritize safety, trust, and empathy for women with traumatic experiences.
- Avoidance of retraumatization during counseling or healthcare processes.

## 5. Accessible Mental Health Programs

- Low-cost or free services that remove financial barriers for migrant women.
- Flexible scheduling and childcare options to accommodate women's family responsibilities.

## 6. Community-Based Support Networks

- Development of peer support groups where migrant women can share experiences and build social connections.
- Collaboration with NGOs and community organizations to extend outreach and support.

## 7. Somatization Awareness

- Recognition of somatic symptoms as potential indicators of unaddressed mental health issues.
- Training for general healthcare providers to identify and address mental health concerns effectively.

## Recommendations

### 1. Enhance Training for Mental Health Professionals

- Introduce specialized training programs focusing on migration psychology and trauma-informed practices.

### 2. Develop Comprehensive Care Pathways

- Establish clear protocols for referral and follow-up care for migrant women accessing mental health services.

### 3. Promote Awareness Campaigns

- Increase awareness about mental health resources among migrant communities through multilingual materials and outreach programs.

### 4. Integrate Mental Health into Primary Care

- Embed mental health screenings and services into general healthcare visits to identify needs early.

### 5. Expand Funding for Mental Health Initiatives

- Secure adequate resources to develop and sustain programs tailored to migrant women's mental health needs.

## 6. Monitor and Evaluate Services

- Implement feedback mechanisms to continuously assess and improve the effectiveness of mental health programs.

## Expanding Perspectives on Health for Migrant Women

A broader perspective on health for migrant women recognizes the intricate relationship between socio-economic conditions and overall well-being. This approach underscores the importance of extending health interventions beyond traditional medical domains to include housing, employment, education, and culturally competent healthcare. Addressing social determinants of health fosters a comprehensive strategy that integrates physical, mental, and social health to enhance the quality of life for migrant women and their communities.

## Key Aspects

### 1. Broader Perspective on Health

- Health interventions must address social determinants such as economic stability, housing, and education.
- Emphasizing holistic well-being by linking physical, mental, and social health.

## Recommendations

### 1. Integrate Social Determinants into Health Policies

- Develop cross-sector programs addressing housing, employment, and education as integral to health.

## Sex Education and Reproductive Health

Sex education and reproductive health are fundamental to empowering migrant women. This includes promoting healthy lifestyles, addressing specific health challenges, and ensuring equitable access to culturally sensitive healthcare services. Areas such as family planning, the prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases, and support during pregnancy and childbirth are critical.

Social and cultural factors that affect reproductive health—such as gender-based violence and lack of autonomy in decision-making—must also be addressed. A comprehensive approach to these issues fosters autonomy and improves well-being throughout all stages of reproductive life.

## Key Aspects

### 1. Comprehensive Reproductive Health

- Provide accessible, culturally sensitive healthcare services tailored to reproductive needs.
- Address social factors like gender-based violence and decision-making autonomy.
- Promote education on family planning and healthy pregnancies.

### 2. Healthier Lifestyles

- Encourage nutrition awareness, physical activity, and balanced dietary habits.
- Integrate these elements into broader health programs to tackle unique health challenges.

## Recommendations

### 2. Enhance Reproductive Health Education

- Promote culturally sensitive programs for family planning, sexual health, and gender-based violence prevention.

## Linguistic and Cultural Sensitivity

Healthcare services must prioritize linguistic and cultural sensitivity, which includes offering interpreters, fostering culturally competent environments, and integrating medical anthropology into healthcare training. Gynecology, nutrition, and preventive care are particularly important areas for culturally tailored strategies.

## Key Aspects

### 1. Cultural Competence

- Train staff in cultural diversity and linguistic sensitivity to build trust and engagement.

- Promote culturally informed healthcare environments that respect migrant women's beliefs and practices.

## 2. Linguistic Accessibility

- Ensure access to healthcare in native languages with interpreters and translated materials.
- Integrate culturally sensitive communication into all healthcare interactions.

## Recommendations

### 1. Train Culturally Competent Healthcare Providers

- Expand training on cultural diversity and migration-related health needs.

## Mediation Support in Healthcare

Cultural-linguistic mediators play a vital role in enabling migrant women to access healthcare. Beyond translation, these professionals bridge cultural gaps, improve health literacy, and foster understanding, particularly in gynecological and preventive care contexts.

## Key Aspects

### 1. Role of Mediators

- Mediators facilitate trust and comprehension in healthcare settings.
- Their contributions surpass language translation, addressing deeper cultural barriers.

## Recommendations

### 2. Strengthen Mediator Roles in Healthcare

- Formalize and support cultural-linguistic mediation as an essential component of healthcare delivery.

## Prioritizing Health Areas for Migrant Women

A strategic focus on specific health areas for migrant women is essential to address the unique health challenges they face. Initiatives like *Prevenzione Serena* have

demonstrated the effectiveness of targeted screening protocols for health conditions prevalent in migrant populations, such as Mediterranean anemia, favism, and parasitosis. These programs exemplify the positive outcomes achieved through gradual, personalized healthcare approaches that are sensitive to the diverse cultural backgrounds and needs of migrant women.

A comprehensive approach to prioritizing health areas will ensure that migrant women receive appropriate care and interventions, focusing on prevention, early diagnosis, and culturally tailored support.

## Key Aspects

### 1. Screening and Prevention

- **Targeted Health Conditions:** Develop and implement tailored screening protocols for common health conditions among migrant populations, such as Mediterranean anemia, favism, and parasitosis.
- **Cultural Sensitivity in Care:** Commit to providing culturally informed and personalized care strategies that account for the unique challenges and resistance migrant women may face in accessing healthcare.
- **Education and Awareness:** Increase awareness about prevalent health risks in migrant communities through accessible educational campaigns and multilingual resources.

### 2. Equitable Access to Healthcare

- **Person-Centered Approaches:** Ensure healthcare services are designed to address reproductive health, prenatal and postnatal care, and the prevention and treatment of chronic diseases with a focus on cultural competence and personalized care.
- **Address Systemic Barriers:** Work to reduce barriers to healthcare access, such as the need for documentation, financial constraints, or discrimination in healthcare settings.
- **Integration with Social Services:** Collaborate with social support programs to provide holistic care that includes healthcare, housing, education, and employment support.

## Recommendations

### 1. Implement Targeted Screening Programs

- **Create National Guidelines:** Establish national guidelines for migrant health screening, ensuring specific focus on conditions like Mediterranean anemia, favism, and parasitosis, which are prevalent in certain migrant populations.
- **Mobile Health Units:** Develop mobile health units or community-based healthcare initiatives to reach migrant women who may face mobility or transportation challenges in accessing clinics or hospitals.

### 2. Promote Culturally Tailored Health Campaigns

- **Community Outreach:** Conduct outreach in migrant communities through local organizations, providing educational materials on common health risks and preventive measures in multiple languages.
- **Cultural Sensitivity Training for Healthcare Providers:** Integrate cultural sensitivity training in healthcare provider education to ensure that migrant women receive respectful and responsive care.

### 3. Enhance Access to Reproductive and Maternal Health Services

- **Prioritize Reproductive Health:** Ensure that migrant women have easy access to reproductive health services, including contraception, prenatal and postnatal care, and support during childbirth.
- **Telemedicine Services:** Expand access to reproductive health services through telemedicine, particularly for those in rural areas or those who face barriers to in-person visits.

### 4. Expand Health Insurance Coverage

- **Policy Advocacy:** Advocate for policies that ensure migrant women, including undocumented migrants, have access to affordable or free healthcare services, particularly maternal health, chronic disease prevention, and mental health care.
- **Community Health Insurance Models:** Work with local governments and NGOs to develop community health insurance models that can provide affordable coverage for migrant women, ensuring no one is left out of essential care.

### 5. Improve Healthcare Infrastructure

- **Culturally Competent Healthcare Facilities:** Invest in making healthcare facilities more welcoming to migrant women by promoting



linguistic diversity, hiring staff with cultural competence, and using interpreters for non-native speakers.

- **Culturally Inclusive Health Materials:** Ensure that healthcare information, brochures, and consent forms are available in multiple languages, and consider the cultural values and health beliefs of migrant women in their design.

## 6. Increase Mental Health and Wellness Support

- **Targeted Mental Health Programs:** Develop mental health programs specifically tailored for migrant women to address trauma, migration stress, and adaptation to a new environment.
- **Provide Psycho-social Support:** Offer psycho-social support and counseling services that help migrant women cope with the mental health challenges of migration, integrating both individual and group therapy options.

## 7. Develop Support Networks and Peer Groups

- **Peer Support Programs:** Establish peer support networks where migrant women can share experiences, seek advice, and access resources for both physical and mental well-being.
- **Community-Based Health Educators:** Train migrant women as community health educators who can share knowledge, conduct outreach, and help overcome health literacy barriers in their communities.

By focusing on these recommendations, healthcare systems and organizations can better address the health needs of migrant women, ensuring they receive the care and support necessary to lead healthy, fulfilling lives while adapting to their new environments.

## Legal frameworks: Support for migrant women

In this section, we'll explore the legal challenges highlighted in the interviews with both frontline workers and migrant women. We will explore issues regarding access to legal advice, the rights of migrant women, and the challenges faced by workers in this context.

Legislative Consideration and rights of professional workers :

The analysis of interviews has highlighted a critical need for legislative action, especially in relation to the 2019 Code Red law. It is essential to introduce specialized

training and awareness programs for professionals, including social workers, nurses, and police officers, to ensure they possess the necessary skills and sensitivity to handle diverse situations effectively.

A challenge has emerged concerning the rights of professional workers, emphasizing the importance of access to legal advice for those working as frontline operators. Advocacy is needed to address bureaucratic obstacles, safeguard workers' rights, and ensure the establishment of key support services, such as a dedicated psychological support desk.

Additionally, the lack of recognition for anthropologists' roles points to a gap in the current system. There is a clear need for better representation and protection, as well as improved training from the outset, reflecting a desire for reforms in both the legal and professional rights of workers.

The system faces challenges, particularly time constraints during the second reception phase. It is crucial to extend the timeframe to facilitate more effective integration. Furthermore, financial challenges within institutional work, such as delayed payments and unjust checks, have been identified. Issues related to neighbors and potential health risks—such as the introduction of bedbugs due to second-hand clothing—suggest the need for stronger support or regulations in these areas.

Based on the experiences of professionals working with migrant women, several key issues have been identified regarding legislation and labor rights, which present significant challenges:

1. **Lack of Clarity in Contracts:** Unclear job descriptions hinder the ability to defend the rights of migrant individuals. Bureaucratic barriers and a lack of information about labor rights exacerbate these challenges.
2. **Employment Inequality:** Despite receiving training, many migrant individuals end up working in positions below their qualifications. The process of title homologation and finding suitable employment remains a significant hurdle.
3. **Excessive Bureaucracy:** The overwhelming volume of administrative procedures and inconsistent interpretations of immigration laws often create confusion and frustration for both professionals and migrant individuals.
4. **Digital Divide:** The lack of access to digital tools or the necessary technological skills further complicates the process, particularly in a system where many procedures are conducted online.

In response, the following considerations are necessary:

1. **Clear and Transparent Contracts:** It is essential to establish well-defined and transparent guidelines in contracts, ensuring that both employers and employees fully understand their respective rights and responsibilities.
2. **Support for Title Homologation:** Policies and programs should be developed to facilitate the title homologation process and help migrant individuals find employment that matches their qualifications and experience.
3. **Administrative Simplification:** Efforts should be made to streamline administrative processes and standardize the interpretation of immigration laws across the country.
4. **Equitable Digital Access:** Measures should be implemented to close the digital divide, providing resources and training to ensure all migrant individuals have equal access to online services and can navigate administrative procedures effectively.

## Legal support for migrant women

Legal assistance and the recognition of the rights of migrant women upon arrival are of paramount importance. Many interviewees highlighted the need to inform migrant women about their rights and the legal processes they will face, particularly before they engage with the asylum commission. This revealed a potential information gap, underscoring the necessity for comprehensive guidance on rights, legal procedures, and available support services.

The strong emphasis on seeking legal representation signals a commitment to ensuring migrant women receive appropriate legal support. Regional disparities in the legal process, particularly delays in obtaining the initial permit due to the COVID-19 pandemic, point to the need for consistent and reliable support across various municipalities. The challenges encountered in obtaining residence permits in Naples further emphasize the ongoing need for comprehensive assistance beyond the initial stages, particularly after leaving reception centers.

Family support and ties were also identified as essential in navigating legal challenges. The reliance on husbands or family members, especially those with Italian citizenship, underscores the interconnected nature of legal processes and familial assistance. Instances of relying on a husband for legal aid and factoring in childcare responsibilities highlight the complex intersection of legal processes and personal circumstances.

Despite these challenges, several women interviewed acknowledged receiving assistance with the asylum process and legal support. This reinforces the importance of legal aid and the right to appeal negative decisions, signaling a commitment to safeguarding the legal rights of migrant women throughout their asylum journey. The focus remains on ensuring proper legal representation, which is crucial to protecting the rights of migrants throughout their legal proceedings.

The interviews as a whole underscore the diverse legal needs of migrant women, including the necessity of information dissemination, legal representation, support during the asylum process, addressing regional disparities, and ensuring continuous assistance throughout their migration journey.

Legal support for migrant women faces substantial challenges that hinder their access to justice and labor rights. Bureaucratic complexity is a major obstacle, as it can impede the regularization of their immigration status and access to essential social services. For many, this complexity leads to confusion and disorientation, particularly for those unfamiliar with the legal and administrative systems of the host country.

Workplace inequality is another significant issue. Migrant women often experience labor deskilling, where they work in jobs that do not match their education or professional experience. This is often due to barriers in the recognition of foreign degrees and qualifications, limiting their access to suitable employment opportunities.

The digital divide presents an additional challenge. While technology has the potential to streamline access to information and services, many migrant women lack the necessary resources or skills to utilize digital tools. This digital exclusion can limit their access to job opportunities, education, and social services that are increasingly reliant on technology.

To address these challenges, it is crucial to implement policies and practices that streamline bureaucratic processes, facilitate the recognition of foreign degrees and certifications, and promote equitable access to digital resources. This could include establishing specific legal counseling services for migrant women, implementing digital skills training programs, and advocating for labor policies that value the education and experience of migrant women.

By ensuring equitable access to justice and employment opportunities, the inclusion and integration of migrant women into the host society can be significantly enhanced. This will contribute to their well-being and foster the development of more diverse, inclusive, and cohesive communities.

## Organizational support for migrant women

The promotion of independence and proactive engagement in addressing issues within migrant communities are central themes emphasized throughout the interviews. Community-driven initiatives, particularly those like community dances and informal meetings, have proven highly effective in tackling critical issues while fostering the autonomy of migrant women. As one interviewee noted, “The things that helped most to bring out these critical issues were community dances, or music meetings,” highlighting how these gatherings have become valuable spaces for open dialogue and empowerment.

A key aspect of promoting independence is the creation of safe spaces that encourage open communication. In migrant communities, where gender-based violence may be prevalent, it is essential to develop environments where individuals feel secure enough to discuss such sensitive matters. The interviews stress the importance of safe spaces in addressing gender-based violence, as they provide a sanctuary for individuals to share their experiences, concerns, and perspectives. These spaces facilitate a collective effort to dismantle the barriers and challenges faced by migrant women.

The interviews also reveal a nuanced, multifaceted approach taken by frontline operators to address gender-based violence. The involvement of psychologists plays a crucial role in these efforts: “Psychologists take part in neutral observation. They do informal interviews while accompanying users in daily activities, for example, doctor’s visits.” Their role extends beyond formal therapy, incorporating informal interactions and neutral observations, which create a supportive and non-judgmental environment. These efforts ensure that the diverse needs of survivors are addressed, with practical interventions such as promoting the equitable distribution of domestic responsibilities being implemented as effective strategies for initiating positive change. This holistic approach addresses both the immediate psychological needs of survivors and the broader societal factors contributing to gender-based violence within migrant communities.

Organizational support for migrant women is focused on empowering them to achieve independence while proactively addressing issues within their communities. It is crucial to provide resources and services that not only foster autonomy but also enable full integration into the host society.

A major focus is on developing training and empowerment programs that build the skills and confidence of migrant women. These programs may cover areas such as labor, education, social skills, and entrepreneurship, as well as support for creating professional and social networks. By equipping migrant women with the tools and

resources to enhance their economic and social independence, they are empowered to make informed decisions and assert their rights more effectively.

Additionally, addressing the specific needs of migrant women in areas like health, housing, and gender-based violence is essential. Organizations can offer counseling, psychological support, and access to community resources that help women overcome the challenges they face in their daily lives. A holistic approach is necessary, one that considers both the individual and structural factors affecting migrant women, recognizing the intersections of gender, migration, social class, ethnicity, and religion.

Finally, fostering the participation and leadership of migrant women within their communities is fundamental to their empowerment. Creating safe, supportive spaces where they can share their experiences, voice concerns, and collaborate on collective solutions is essential. Empowering migrant women to become agents of change in their communities promotes a more inclusive, supportive society and strengthens the social fabric of the host country.

### Ideas for promoting good practices

Below are key aspects and best practices to ensure a safe, trustworthy, and empathetic environment in support centers for migrant women:

#### 1. Reduction of Uncertainty and Promotion of Trust

Migrant women often arrive at support centers feeling uncertain and misinformed. Lack of clear communication can heighten their anxiety and mistrust.

##### Best Practices:

- Provide clear, transparent information about available services and procedures.
- Establish accessible and effective communication channels.
- Train staff to demonstrate empathy, actively listen, and foster a trusting environment.

#### 2. Ensuring Safety and Peace of Mind

Safety is a fundamental need for migrant women. Feeling secure is crucial for both their physical and emotional well-being.

##### Best Practices:

- Create a safe, protected space where women feel supported.

- Address issues promptly and effectively, ensuring quick resolutions.
- Develop and communicate clear safety protocols, ensuring all users are aware of them.

### 3. **Psychological and Emotional Support**

Many migrant women arrive emotionally affected and in need of psychological support to adapt to their new circumstances.

#### **Best Practices:**

- Offer regular psychological and emotional support services.
- Train staff to provide appropriate, sensitive emotional support tailored to individual needs.
- Encourage activities that foster emotional well-being, resilience, and personal growth.

### 4. **Administrative Facilitation and Career Guidance**

Assistance with legal procedures and career guidance is essential for migrant women to integrate and contribute productively to their new community.

#### **Best Practices:**

- Provide support with legal procedures, such as asylum applications and work permits.
- Offer professional orientation programs, job training, and career counseling.
- Ensure users understand their rights and the processes they are navigating.

### 5. **Accompaniment and Empathy**

Continuous support and the building of trusting relationships with center staff are crucial for women to feel understood and supported.

#### **Best Practices:**

- Foster an environment of trust where women feel comfortable sharing their concerns.
- Ensure staff members approach women with care, showing genuine interest in their well-being.
- Facilitate spaces for dialogue, peer support, and mutual understanding.



## 6. Adaptation and Reception

Adapting to a new life requires ongoing support and a welcoming reception. Women need help navigating a new environment with different rules and regulations.

### Best Practices:

- Provide adaptation programs that offer guidance on laws, rights, and practical life skills.
- Create a welcoming and inclusive environment where women feel valued and supported.
- Encourage the active participation of women in community activities, education, and social integration.

## 7. Guidance and Emotional Support

Migrant women often face trauma and anxiety related to migration. Tailored guidance and emotional support are essential for overcoming these challenges.

### Best Practices:

- Offer personalized guidance that addresses each woman's specific needs.
- Ensure staff are trained in emotional support and crisis management techniques.
- Create support groups where women can share experiences, build solidarity, and learn from one another.

By implementing these best practices, support centers can create a transformative experience for migrant women. Such environments foster safety, emotional well-being, and personal growth, empowering women to navigate their new lives with confidence and autonomy. Ensuring effective administrative support, continuous psychological care, and strong community engagement not only enhances their experience but also supports their integration and empowerment in the host society.



# The perception of the phenomenon of violence against migrant women by Professionals Supporting Migrants. Needs, problems and challenges for the future

In discussions about migrant support, the voices and experiences of professionals working directly with migrant communities are often overlooked. This section aims to highlight these crucial perspectives through qualitative interviews conducted with ten professionals actively involved in supporting migrants.

The goal of this study is to provide insight into the complex realities faced by these professionals, exploring the nuanced intersections of migration, gender, and the challenges they encounter in their work. By engaging directly with their insights, we seek to uncover actionable strategies for addressing issues such as gender-based violence and discrimination within migrant communities, ultimately improving the effectiveness of support initiatives.

## Research method

This study employed a research method that involved semi-structured interviews with professionals who work directly with migrant women. These professionals represented various roles, including social workers, anthropologists, psychologists, and others in related fields. The interviews aimed to gather valuable insights into their experiences, practices, and perspectives concerning gender discrimination and violence against migrant women.

The sample was purposefully selected, consisting of professionals with direct experience and expertise in working with migrant women. This purposive sampling ensured that participants could provide rich, relevant data aligned with the research objectives.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with each participant, allowing flexibility in the questioning while ensuring that key topics were consistently covered across all interviews. The discussions likely focused on topics such as their experiences with migrant women, the specific needs of these women, the challenges faced, strategies implemented, and their views on gender discrimination and violence.

The collected data were analyzed using qualitative methods. This process involved transcribing the interviews, coding the transcripts to identify key themes and patterns, and analyzing emerging trends and insights related to effective practices in addressing gender discrimination and violence against migrant women.

The research aimed to identify and highlight good practices used by professionals to combat gender discrimination and violence. These practices likely included a variety of strategies, interventions, and approaches designed to empower migrant women, promote gender equality, and address issues of violence and discrimination.

Based on the identified trends and effective practices, the study also sought to offer insights into the implications for policy, practice, and further research in this field. Recommendations for improving support services, policy frameworks, and interventions aimed at addressing the needs of migrant women and combating gender-based discrimination and violence were also provided.

## Perceived needs in migrant women

Through the interviews conducted, the professionals identified some crucial elements for migrants:

- **Basic Needs**
- **Emotional Implication**
- **Revictimization**
- **Health**
- **Professional development**
- **Social Inclusion**
- **Legislative Clarity**
- **Intercultural dialogue**

Below we will understand what the interviewees have brought to light.

### Basic needs

The primary needs identified by the migrant women supported by the interviewees span several areas, including employment, housing, documentation, the integration of their children into schools, access to healthcare, social support, and understanding legislation. A particular emphasis was placed on healthcare needs, especially for chronic illnesses, cancers, urgent surgeries, and the monitoring of children with disabilities.

Psychological support was also highlighted as essential for helping migrant women cope with the trauma of fleeing war and adjusting to new systems, rights, and responsibilities. This support was seen as crucial not only for addressing the trauma of migration but also for providing professional help in navigating daily challenges in a healthy way.

Language barriers were identified as a significant obstacle in accessing services and interacting with institutions, often increasing vulnerability to discrimination and workplace violence. Mastery of the Portuguese language was seen as vital for achieving autonomy, reducing misinformation, and building more functional professional relationships, with a better understanding of the culture. However, resistance to learning the language was also cited as a major challenge, despite recognition of its importance for self-empowerment and defending rights.

Other key needs included access to social support for unemployed women, the need for flexible working hours to accommodate religious practices, and the deconstruction of cultural norms that normalize domestic violence.

The integration of children into schools and the ongoing support required to ensure their successful adjustment and thriving in the new educational environment were also mentioned as significant concerns. Adequate housing, including support in avoiding sudden evictions, was another essential need identified.

In addition, the interviewees noted challenges in understanding official information and navigating the legislative landscape, including the process of regularizing their status. Finally, there was a broader societal concern about dismantling cultural norms that perpetuate violence and discrimination, empowering women to recognize and claim their rights.

Several barriers were also identified in healthcare, such as the lack of professionals, the challenges of bringing or translating documents, and even some professional attitudes that impede access to necessary services.

### Key Points Emerging:

- **Language Learning:** Mastery of the local language is crucial for the integration and empowerment of migrant women. Classes in Spanish, ranging from basic literacy to preparation for nationality exams, are essential. For example, an Algerian woman's significant progress in Spanish, including attending classes to prepare for nationality exams, was highlighted as a success story.

- **School Participation:** Migrant women express strong concern for their children's education and their relationship with schools. Professionals encourage family involvement in school activities, such as parent associations, to improve relations with educational centers and facilitate better integration.
- **Emotional Engagement:** While emotional involvement from professionals is essential for effective support, maintaining a balance to avoid burnout is equally important. Professionals must engage with migrants while safeguarding their personal well-being to provide sustainable help.
- **Comprehensive Care:** Providing a range of services tailored to the specific needs of migrant women is a cornerstone of effective support. This ensures that all aspects of their well-being—physical, emotional, and social—are addressed.
- **Self-Determination:** Empowering migrant women to become self-reliant is a key goal. Professionals aim to foster autonomy, reducing the need for excessive reliance on support services and promoting independence.
- **Access to Information:** Ensuring migrant women have access to clear, accurate information is crucial. This enables them to navigate systems and feel safe, competent, and informed.
- **Adjustment of Expectations:** Migrant women's expectations, shaped by their migration motives and past experiences, may need to be adjusted to align with their current reality. Professionals play a vital role in guiding women through this adjustment process to ease their transition.
- **Personalized Support:** Support should be tailored to each woman's unique context and background. Understanding their country of origin and personal history allows professionals to provide more relevant and effective assistance.
- **Security:** A sense of safety and protection is fundamental for migrant women. Professionals work to create an environment where women feel secure, free to move without fear, and confident in the protection offered by local authorities.
- **Multidisciplinary Coordination:** The effectiveness of support services is enhanced through collaboration across various disciplines. Professionals from different fields work together to ensure comprehensive and coordinated care, addressing all aspects of migrant women's needs.
- **Empowerment:** Professionals encourage migrant women to explore opportunities beyond traditional, precarious roles. Efforts are made to help

women develop their skills and access better employment opportunities, even when faced with limitations in education or training.

- **Emotional Support:** Providing emotional and psychological support is essential. Professionals understand the importance of addressing the emotional and psychological needs of migrant women to offer the most effective assistance.

By addressing these diverse needs and employing a comprehensive, personalized approach, professionals aim to empower migrant women, support their integration, and improve their overall well-being.

### Emotional implications

Migrant women face a significant emotional burden as they rebuild their lives. The trauma of war and forced displacement, coupled with the challenges of adapting to a new country, deeply impacts their mental health. Many experience depression, post-traumatic stress, and isolation, often worsened by the lack of adequate psychological support due to language barriers. Despite possessing higher qualifications, many struggle to practice their professions, which affects their self-esteem and sense of self-worth.

However, these women demonstrate remarkable resilience and inner strength. Driven by their responsibilities as caregivers and providers, they strive to rebuild their lives and achieve their goals. Through learning the language, translating their diplomas, and actively seeking educational and professional opportunities, they gradually regain a sense of purpose and autonomy. This determination to overcome obstacles and create a better future for themselves and their children speaks to their extraordinary capacity for adaptation and personal growth in the face of adversity.

Although the interviews do not directly address the emotional aspects of self-esteem and personal reconstruction, they suggest key themes. There is mention of the importance of recognizing migrant women's skills to enhance their self-esteem. Additionally, creating a welcoming environment where women feel safe and comfortable to open up is emphasized. These factors, although not explicitly discussed, are seen as contributing to the rebuilding of self-esteem and personal strength in women who have often faced trauma and discrimination.

In line with their needs, professionals highlighted other emotional factors that play a critical role in the life management of migrant women:

**Belongingness and Emotional Stability:** For migrant women, a sense of belonging is crucial. They often find this in organizations, where they establish connections and

community. This sense of belonging provides the emotional stability necessary for their adaptation and well-being. One professional shared how they work to make women feel comfortable and connected, offering them emotional refuge that enhances their stability. This initial emotional support is fundamental for their ability to face the challenges of their new life.

**Fear and Uncertainty:** Migrating without secure legal status creates constant fear and uncertainty about the future. For women from countries like Ukraine, where the prospect of returning home remains unclear, this fear is especially pronounced. An interviewee pointed out that many women live with a constant sense of uncertainty, which amplifies their emotional vulnerability. This instability complicates long-term planning and has a significant impact on their mental health.

**Resilience and Grief:** Despite difficult circumstances, many migrant women exhibit remarkable resilience. Professionals note how these women, even after facing setbacks in migration or employment processes, manage to move forward. They navigate grief and loss associated with migration, adapting to new circumstances with impressive inner strength. Social grief, particularly for Ukrainian women, is an ongoing and complex challenge that requires consistent support.

**Frustration and Sustained Stress:** Frustration is common among migrant women, especially as they face pressures to send money home and the difficulty of securing employment. This frustration, combined with the ongoing stress of waiting for migration resolutions, leads to a fragile emotional state. One professional highlighted how the pressure to meet economic expectations from their families adds to their frustration and anxiety. Sustained stress becomes a constant in their lives, affecting their emotional well-being and overall ability to adapt.

**Empowerment and Self-Esteem:** Working on the self-esteem of migrant women is crucial, as many arrive with a damaged mental and emotional self-image. Efforts focus on fostering their self-concept and empowering them to move away from precarious jobs and roles. Professionals emphasize the importance of promoting autonomy and empowerment rather than offering paternalistic support. One interviewee mentioned that it's essential for these women to discover new possibilities, strengthening themselves to break free from low-paying, unstable work.

**Emotional Support and Accompaniment:** Continuous emotional support is vital in the adaptation and personal reconstruction process. Professionals emphasize the importance of offering close, humane support that helps migrant women manage the distress and helplessness that often accompany their situations. An interviewee

noted that the support should be empathetic and responsive, allowing women to feel heard and understood, which is critical for their emotional recovery.

**Example:** One migrant woman, who arrived with low self-esteem and great uncertainty about her future, was able to overcome frustration and find a renewed sense of empowerment and emotional stability through emotional support and a sense of belonging to a supportive community. With ongoing work on her self-esteem and continuous encouragement, she developed greater resilience and was able to plan a more stable future for herself and her family.

In sum, the emotional and psychological support provided to migrant women is crucial for helping them navigate their challenges. This support not only aids their personal reconstruction but also fosters resilience and self-determination, empowering them to move forward and build better lives for themselves and their families.

## Revictimization

According to professionals, addressing the issue of re-victimization is very complex for reasons ranging from multiple layers of victimization and cultural barriers, which often complicate their recovery and integration. Their journey, from fleeing war to rebuilding their lives in a new country, is marked by significant trauma. The displacement process itself is harrowing, with overcrowded and unsafe conditions on escape routes, the separation from family and pets, and the uncertainty of their final destination. Upon arriving in Portugal, many are placed in inadequate housing, where the risk of abrupt eviction—due to the onset of the tourist season or school year—reinforces their sense of insecurity and instability.

In the workplace, some migrant women are subjected to discrimination, harassment, and even violence by colleagues and superiors. This includes disrespectful treatment, restrictions on using their native language, and undue pressure. These abuses are exacerbated by the language barrier and the fear of losing their jobs, placing them in a highly vulnerable position. Additionally, within the community itself, newly arrived refugees may face exploitation or mistreatment by fellow migrants who have already settled in the country. These experiences of re-victimization complicate the women's recovery and integration, deepening the trauma and stress they endure.

Re-victimization is a central issue for migrant women and manifests in various forms:



## **Racism**

Although many migrant women may not explicitly recount instances of racism or rejection, these experiences likely occur more frequently than reported. One interviewee suggested that the low number of reported cases could stem from a lack of resources or confidence in reporting such incidents. This points to the need for programs that empower migrant women to recognize and report racial discrimination.

## **Caricaturization, Unemployment, and Aid**

Stereotypes surrounding migrants—such as the belief that they receive excessive aid or are unwilling to work—contribute to their stigmatization and further victimization. These misconceptions foster hostility and impede the integration of migrant women. One professional noted how these unfair perceptions generate frustration, harming both migrants and social cohesion as a whole.

## **Hate Speech and Stereotyped Language**

The use of stereotyped language and hate speech can escalate into hate crimes, perpetuating violence against migrant women. An interviewee highlighted how such harmful discourse can lead to violent acts and amplify the cycle of victimization. Words have power, and negative rhetoric only serves to further marginalize these women.

## **Personal Reconstruction**

For many migrant women, rebuilding their lives has become a recurring process due to both internal displacement and international migration. While their resilience is admirable, this continual reinvention takes a toll on their emotional and mental well-being. One professional spoke of the enormous emotional and practical investment required each time a woman has to start over, further compounding the stress they face.

## **Bureaucratization of Legal Processes**

The legal challenges that migrant women navigate can be deeply traumatic, often serving as painful reminders of their past experiences. The bureaucratization of legal demands, combined with a lack of sensitivity, can lead to further re-victimization. A professional emphasized the importance of working with legal teams to make these processes as seamless and compassionate as possible.



## **Paternalism and Welfareism**

Negative paternalism and welfareism can undermine the autonomy of migrant women, reinforcing their dependence and victimization. An interviewee criticized the tendency to view migrant women as incapable of managing their own affairs, highlighting the need for a more empowering, respectful, and collaborative approach that recognizes women's agency.

## **Coordination and Coordinated Referral**

Coordinating services across various institutions is vital to prevent re-victimization. Through coordinated referrals, migrant women can receive comprehensive and continuous support throughout their integration journey, ensuring that they receive the necessary resources at each stage. One professional emphasized the importance of collaborative work to avoid service duplication and ensure a seamless process of support.

## **Violation and Stereotyping**

A significant percentage of migrant women have experienced rape and abuse, which heightens their vulnerability. Furthermore, the stereotyping and blaming of women in prostitution perpetuates further re-victimization. One interviewee highlighted an instance where a stigmatizing sign targeted a mother, underscoring the importance of awareness and education to avoid perpetuating harmful stereotypes that contribute to further harm.

## **Learned Helplessness**

Learned helplessness, a psychological effect of repeated victimization, occurs when women feel powerless and dependent on others to survive. This feeling of helplessness perpetuates their vulnerability, making it difficult for them to assert control over their lives. One professional discussed how the continuous exposure to traumatic experiences and the lack of adequate support intensify this sense of powerlessness, leaving women feeling trapped.

In summary, migrant women face numerous forms of re-victimization that impede their emotional recovery and integration. From racism and stereotyping to the bureaucratic hurdles and discriminatory workplace practices, these women must navigate a complex web of challenges. Efforts to reduce re-victimization must focus on empowering migrant women through legal, emotional, and social support systems that promote autonomy, dignity, and respect.

## Health

Migrant women face a range of opportunities and challenges that impact their daily lives, particularly in relation to healthcare access and their broader needs. While they generally have access to essential health services, including medical, psychological, and psychiatric support, several barriers limit the effectiveness and adequacy of the care they receive.

### Healthcare Access

Migrant women do have access to healthcare services crucial for their integration and well-being. This includes not only basic medical care but also vital psychological and psychiatric support. However, gaps persist in the management of chronic conditions such as heart disease, respiratory illnesses, and cancer, which require continuous monitoring and treatment. Additionally, the demand for mental health support is high, particularly due to the trauma resulting from war, forced displacement, and challenges in adjusting to a new environment. The shortage of mental health professionals who speak languages like Ukrainian is a significant barrier to providing the necessary psychological care, especially for those from conflict zones, such as the Middle East, who may suffer from complex mental health issues.

### Maternal and Child Health

A critical concern for migrant women is maternal and child health, especially for pregnant women and children with disabilities or special needs. Ensuring access to prenatal consultations, vaccinations, pediatric follow-ups, and early intervention is essential for the well-being of these vulnerable groups. Despite the efforts of certain institutions and professionals, language, cultural differences, and bureaucratic hurdles often impede full access to Portugal's healthcare system. Addressing these challenges requires investments in multilingual resources, intercultural training for healthcare professionals, and stronger collaboration between health and social support sectors to ensure that the needs of migrant women and their families are met effectively.

### Filial Prioritization

A notable observation is that migrant women often prioritize their children's health over their own. This is evident in the higher demand for psychological care for

children, while mothers seldom seek help unless their problems become particularly acute. This tendency may stem from cultural barriers or the belief that their own mental health needs are secondary.

### **Mental Health Access**

Access to mental health services remains limited, with long waiting lists and a lack of awareness about the importance of psychological care. Many women do not seek mental health services because they either do not understand their benefits or do not prioritize them. Professionals have highlighted that, despite efforts to facilitate mental health referrals, the demand for services far exceeds the available supply, resulting in significant delays.

### **Promotion of Leisure and Physical Activity**

Promoting leisure and physical activity is vital for the overall well-being of migrant women. However, cultural resistance to these activities is common, with many women perceiving leisure as a waste of time. Despite efforts to organize recreational activities, participation remains low, suggesting that more targeted strategies are needed to engage migrant women and encourage their involvement.

### **Affective-Sexual Education**

Affective and sexual education programs are offered to migrant women on an as-needed basis, but their uptake is limited. This is especially true for women who have experienced trauma, such as gender-based violence, who may have less interest or awareness of these services. There is a clear need for more comprehensive and culturally sensitive affective-sexual education programs that reach those who need them most.

### **Destigmatization and Nutritional Education**

Stigmatization of mental health issues and a lack of proper nutritional education are significant barriers to migrant women's health. Their diets may not align with local norms, often due to stress or disorganization, and may reflect emotional instability. One professional mentioned that migrant women's dietary imbalances are often

linked to their emotional states, which further complicates their ability to maintain healthy habits.

### **Resistance and Lack of Knowledge in Healthcare Access**

Migrant women often face administrative resistance and a lack of awareness regarding their healthcare rights. Navigating complex administrative procedures can lead to delays or initial denials of care, necessitating professional assistance to resolve these issues. Family reunification also presents challenges, as newly arrived family members may face difficulties accessing healthcare until they meet certain registration requirements.

### **Challenges in Mental Healthcare and the Need for Psychological Support**

The mental healthcare system is overwhelmed by high demand and insufficient resources, leading to significant delays in appointments. Despite these challenges, the availability of free services remains an advantage. The promotion of psychological support is crucial, especially as cases of trauma, including gender-based violence, increase. Effective coordination between healthcare, social services, and law enforcement is needed to ensure that women who are victims of violence receive the comprehensive support they require.

In conclusion, while migrant women in Portugal have access to essential health services, numerous barriers—including cultural, bureaucratic, and language challenges—limit their ability to fully benefit from the healthcare system. Addressing these issues requires coordinated efforts to improve accessibility, cultural sensitivity, and mental health support to ensure that migrant women's health and well-being are adequately supported.

### **Professional development**

Migrant women encounter a mix of opportunities and challenges as they strive to develop their careers. On one hand, many come with high levels of education and professional qualifications gained in their home countries, which could be valuable assets to the Portuguese labor market. Some institutions have been supportive, offering opportunities such as diploma translation, access to master's or bachelor's degree programs, and participation in internship schemes. These opportunities for validating skills and acquiring local credentials are crucial for advancing their careers.

However, the challenges they face are considerable. The language barrier is a major obstacle, hindering communication in the workplace and limiting job prospects. Moreover, the process of recognizing foreign qualifications is often slow and bureaucratic, requiring both resources and persistence. Even when migrant women do secure employment, they may encounter discrimination, exploitation, or a lack of recognition for their skills by employers and colleagues. Additionally, the responsibility of balancing work with family obligations—especially for single mothers or women caring for young children—can further limit their availability to work and progress professionally. Despite these hurdles, many migrant women demonstrate resilience and determination, actively seeking training, internships, and job opportunities that align with their skills and experiences.

Based on narratives and insights from professionals, several key challenges and strategies for improving migrant women’s integration and career progression have been identified. These include:

### **Flexibility and Training in the Workplace**

Migrant women often take part in training programs with flexible schedules that allow them to balance their professional development with family responsibilities. Many of these training opportunities take place within the workplace itself, making them more accessible. However, it is essential that such training aligns with the needs of the local labor market in order to be effective and relevant.

### **Priorities and Challenges**

Migrant women juggle multiple priorities that can impede their professional growth, such as securing housing, regularizing their legal status, and finding immediate employment to meet basic needs. These pressing concerns can often take precedence over professional development, although finding steady work is crucial for their integration.

### **Gender Stereotypes in the Workplace**

Due to gender stereotypes and the lack of recognition for their qualifications, migrant women are often relegated to feminized and precarious roles, such as domestic work and eldercare. Despite their desire to work, many prioritize the job

opportunities available to their male partners, which reinforces traditional gender roles.

### **Individualized Integration Programs**

Personalized labor integration programs offer a tailored approach, assessing each woman's background, skills, and training to create a specific path for employment. These programs are thorough and include follow-up plans and tailored training, but they require significant resources and ongoing support to be successful.

### **Participation in Work Teams**

Migrant women's involvement in work teams and leadership roles within organizations tends to be limited, often restricted to low-skilled positions, such as cleaning or basic services. This highlights the need for greater inclusion and representation in more diverse and influential roles within the workforce.

### **Work-Family Balance and Responsibilities**

Balancing work and family responsibilities is a significant challenge, particularly for single mothers. The lack of time to pursue additional training outside of work further exacerbates this issue, often resulting in migrant women being stuck in a cycle of precarious and low-paid jobs.

### **Precariousness and Deskilling**

Migrant women often accept precarious employment as a short-term solution due to financial necessity. This can lead to deskilling, as they are unable to fully apply their existing qualifications and experience. The lengthy and expensive process of homologating qualifications and obtaining necessary certifications further limits their opportunities.

### **Regularization and Documentation**

Irregular immigration status is a persistent challenge for many migrant women. Issues with renewing residence permits or asylum applications create instability in

their employment and affect their access to basic rights. Additionally, informal housing arrangements further complicate their legal and work status.

### **Training and Cultural Needs**

Training programs that focus on gender equality and women's rights are crucial for empowering migrant women. Including feminist perspectives in such training can help overcome cultural barriers and promote equality in the workplace, fostering a more inclusive environment for all employees.

In summary, while migrant women in Portugal bring valuable skills and qualifications to the workforce, they face numerous challenges in achieving career growth and stability. Addressing these barriers—such as language difficulties, bureaucratic processes, gender stereotypes, and work-family balance—requires coordinated support and tailored strategies to ensure their successful integration and professional advancement.

### **Social Inclusion**

Migrant women face both opportunities and challenges in their social development and integration into society. Various initiatives and resources exist to promote their inclusion, with key support coming from associations and local authorities. These organizations organize cultural events, language classes, and orientation activities designed to help women familiarize themselves with their new environment and build social networks. Such opportunities for interaction and learning are essential in fostering a sense of belonging and helping to overcome feelings of isolation.

Furthermore, some women find employment relatively quickly after their arrival, and the successful recognition of academic or professional qualifications in fields like engineering and medicine, though often a lengthy process, is a valuable opportunity for them to develop their potential and integrate into society.

However, significant barriers remain. Language and cultural differences present considerable challenges to these women's social development. Many struggle to communicate effectively in the local language, which limits their ability to build relationships within the community and access necessary services and information. Furthermore, the clash between different social norms and expectations can lead to misunderstandings and discrimination. Some women also experience a sense of internal conflict, caught between the desire to integrate into Portuguese society and the need to preserve their cultural identity, particularly in the case of those from

Ukraine. These complexities can contribute to feelings of marginalization and make it more difficult for migrant women to participate fully in social life. Therefore, ongoing, culturally sensitive support is essential to help these women navigate these challenges and strike a healthy balance in their social development.

The following aspects highlight the primary needs of migrant women in terms of social development:

### **Literacy and Learning**

Literacy remains a significant challenge for many migrant women, especially those from countries with different alphabets and writing systems. Adapting to new languages is a fundamental requirement for their integration and participation in society, yet it can be complex and time-consuming.

### **Socialization through Training**

Training programs offer more than just educational opportunities; they provide valuable spaces for socializing and networking. Classes, such as those in Portuguese, as well as other community activities, help migrant women build connections and feel included in local society.

### **Adherence and Continuity**

Continual participation in training programs and community activities is crucial to the social development of migrant women. Regular attendance in language classes and services provided by local organizations plays a key role in their integration and well-being.

### **Restitution and Gratitude**

Migrant women often express gratitude for the support they receive and a willingness to contribute back to their communities. Many actively engage in volunteering or assist other newcomers, demonstrating a desire to give back to the society that has welcomed them.

### **Gender Roles and Stereotypes**



Gender roles and family expectations can significantly influence the lives of migrant women. The responsibility of caring for children and balancing family obligations with work can be overwhelming, limiting their ability to participate in both social and professional activities.

### **Loss of Social Status and Grief**

For many migrant women, adapting to a new environment and losing their social status can be deeply challenging, particularly if they were highly educated or held professional positions in their home countries. The process of settling into a new society and finding work that reflects their qualifications can be difficult to accept and may cause emotional distress.

### **Empowerment through Employment**

Employment is not only an economic necessity but also a source of empowerment and belonging for migrant women. Having the opportunity to work and build professional networks enhances their social development and emotional well-being.

### **Support and Integration**

Community support is crucial for migrant women's social development. Creating welcoming and safe spaces, along with promoting active participation in community life, plays an important role in helping them feel included and supported.

### **Ongoing Challenges**

Despite various efforts to aid the integration of migrant women, obstacles such as gender stereotypes and a lack of support persist in the host society. These barriers can limit their opportunities and hinder their full participation in the community.

### **Legislative Clarity and Rights Access**

One of the significant barriers to migrant women's integration is the lack of understanding about their rights and duties in Portugal. Many arrive with expectations based on experiences in other European countries, which can lead to confusion and frustration when faced with the unique aspects of the Portuguese

system. The language barrier further complicates their ability to access accurate information and assert their rights.

Nevertheless, there are structures in place to protect and promote the rights of these women. Some institutions and dedicated professionals, including lawyers, offer crucial legal guidance on issues such as regularization, family reunification, social benefits, and protection from labor exploitation. These initiatives aim to empower migrant women to understand and exercise their rights, contributing to their autonomy and inclusion in Portuguese society. However, a continuous and coordinated effort between government bodies and civil society organizations is essential to address existing gaps and ensure that these women's human rights and dignity are fully respected.

Key aspects of the legislative and rights framework include:

- **Responsibility in Hiring**  
Clear policies regarding the protection of migrant workers' rights, especially concerning labor contracts, are essential. Providing migrant women with clear information about their labor rights and ensuring their enforcement in contracts can help protect them from exploitation.
- **Labor De-skilling**  
Despite possessing high levels of education and professional experience, many migrant women find themselves in jobs that do not match their qualifications. This not only affects their job satisfaction but also their professional development.
- **Degree Recognition**  
Simplifying the recognition of foreign degrees would enable migrant women to access jobs that align with their previous education and experience. However, the process of degree recognition can be complex and difficult to navigate.
- **Autonomy Phase**  
The transition to autonomy is a significant milestone for migrant women, marking their ability to live independently within their host society. However, bureaucratic and administrative obstacles can delay or obstruct this process.
- **Bureaucracy and Administrative Resistance**  
Excessive bureaucracy and resistance within administrative systems make it difficult for migrant women to access basic services and rights. Inconsistent criteria and lack of coordination between institutions further complicate this process.

- **Digital Divide and Ignorance of Rights**

The digital divide and limited awareness of equality rights present significant barriers for migrant women. The lack of access to technology and information hampers their ability to claim their rights and access services.

- **Pioneering Initiatives and Recognition**

Initiatives such as the Gender Violence Law have been instrumental in advancing protections for migrant women. However, it is crucial that these laws and policies are effectively implemented and recognized as fundamental tools for safeguarding the rights and dignity of women in vulnerable situations.

In conclusion, while there are many positive initiatives to support the social integration of migrant women, significant challenges remain. Overcoming language barriers, gender stereotypes, bureaucratic hurdles, and issues related to recognition of qualifications and rights is essential to ensure that these women can fully integrate, contribute to society, and achieve autonomy and well-being.

### Intercultural dialogue

The interviews underscored the importance of harmonizing identity and values for the peaceful coexistence of different cultures. A key focus was the need to strike a balance between integrating into Portuguese society and preserving the cultural identities of immigrants. It was emphasized that the goal should be integration, not complete assimilation, allowing migrant women to maintain ties to their roots and traditions while adapting to their new environment. This approach is exemplified by the work of immigrant associations, which often provide language and culture classes for children in the immigrants' native language, fostering a sense of pride and connection to their heritage.

It was acknowledged that harmonizing identity and values for cross-cultural coexistence is a complex process that requires openness, mutual respect, and adaptation from both migrants and the host society. Successful integration involves overcoming language and cultural barriers and adapting to local norms without losing one's own identity. This coexistence can be enriching, promoting cultural diversity and the exchange of experiences. However, it also requires coordinated efforts to address discrimination and prejudice.

At the same time, the interviewees recognized the importance of adopting certain values and norms of the host society to ensure harmonious coexistence. This includes learning the local language, understanding and respecting local laws and customs, and actively participating in community life. It was suggested that through

intercultural dialogue, education, and mutual support, it is possible to create an environment where different cultures can coexist and enrich one another. This process requires continuous effort from all parties involved, including migrant women, institutions, and society as a whole, to foster understanding, respect, and appreciation of diversity.

In this context, the interviewees addressed the harmonization of identities and values as essential to promoting coexistence among different cultures. Several key aspects were highlighted:

### **Collaborative Dimension**

Promoting collaboration between diverse groups and communities is crucial to avoid divisions and foster integration and mutual understanding.

### **Inmigracionalismo and Social Awareness**

Raising awareness of discrimination in the media, through programs like "Inmigracionalismo," is an effective way to challenge stereotypes and prejudices about migration.

### **Opportunities for Cultural Exchange**

Cultural exchange events, such as the "Café del Mundo," create opportunities for communities to come together, share their traditions and experiences, and build intercultural social networks.

### **Intercultural Education**

Intercultural education, led by teachers and reflected in school curricula, is fundamental for promoting respect and understanding among students from diverse cultural backgrounds.

## **Demystification and Flexibility**

It is important to demystify misconceptions and adopt a flexible, open-minded approach when interacting with people from different cultures, recognizing and respecting their values and individual experiences.

## **Gender Sensitization**

Promoting gender sensitization, particularly addressing gender-based violence, is crucial for fostering healthy relationships and combating discrimination and inequality.

## **Mythification of Romantic Love and Adjustment of Expectations**

Addressing the mythification of romantic love is important, especially for migrant women, in order to help them adjust their expectations and promote autonomy and gender equality.

## **Program Evaluation and Institutional Co-responsibility**

Ongoing evaluation of programs and shared responsibility among institutions is vital to ensure that the objectives of promoting intercultural coexistence and combating discrimination are achieved.

## **Inclusive Language and Continuous Training**

Promoting inclusive language and providing continuous training on cultural diversity and gender issues are essential tools for fostering an environment of respect and mutual understanding.

These insights underline the importance of a collaborative, inclusive approach to integration, where both migrant women and the host society actively contribute to creating a more just, respectful, and harmonious environment for all.

## Research conclusion

Professionals supporting migrant women approach the phenomenon from multiple perspectives, recognizing the diverse needs, challenges, and opportunities this group faces. Their work seeks to navigate these complexities, promoting social inclusion and overall well-being. Below is an overview of how they perceive the situation, the social impact of their work, and the recognition they receive.

### Perception of the phenomenon and social projection of their work

Professionals supporting migrant women view the phenomenon through a nuanced perspective, recognizing the complex and diverse challenges this group faces. They understand that migrant women often encounter a range of difficulties upon arrival, from practical issues such as navigating bureaucratic obstacles and accessing basic resources, to deeper concerns related to social integration and emotional well-being.

Their work seeks to address these complexities in a holistic way, recognizing that effective support goes beyond providing material assistance. These professionals aim to promote social inclusion and overall well-being by addressing immediate survival needs while also empowering migrant women socially, economically, and emotionally. They acknowledge that successful integration requires a comprehensive approach, considering aspects such as health, education, employment, and social connections.

Professionals work to create environments that are welcoming and supportive, focusing on building trust, fostering meaningful relationships, and promoting a sense of belonging among migrant women in their new communities. By addressing the multifaceted needs of migrant women and advocating for their rights, they contribute to the broader goal of creating a more inclusive and equitable society.

While their efforts may not always receive the recognition they deserve, professionals remain dedicated to their work and the positive impact it has on migrant women's lives. They derive satisfaction from knowing that their contributions help empower these women, enriching the social fabric of the host society.

Three key aspects of their work include:

1. **Raising Awareness of the Migration Process:** It's essential to raise societal awareness about the realities and challenges of migration, particularly for migrant women who face unique and often overlooked struggles.
2. **Demystifying Stereotypes:** Professionals stress the importance of challenging stereotypes and prejudices surrounding migration and gender, working to foster a more accurate and respectful portrayal of migrant women.
3. **Social Value of Their Work:** The work with migrant women should be recognized as a valuable contribution to community well-being and cultural diversity. Professionals emphasize the importance of highlighting their efforts in the integration and empowerment of these women within society.

To further these goals, it is recommended to:

1. **Launch Awareness Campaigns:** Organize campaigns aimed at the general public to increase understanding of the challenges faced by migrant women, promoting respect and solidarity.
2. **Encourage Intersectoral Collaboration:** Form partnerships with media outlets, educational institutions, and community organizations to spread accurate and positive information about migration and the contributions of migrant women.
3. **Participate in Community Events:** Actively engage in community gatherings, cultural fairs, and intercultural activities to encourage dialogue and showcase the positive impact of supporting migrant women.
4. **Facilitate Dialogue:** Host roundtables, talks, and debates on topics like migration and gender equality, involving experts and community leaders to foster constructive discussions and deepen understanding.
5. **Share Success Stories:** Highlight the achievements and contributions of migrant women within the community to challenge negative stereotypes and demonstrate their resilience and value.
6. **Organize Information Sessions:** Offer information sessions on rights, duties, and the functioning of the Portuguese system, in partnership with relevant public and private organizations, to empower migrant women with knowledge about their legal and social standing.

7. **Provide Comprehensive Training:** Deliver training not only to migrant women but also to organizations, their staff, and the broader public, to foster a societal shift in attitudes and combat discrimination.

### Perceived needs and social projection

Professionals supporting migrant women demonstrate a deep understanding of the diverse and multifaceted needs faced by this demographic. They recognize that these needs go beyond practical concerns and encompass economic, social, and emotional dimensions.

**Practical Support:** Professionals are acutely aware of the immediate challenges faced by migrant women, such as navigating bureaucratic hurdles, securing essential resources like food, clothing, and shelter, and dealing with complex legal processes related to international protection applications. Addressing these fundamental needs is critical for ensuring the safety and survival of migrant women in their new environment.

**Economic Empowerment:** Economic vulnerabilities are also a significant concern. Many migrant women express a strong desire for economic independence through employment and secure housing. Professionals understand that supporting migrant women in achieving financial autonomy is key to their integration into society. They work to provide vocational training, job placement opportunities, and support for entrepreneurship, recognizing that economic empowerment facilitates long-term integration and social stability.

**Social and Emotional Support:** Beyond practical and economic considerations, professionals are committed to addressing the social and emotional needs of migrant women. They understand the importance of helping migrant women build a sense of belonging and social inclusion within Italian society. This includes overcoming cultural differences and establishing meaningful social connections. Professionals strive to create welcoming environments where migrant women feel valued, respected, and supported, thus fostering a smoother integration into local communities.

Through a holistic approach, professionals aim to support migrant women in all aspects of their lives—practical, economic, social, and emotional. They recognize that these dimensions are interconnected and essential for the well-being and successful integration of migrant women. By addressing these needs, professionals contribute to building a more inclusive society where migrant women can thrive and reach their full potential.



Key aspects of focus include:

1. **Active Listening and Empathy:** It's essential to continuously listen to and understand the needs of migrant women, incorporating their individual experiences and cultural contexts into support services.
2. **Comprehensive Approach:** The needs of migrant women are vast, encompassing everything from basic survival needs to emotional, legal, and social integration. Any intervention must be multidisciplinary and holistic, covering all these areas.
3. **Recognition of Diversity:** Perceived needs differ among migrant women based on factors such as age, ethnicity, educational background, marital status, and migration experience. It's crucial to acknowledge and respect this diversity when developing programs and services.
4. **Knowledge of Rights:** One of the main challenges is a lack of knowledge regarding the rights and responsibilities of refugees within the host country. Addressing this knowledge gap is vital to empower migrant women.
5. **Psychological Support:** Providing psychological counseling is crucial for helping migrant women cope with the trauma of leaving their home countries and adjusting to new, often difficult environments.
6. **Language Barriers:** Language challenges often hinder access to services, making it more difficult for migrant women to interact with institutions and increasing their vulnerability to discrimination and exploitation.

To address these needs, the following actions are recommended:

1. **Needs Assessment:** Regularly assess the perceived needs of migrant women through surveys, interviews, and focus groups to ensure services remain relevant and effective.
2. **Holistic Services:** Provide comprehensive services that address both the practical and emotional needs of migrant women, including legal aid, psychological support, vocational training, housing access, and healthcare.
3. **Rights-Based Approach:** Adopt a rights-based approach to empower migrant women, allowing them to actively participate in decision-making processes and recognizing their agency and autonomy.
4. **Promotion of Social Inclusion:** Foster the social inclusion of migrant women through community activities, cultural exchange programs, and opportunities for civic and political participation.
5. **Training and Awareness:** Offer training to professionals and raise awareness in society about the unique needs and rights of migrant women, creating a more supportive and informed response.

6. **Close Collaboration:** Strengthen collaboration between public and private institutions to ensure a coordinated and efficient response to the needs of migrant women.
7. **Emergency Shelter:** Ensure the provision of emergency shelter by organizations like the Red Cross and offer transitional housing through local councils, ensuring safe and dignified accommodation.
8. **Skill Development Activities:** Conduct activities with migrant women to identify and enhance their skills, build self-esteem, and encourage active participation in society.
9. **Deconstructing Concepts:** Work to deconstruct harmful notions of violence, discrimination, and rights/duties, empowering women to recognize and respond to abusive situations.
10. **Language Courses:** Provide free, tailored Portuguese language courses to help migrant women integrate socially and professionally, aiding their full participation in society.

### Challenges faced and recognition

Professionals supporting migrant women are deeply dedicated to their work, driven by a strong passion for advocating for the rights and well-being of this vulnerable demographic. However, they face numerous challenges in providing effective support and fostering social inclusion.

**Bureaucratic Challenges:** One significant obstacle is the bureaucratic complexity that often delays or complicates the provision of timely assistance. Navigating intricate legal processes, securing essential documents, and accessing available resources can be a slow, burdensome process, hindering professionals' ability to address the immediate needs of migrant women effectively.

**Cultural and Communication Barriers:** Professionals also contend with cultural differences that affect communication, understanding, and trust-building with migrant women. Adapting to the diverse cultural backgrounds of migrant women requires sensitivity and an ability to offer culturally appropriate support that is responsive to their unique needs and experiences.

**Systemic Biases and Institutional Barriers:** In addition to these challenges, systemic biases within institutional structures can impede the work of professionals. Discriminatory practices, inadequate resources, and institutionalized inequalities within social systems often undermine their efforts to support migrant women, making it more difficult to promote social inclusion and protect their rights.

Despite these significant hurdles, professionals remain steadfast in their commitment to advocating for the rights of migrant women and enhancing their social inclusion. They understand the vital role they play in creating a more equitable and inclusive society, and they are determined to overcome these obstacles in order to fulfill their mission.

**Need for Recognition:** The recognition of their efforts is crucial for sustaining motivation and ensuring the effectiveness of their work. However, many professionals feel that their contributions are undervalued, both within institutional settings and in the broader society. This lack of recognition can diminish morale and hinder the effectiveness of their work, making it essential to publicly acknowledge the value of their contributions.

To address these challenges and support the continued impact of these professionals, there is a pressing need for greater recognition and institutional support. Acknowledging their efforts, along with providing the necessary resources, can help empower professionals to continue their vital work effectively. Raising awareness of their role and fostering a culture of appreciation can help create a more supportive environment for their contributions to social inclusion and the protection of migrant women's rights.

### Key Areas for Focus:

1. **Multidimensional Challenges:** The obstacles faced by professionals in supporting migrant women are diverse and complex, including legal, cultural, linguistic, emotional, and social barriers. These challenges can impede integration and access to critical services.
2. **Need for Professional Recognition:** Despite the essential nature of their work, professionals who support migrant women often lack recognition in terms of compensation, social status, and institutional support, which can undermine their morale and effectiveness.
3. **Importance of Interdisciplinary Support:** Effectively assisting migrant women requires a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach that involves professionals from a range of fields, such as social work, law, healthcare, psychology, and education, to address the full scope of their needs.

## Recommendations:

1. **Recognition of Work:** Publicly acknowledge and celebrate the contributions of professionals supporting migrant women, highlighting their vital role in improving the well-being and social integration of this vulnerable group.
2. **Specialized Training:** Provide ongoing, specialized training for professionals supporting migrant women, covering key areas such as legal frameworks, cultural sensitivity, psychological support, and gender-related issues to enhance the quality of services provided.
3. **Institutional Support:** Ensure adequate institutional backing, including sufficient funding, resources, and professional oversight, for programs and services that support migrant women. This will ensure that professionals have the tools they need to be effective.
4. **Recognition of Diversity:** Acknowledge the diverse experiences and needs among migrant women, adopting a gender-sensitive, intersectional approach that considers factors such as ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, and other cultural aspects in service provision.
5. **Collaboration Networks:** Encourage collaboration and the sharing of best practices among organizations, government agencies, academic institutions, and civil society groups working to support migrant women. Strengthening these networks will enhance the collective response to the challenges faced by migrant women and improve overall service delivery.

## Strategies for social projection

Professionals supporting migrant women understand that strengthening the social impact of their work requires collaboration, networking, and ongoing learning. By actively engaging with other organizations and professionals, they aim to enhance their influence and address systemic barriers more effectively.

**Collaboration** is key for professionals to maximize their resources, expertise, and networks in offering comprehensive support to migrant women. By partnering with government agencies, NGOs, community groups, and other stakeholders, they can gain access to additional resources, exchange best practices, and coordinate efforts to better address the diverse needs of migrant women in a holistic way.

**Networking** plays a crucial role in broadening the reach and influence of professionals within the community. Building relationships with key stakeholders—such as policymakers, community leaders, and service providers—allows them to

advocate for policy reforms, raise awareness about the challenges faced by migrant women, and mobilize support for their initiatives.

**Continuous learning** is essential for professionals to stay current with emerging trends, best practices, and the evolving needs of the migrant community. By participating in training programs, workshops, conferences, and peer exchanges, they can enhance their skills, deepen their cultural understanding, and adapt their approaches to better serve migrant women.

Creating **safe and supportive environments** for migrant women is a top priority. Professionals understand the importance of establishing trust, offering emotional support, and ensuring cultural sensitivity to facilitate the social integration and well-being of migrant women.

They prioritize **trust-building** by demonstrating empathy, respect, and genuine concern for migrant women's well-being. They create safe spaces where women feel comfortable expressing concerns, sharing experiences, and seeking help without fear of judgment or discrimination.

**Emotional support** is essential for addressing trauma and psychological distress. Many migrant women face significant emotional challenges, and professionals offer compassionate listening, counseling, and referrals to help them heal, rebuild self-esteem, and regain control over their lives.

**Cultural sensitivity** is crucial in recognizing and respecting the unique cultural backgrounds, beliefs, and values of migrant women. By incorporating cultural considerations into their interventions, professionals ensure that services are accessible, relevant, and respectful of the diversity within the migrant community.

Ultimately, professionals understand that collaboration, networking, continuous learning, and creating safe environments are essential strategies for increasing the social impact of their work and fostering the well-being and integration of migrant women. Through these collective efforts, they strive to build a more inclusive and equitable society where all individuals can thrive, regardless of their background.

### Key Areas to Focus On:

1. **Need for Awareness:** Widespread understanding of the realities and needs of migrant women is often lacking, which leads to perpetuating stereotypes and discrimination.

2. **Importance of Visibility:** Highlighting the experiences, contributions, and challenges faced by migrant women is crucial to fostering empathy, solidarity, and collective action.
3. **Role of Education and Communication:** Intercultural education and inclusive communication are powerful tools to combat prejudice and stereotypes, promoting greater respect for cultural diversity and migration experiences.

### Recommended Actions:

1. **Awareness Campaigns:** Develop public campaigns that address migration, gender, and intercultural issues, showcasing the positive contributions of migrant women and promoting equality of rights and opportunities.
2. **Gender Mainstreaming:** Ensure that all awareness and communication efforts incorporate a gender perspective, focusing on the specific challenges faced by migrant women and promoting gender equality in all societal areas.
3. **Community Participation:** Engage host communities and migrant women in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of programs and policies related to migration and integration, fostering a participatory, needs-based approach.
4. **Strategic Partnerships:** Form partnerships with media, educational institutions, civil society organizations, and the private sector to amplify the message of inclusion, diversity, and respect for migrant women's rights.
5. **Promotion of Intercultural Dialogue:** Create spaces for dialogue where migrant women and host communities can exchange experiences and perspectives, enhancing mutual understanding and strengthening social cohesion.
6. **Understanding Cultural Differences:** Deepen understanding of the values, traditions, and gender roles from the women's cultures of origin, ensuring interventions are respectful and culturally sensitive, without imposing foreign norms.

### Perception of recognition

While many professionals working with migrant women feel valued and recognized for their contributions, others express frustration over the perceived lack of acknowledgment and support for their efforts. This divide in perception

underscores the varying experiences and challenges that professionals face in this field.

For those who feel valued, their sense of fulfillment often stems from tangible signs of appreciation within their organizations, such as promotions, awards, or positive feedback from colleagues and supervisors. These professionals are motivated and energized by witnessing the positive impact of their work on the lives of migrant women and their communities. Knowing that their contributions are making a difference strengthens their commitment to continue their work.

In contrast, some professionals experience demoralization due to the lack of acknowledgment and support. They may feel underappreciated, especially when organizations fail to provide adequate resources, recognition, or opportunities for growth. This lack of support can lead to feelings of burnout, frustration, and disillusionment, which can diminish their morale and effectiveness in their roles.

Key factors contributing to frustration include insufficient compensation, limited resources, and a lack of institutional recognition. Many professionals in this field are burdened with demanding workloads, often with low financial compensation and job insecurity. Additionally, limited access to training, professional development opportunities, or career advancement further exacerbates the challenges they face.

To address these concerns and enhance the effectiveness of professionals supporting migrant women, it is essential for organizations and policymakers to prioritize fair compensation, adequate resources, and institutional recognition. This includes providing competitive salaries, facilitating access to training and professional development, and creating opportunities for career advancement. A supportive work culture that values contributions and promotes work-life balance can also help alleviate burnout and frustration among professionals.

Ultimately, ensuring that professionals feel valued, supported, and recognized is crucial for sustaining their motivation and effectiveness. By addressing these challenges and fostering a culture of appreciation and support, organizations and policymakers can empower professionals to continue making meaningful contributions to the well-being and social integration of migrant women.

### Key Aspects to Focus On:

1. **Lack of Institutional Recognition:** Many professionals feel overlooked by institutions and society for their efforts in supporting migrant women, which can lead to frustration and a lack of motivation.



2. **Value of Peer Recognition:** While institutional recognition may be scarce, professionals often find validation and encouragement within their own networks, where peers recognize their efforts and contributions.
3. **Need for Advocacy and Awareness:** There is a need for advocacy campaigns to highlight the importance of professionals' work, and to push for greater recognition and support from both institutions and society.

### Recommendations:

1. **Advocacy Initiatives:** Professionals should actively engage in advocacy efforts that raise awareness about the importance of their work and call for greater recognition and support from policymakers, government agencies, and the public.
2. **Professional Development Opportunities:** Institutions and organizations should provide opportunities for continuous learning, training, and skill development to empower professionals and enhance their expertise in supporting migrant women.
3. **Celebration of Successes:** Organizations should implement strategies to celebrate the achievements of professionals working with migrant women, such as awards, recognition ceremonies, or internal appreciation programs.
4. **Building Support Networks:** Professionals should seek out and participate in support networks, professional associations, and communities of practice where they can receive peer recognition, exchange experiences, and collaborate with like-minded individuals.
5. **Advocating for Oneself:** Professionals should advocate for their own work and impact, ensuring that stakeholders, policymakers, and the broader community recognize the importance of their role in supporting migrant women.

### Synthesis of Good Practices to Support Migrant Women

1. **Language and Education Programs:** Implement language courses at various proficiency levels and encourage active parental involvement in their children's education to foster both individual and family integration.
2. **Professional Training on Emotional Balance:** Offer ongoing training for professionals to help them manage emotional engagement with clients, ensuring they provide effective support while maintaining their own well-being.



3. **Integrated Service Provision:** Develop comprehensive service models that address the health, legal, educational, and social needs of migrant women in a holistic manner, ensuring they receive all necessary support through a single point of contact.
4. **Autonomy-Focused Interventions:** Design programs that empower women by focusing on skill development and self-sufficiency, helping them gain the tools needed to become independent and self-reliant.
5. **Information Accessibility:** Create clear, accessible channels to provide migrant women with essential information about their rights, available services, and safety measures, ensuring they can navigate their new environment with confidence.
6. **Customized Support Strategies:** Develop personalized support plans that recognize and address the diverse backgrounds and unique needs of each migrant woman, improving the relevance and effectiveness of the assistance provided.
7. **Safe and Trustworthy Environments:** Establish and maintain spaces where migrant women feel safe, respected, and able to express their concerns without fear of judgment, discrimination, or retaliation.
8. **Multidisciplinary Team Collaboration:** Foster collaboration among professionals from various sectors—such as social work, healthcare, education, and legal services—to create a cohesive and coordinated support system.
9. **Empowerment Initiatives:** Encourage women to explore and seize opportunities for education, employment, and community involvement, promoting greater economic and social participation beyond traditional roles.
10. **Emotional and Psychological Care:** Ensure that emotional and psychological support services are readily available and tailored to the unique challenges and trauma that migrant women may face, helping them to effectively navigate their new circumstances.

### Key Actions:

1. **Initial Welcome and Life Project Development:** Provide an initial welcome process that includes delivering a welcome manual, explaining rules, signing an agreement, and collaboratively developing a life project with each migrant woman.

2. **Joint Life Project Construction:** Engage in regular, collaborative meetings between the multidisciplinary team and migrant women to discuss, review, and revise their life projects, ensuring these are responsive to their evolving circumstances.
3. **Promoting Responsibility and Autonomy:** Encourage migrant women to take responsibility for their life projects, holding them accountable for changes or absences, and empowering them to manage their personal development.
4. **Adaptation and Reformulation of Life Projects:** Adjust life projects when significant changes occur, such as pregnancy or loss of employment, to ensure continuous support and alignment with their current needs.
5. **Building Trust and Professional Boundaries:** Establish a trusting relationship with migrant women through regular monitoring, availability, and personal examples, while maintaining professional boundaries.
6. **Comprehensive Opportunity Database:** Collaborate with local authorities and institutions to create a detailed database that includes resources such as host families, temporary accommodation, and job opportunities for refugee women.
7. **Labor Market Integration:** Offer personalized support for the recognition and translation of diplomas and professional skills, facilitating migrant women's access to the labor market and supporting their professional integration.
8. **Transparent Multidisciplinary Collaboration:** Improve service delivery by ensuring clear and open communication between professionals from different institutions (e.g., Social Security, healthcare systems, and social services), ensuring a comprehensive response to women's needs.
9. **Empowerment Through Self-Reflection:** Foster women's ability to think critically about their preferences and goals, encouraging active participation in shaping their lives rather than passively accepting imposed decisions.
10. **Cultural Respect and Adaptation:** Recognize and respect the cultural values and traditions of migrant women, helping them gradually adapt to the host country while remaining connected to their roots.
11. **Empathy and Personal Connection:** Engage in informal conversations with migrant women on sensitive topics such as marriage or pregnancy, establishing a deeper connection and trust beyond the professional-client relationship.

By implementing these strategies, institutions and organizations can create a supportive and empowering environment for migrant women, enhancing their well-being, promoting their integration, and improving their overall quality of life.

# Collection of Best practices to combat the violence against migrant

## Spanish Best practices

### Spanish Best practices n.1 : Intersectoral collaboration project for the prevention and treatment of gender violence

This programme has been recognised with the Quality Award by the National Health System of the Ministry of Health of Spain (2010).

The objective of this project, which is being carried out in the city of Salamanca through the Primary Health Care Management, is to improve prevention and care in gender violence, through intersectoral coordination from health services as the central axis on which the coordination with the rest of the resources pivots in collaboration with the Local Police and the Secondary Education Institute. It was presented to the BBPP competition having implemented and analysed the health action against gender violence with coordination as its axis.

At the local level, the health sector was considered an important axis on which resources are coordinated and networks are created that offer an adequate response to the prevention and care of gender violence. The objective was to improve the prevention of gender violence and the care of women victims of this violence in the city of Salamanca through coordination, with health services being the central axis in the coordination with other resources.

Regarding the target population, three aspects were assessed:

- In terms of care: female victims of VG in the city of Salamanca and their sons and daughters.
- At the training level: social and health professionals from Primary Care in the city of Salamanca.
- At the preventive level: adolescent population from a basic health area of Salamanca (Garrido Sur)
- Participants: health and social professionals from Primary Care, Local Police, teaching staff from the Secondary Education Institute

Regarding the methodology:

- Creation of a permanent intersectoral working group on gender violence in the Primary Care Management (health, police, teaching and social areas), coordinated by a nursing professional. Review of the literature and experiences of interest in prevention in the educational field.
- Design by the group of an action plan on VG. and all the activities carried out were designed and carried out within a framework of collaboration between the institutions.
- Situation analysis: The assessment of the problem of VG in the city of Salamanca was carried out through a prevalence study through the electronic clinical records of Primary Care.
- Care for women victims of gender violence) and through the realization of a pilot study in a secondary school in the adolescent population that collects information on the beliefs and social roles present at this stage, in relation to the myths that give rise to, perpetuate and justify gender violence, and the prevalence of gender violence in the study population.
- Training of professionals: To improve care for women victims of violence, primary care health and social professionals have been trained and raised awareness (290 in 14 workshops), with the main objective of acquiring knowledge and skills for the comprehensive approach to women who suffer violence and knowing the resources available in the health area to achieve multidisciplinary and coordinated care.
- Development of coordination systems and implementation of intervention protocols:

Specific coordination between the health and police systems in emergency care has been developed.

Three documents were adopted as a basis for all interventions: The Common Protocol for Health Action in the Face of Gender Violence, the Clinical Practice Guide for Violence against Women in Couples of the Junta de Castilla y León of 2010 and the Confidentiality Guide.

A prevention program was designed in the school environment. The contribution to the prevention of gender violence was a priority issue for the working group. The proposed activities were raised as pilot experiences, so that, after the initial evaluation, they could be carried out continuously and thus overcome the punctual interventions, which barely achieve results in prevention. A pilot School Prevention program was carried out during the first quarter of the 2010-2011 school year at the IES Venancio Blanco in Salamanca. Specific training was carried out for the teachers of the center to raise their awareness of the problem. The programme was carried out in classrooms, during tutoring hours. The number of educational sessions

carried out by nursing professionals from 1st to 4th ESO was 36 (3 in each course). The Local Police carried out 3 sessions in the 2nd year of Baccalaureate courses. As for the materials used, on the one hand the Briefcase =a2 (Equalized) Formulas for Equality of the was used. Author Eva Ma de la Peña Palacios. Awareness videos were added to the material. The Police used the material "The Guide for Girls and Boys. What We Need to Know about Gender Violence" by the author Luisa Velasco Riego", so that they distributed copies among the teachers and a summary brochure among the students. The selection of this material, after carrying out an exhaustive search of all the materials published at a national level, was made because it is an agile, dynamic tool, which encourages student participation, because it is easy to apply in the classroom and because it adjusts to the preventive objectives selected by the group.

The other preventive strategy was the implementation of the adolescent consultation on VG in two basic quotas of the Garrido Sur and Capuchinos de Salamanca Centres. It was carried out by two nursing professionals within the periodic reviews of the 110 Youth Care Service. It included the implementation of psychosocial approach questions for screening and brief educational interventions for the promotion of equality and non-violence and information on the concept of Gender Violence.

The results of the project seem encouraging, and it can be said that it has improved the awareness and training of health professionals, it has improved the care of women who suffer gender violence thanks to the coordination of the health, social and police systems and it has contributed to the prevention of gender violence through the collaboration of all sectors in the educational field.

At the present time, intersectoral collaboration continues in the care of women, in an agile and practical way (health and police areas); in addition, the police have served as a link with the judicial field. From a preventive point of view, the school programme at the ES is carried out continuously, with the midwives also being involved in its implementation, and we have among our objectives the longer-term evaluation when the development trajectory is broader.

<b>Intersectoral collaboration project for the prevention and treatment of gender violence</b>	
<b>Area of intervention</b>	<i>Awareness and prevention. Care and support.</i>
<b>Short description of the best practice</b>	<i>It aims to improve prevention and care in gender violence, through intersectoral coordination from health services as a central axis on which coordination with the rest of the resources pivots in collaboration with the Local Police and the Secondary Education Institute.</i>
<b>Target audience</b>	<i>The intervention/care/support is directed at women victims of gender violence and awareness and prevention is directed at the adolescent population (women in general).</i>
<b>Actors who apply the methodology or use the tool</b>	<i>Primary Care Health Area (medicine/nursing/social worker Local Police and Institute Teaching Staff.</i>
<b>Type of violence opposed</b>	<i>Any manifestation of violence (physical, psychological, sexual and economic violence)</i>
<b>Introduction</b>	<i>An intersectoral working group was created in Primary Care (health, police, educational and social areas) to exchange information and experiences on the different interventions carried out in the different areas and to coordinate them. Each of the interventions carried out has been done from a collaborative framework. The problem has been assessed by studying the prevalence in the clinical histories of primary care and in the adolescent population; health professionals have been trained and made aware of it and the intersectoral coordination strategies that exist as an essential instrument to care for and protect victims of violence have been presented, specifically developing coordination between the health and police systems in urgent care. An educational program has been developed in the school environment and diagnostic and prevention interventions on gender violence have been carried out in consultation, with special attention to the adolescent population. Gender has been taken into account in the intervention as women are victims of gender-based violence. Launched in 2010 to the present. This program has been recognized with the Quality Award by the National Health System of the Ministry of Health of Spain (2010).</i>



## Spanish Best practices n.2 : Awareness and prevention campaign against gender violence

This project has been recognized in the provincial award category at the Meninas Castilla y León Awards in 2023 for the work carried out in the area of intervention and prevention of all types of violence against women and support for victims.

This award is given for the commitment made for years to fight against gender violence, a scourge suffered by many women, especially in rural areas where they must face greater difficulties, fighting for equality between women and men and against the most serious inequality: gender violence, contributing to the development of different materials so that the population has more information and to promote the request for help by women who suffer violence. Actions that start from the same objective: to involve citizens to raise their voices against gender violence, to raise the voices of those who are silent. This local entity has been developing multiple awareness-raising and training actions. Within the City Council's commitment to the fight against gender violence, when the situation requires it, there is the provision of accommodation in hotels/hostels in the area for victims of gender violence and, where appropriate, their children, with the full protection of the corresponding patrol of the Civil Guard in the area, in order to "avoid having to go to an Emergency Centre.

Regarding the preparation of materials, they are the following:

- Creation of an informative flyer to bring the concept of gender violence closer to the public, aimed mainly at understanding what this type of violence is and how it manifests itself and the obstacles that women living in rural areas encounter. The emergency telephone numbers 016, 112 and 062 are also included, as well as the telephone numbers of the Department of Social Services and the CEAS. In addition to the concepts mentioned above, a phrase has been included to attract the attention of both women who are victims of abuse and the general public: "Telling what is happening to you is the first step towards your recovery" as a way of raising awareness about the health consequences of women who suffer from this serious problem. This material has been distributed to all establishments in the area, both public and private, in order to reach the majority of the population.

- Creation of an audiovisual. Creation of a video in which a good part of the business and associative network has been involved, as well as different public and private entities. The audiovisual, in addition to raising awareness among the population, aims to reject this type of violence and show support for abused women, so that they know they are not alone. All participants were given a purple ribbon, a symbol



of solidarity towards abused women and the fight against gender violence. The audiovisual is specifically aimed at women victims of gender violence and the general population. The professionals who have participated: Subdelegate of Government. Mayor. Department of Social Affairs. Local Police. CEAS. Civil Guard. SACYL. Emergencies 112. Civil Protection. Association against cancer. Red Cross. IES Valverde de Lucerna. Property registry. Tourist Office. Municipal Sports House. Pharmacy. Parapharmacy. Mechanical workshops. Post Office. Hospitality companies. Commerce

<b>Awareness and prevention campaign against gender violence</b>	
<b>Area of intervention</b>	<i>Awareness and prevention.</i>
<b>Short description of the best practice</b>	<i>Awareness and prevention campaign against gender violence with the publication of flyer and an audiovisual to raise awareness of this serious problem in rural areas.</i>
<b>Target audience</b>	<p><i>Preparation of materials for free distribution.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Preparation of an informative flyer to bring the concept of gender violence closer to the public, aimed primarily at understanding what this type of violence is and how it manifests itself.</i></li> <li>- <i>Preparation of an audiovisual. Preparation of a video in which a good part of the business and associative fabric, as well as different public and private entities, have been involved. The audiovisual, in addition to raising awareness among the population, aims to reject this type of violence and show support for abused women, so that they know that they are not alone.</i></li> <li>- <i>All participants were given a purple ribbon, a symbol of solidarity towards abused women and the fight against gender violence.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Actors who apply the methodology or use the tool</b>	<i>Specifically aimed at women victims of gender violence and the general population. Professionals involved: Deputy Government Delegate. Mayor. Department of Social Affairs. Local Police. CEAS. Civil Guard. SACYL. Emergencies 112. Civil Protection. Association against cancer. Red Cross. IES Valverde de Lucerna. Property Registry. Tourist Office. Municipal Sports Centre. Pharmacy. Parapharmacy. Mechanical workshops. Post Office. Hospitality companies. Commerce.</i>
<b>Type of violence opposed</b>	<i>Any manifestation of violence (physical, psychological, sexual and economic violence).</i>
<b>Introduction</b>	<i>The obstacles that women living in rural areas usually encounter are highlighted. The emergency telephone numbers 016, 112 and 062 are included, as well as the telephone numbers of the Department of Social Services and the CEAS of the town. A phrase is included to draw the attention of both women victims of abuse and the general public: "Telling what is happening to you is the first step towards your recovery" because it is a way of raising awareness about the health consequences of women who suffer from this serious problem. The material has been distributed to all establishments in the area, both public and private, to reach the majority of the population. In addition, the video reflects the involvement of most of the business and associative fabric, so in addition to raising awareness among the population, it aims to reject this type of violence and show support for abused women. It was made in 2021. The audiovisual material was disseminated through the press and social networks and the City Council website.</i>

### Spanish Best practices n.3 : AGAINST ABUSE ZERO TOLERANCE

This project launched by the City Council of Puebla de Sanabria (Zamora) has been awarded by Antena3 news and the Mutua Madrileña Foundation in October 2024 as a good practice for its commitment to the fight against gender violence, in terms of raising awareness and preventing gender violence in the adolescent population.

It is part of the "Zero tolerance against abuse" campaign launched by the aforementioned entities with the aim of reinforcing social rejection of abuse and supporting victims, especially in the youth field, recognizing and rewarding the best actions promoted to raise awareness among the young population about zero tolerance towards gender violence. The City Council of Puebla de Sanabria (Zamora) has been selected from among 400 municipalities for its programs on gender violence and which highlights the initiatives promoted by the municipality in favor of equality and the prevention of this problem.

The award-winning activity was "Sanabria in Equality" which brought together more than 60 people of all ages in a sports day that promoted equality and respect between men and women. The event included the participation of prominent figures in football, such as Kenio Gonzalo, national Under-17 coach, Elena Fernández, goalkeeping coach for the Under-17 and Under-19 teams, and Javier Torres, former player for Real Madrid and Real Valladolid. Later, to complement this activity, a talk-colloquium on "Equality in sport" was held at the Puebla de Sanabria Castle, where the difficulties faced by girls in sports, especially in rural areas, were addressed. This meeting generated a space for reflection and awareness about the importance of promoting equality from an early age. In addition to these activities, there is a drawing competition on equality and gender violence aimed at primary school children and a photography competition for secondary school children. Both are part of an exhibition.

<b>Zero Tolerance Against Abuse</b>	
<b>Area of intervention</b>	<i>Awareness and prevention.</i>
<b>Short description of the best practice</b>	<i>This is a joint campaign carried out by Antena3 News and the Mutua Madrileña Foundation within the framework of corporate responsibility. This collaboration aims to reinforce social rejection of abuse and support victims, especially among youth.</i>
<b>Target audience</b>	<i>To the total population and especially to women in general.</i>
<b>Actors who apply the methodology or use the tool</b>	<i>Policy makers in local entities (Mayors of Town Councils throughout Spain).</i>
<b>Type of violence opposed</b>	<i>Any manifestation of violence (physical, psychological, sexual and economic violence)</i>
<b>Introduction</b>	<i>This initiative began in 2015 and is still active today. The aim of this collaboration is to reinforce social rejection of abuse and support victims, especially among youth. It includes renowned journalists who work to raise awareness in society about the importance of not tolerating abuse. Projects such as the webinar “Young people, mobile phones and gender violence” have been developed for students aged 13 to 16. The campaign includes the collaboration of Spanish town councils that want to join through the project “Municipalities against abuse”, which recognizes and rewards the best actions promoted to raise awareness among young people about zero tolerance towards gender violence. Antena 3 Noticias broadcasts a special program every year coinciding with the World Day against Gender Violence. Fundación Mutua Madrileña and Antena 3 Noticias also launch specific actions for the summer, such as the awareness campaign among young people about the importance of taking extreme precautions at summer parties. Every year, localities that carry out actions on gender violence are awarded. This year, 2024, 40 municipalities have been selected from the 400 participating localities. This good practice has been recognized by UN Women as one of the best international practices in terms of communication and dissemination in the fight against gender violence.</i>

#### Spanish Best practices n.4 : MUNICIPAL PROSTITUTION ABOLITIONIST PLAN

This is a Good Practice awarded by the Government of Spain, in the annual BBPP competition: “Contest of good local practices against gender violence 2023” which is launched annually and in which the Federation of Municipalities and Provinces collaborates, which is the entity in charge of selecting the best practices. This good practice was implemented by the Riba-Roja de Túria City Council (Valencia).

It was classified in category 4: Promotion of training for the different agents to guarantee a specialized and comprehensive response to female victims.

The general objective was to provide the key agents of the municipality with the necessary training to understand the reality of prostitution and have tools to detect and intervene with women and girls in prostitution, as well as to move towards a society in which respect for human rights and, consequently, the need to abolish prostitution prevail.

Furthermore, the entity set itself the specific objective of providing specific training on prostitution, sexual exploitation and trafficking to key agents and the general population.

They started from an initial assessment in which it was observed that there was a discrepancy in the data provided by the informants from social services areas, and a lack of answers to several of the questions posed. Therefore, it was intuited that there was a lack of training and specialization, recognized by the informants, as well as a lack of adequate records of the cases detected, or a lack of knowledge of these and, in addition, the participants recognized a lack of suitability of the resource to assist women to leave the prostitution system.

The perception of the participants regarding the suitability of the resources they had to help women to leave prostitution was assessed, this assessment being negative, except for the Police, which they considered to be the appropriate resource.

The response of migrant prostituted women was also assessed, with the majority of women indicating that the resource was adequate to meet specific needs but that there were many obstacles to specialized intervention: the language barrier, the cultural barrier, and lack of training.

Training was precisely another variable to be analyzed. The existence of previous training on prostitution and sexual exploitation that the participants had received was investigated, and it was discovered that the majority had not received training on the subject, except for a few people who had attended training voluntarily and outside the framework of their work. An interesting fact was the case of the State Security Forces and Corps: 100% of the participants indicated that they had not

received training on the subject despite having expressed the suitability of the resources to help victims of the prostitution system.

As for the methodology, the perspective close to communicative methodology was applied (Gómez, J. et al. 2006) that uses the dialogic turn (Beckgersheim, Butler & Puigvert, 2003) that focuses on the voices of all the people involved; what was intended was to understand and accept that knowledge is not foreign to who produces it by evaluating the following points:

- Characteristics of the care given to women in prostitution, referrals and type of help requested and provided.
- Characteristics of the women in prostitution who were assisted (economic need, origin, age, addictions, mental health, educational level, socioeconomic level and form of recruitment).
- Characteristics of the "clients/consumers" of prostitution.
- Minors and women at risk of being recruited for sexual exploitation.
- Perception of the level of aggressiveness of the pimps.
- Prostituted women murdered in the municipality. - Assessment of the suitability of community resources to help women leave the prostitution system.
- Prior training of operators in the subject.
- Assessment of the abolitionist objective and possible improvement actions in the municipality.

<b>Municipal Prostitution Abolitionist Plan</b>	
<b>Area of intervention</b>	<i>Intervention. Promotion of training for various agents to ensure a specialized and comprehensive response to women victims of gender violence.</i>
<b>Short description of the best practice</b>	<i>The initial premise is a lack of training and specialization, as well as a lack of knowledge of cases in the different areas of social services for assisting prostituted women when they leave prostitution.</i>
<b>Target audience</b>	<i>Special migrant women and women in general. Raising public awareness. Women in prostitution.</i>
<b>Actors who apply the methodology or use the tool</b>	<i>Social agents involved in cases of prostitution (Security Forces and Corps. Social Services.)</i>
<b>Type of violence opposed</b>	<i>Sexual violence</i>
<b>Introduction</b>	<i>Double program: "From the local for women" and "Here we are, look at your side". The first aims to develop equality policies aimed at creating and facilitating spaces for reflection, training and information on equal masculinities and to develop and approve ordinances, plans, protocols, projects and programs aimed at eradicating all types of sexual violence in the municipality. The second is to train the agents involved in the first line of action and intervention to develop a multidisciplinary intervention for victims of sexual violence and to become familiar with the concepts relating to sexual violence in order to correctly identify the reported crime, as well as to promote a rapid and coordinated intervention of all professionals in a situation of sexual violence, that is, with specialized attention to women in prostitution and help them leave the prostitution system. Launched by the Riba Roja de Turia City Council (Valencia) in 2023 and awarded in the BBPP competition of the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces of Spain.</i>



## Italian Best practices

In the pursuit of addressing the pressing issues of gender-based violence and discrimination against migrant women in Italy, an exploration of best practices has been undertaken. This investigative endeavor involves a multifaceted approach, incorporating desk research, analysis of interviews with migrant women, and insights from frontline operators. By delving into diverse information sources, a nuanced understanding of the specific needs and challenges faced by migrant women in the realm of gender-based violence and discrimination has emerged.

The research process not only serves to unveil the prevalent issues but also aims to illuminate effective strategies and interventions that have proven beneficial in combating gender-based discrimination against migrant women. This exploration has identified and analyzed best practices that exhibit promising outcomes in the ongoing fight against gender-based violence and discrimination faced by migrant women in Italy.

### Italian Best practices n.1 : Turin, my city

In the heart of Turin, Italy, the "Turin, My City" program is a best practice that focuses on empowering immigrant women from Maghreb countries in Turin, Italy. Launched in 2000, the initiative addresses challenges faced by these women, including limited integration opportunities due to childcare responsibilities and cultural barriers. The program offers women exclusive morning courses, taught by female instructors, covering Italian language, active citizenship, and various practical subjects. Notably, childcare services are provided during classes, overcoming obstacles related to family responsibilities. The initiative's success is evident in the enrolment of over 3,000 women since its inception, with 1,500 obtaining lower secondary school licenses. The program's holistic approach, partnerships with adult education centres, and diverse funding sources contribute to its effectiveness in fostering integration and education among immigrant women and their families.

"Turin, My City" goes beyond conventional language education, stretching its arms to encompass vocational training, employment support, childcare services, citizenship education, social support, counseling, health, legal advice, and cultural activities. Its holistic approach recognizes the multifaceted challenges faced by immigrant women.

The principal beneficiaries are immigrant women from North African countries in Turin, Italy, and their preschool-aged children. The program's implementation



involves a collaborative symphony with civic libraries, adult education centers (CPIAs), and associations like "Il nostro pianeta," MEIC, and Come noi onlus.

At its core, the program is a response to various forms of violence and barriers faced by immigrant women:

- **Gender-Based Violence:** Exclusive morning classes offer a safe sanctuary, breaking free from potential control and coercion.
- **Cultural and Social Isolation:** Language courses, guided city tours, and cultural activities serve as bridges, connecting immigrant women to the broader community.
- **Educational Inequality and Discrimination:** Tailored courses and resources dismantle barriers, paving the way for inclusive education.
- **Restrictions on Autonomy:** Childcare services during classes liberate women from familial constraints, fostering autonomy.
- **Language and Communication Barriers:** The program dismantles linguistic walls, providing language courses and workshops to enhance communication skills.
- **Lack of Access to Services:** Information and support dismantle barriers, guiding immigrant women to essential services.
- **Cultural and Religious Discrimination:** Workshops and activities foster intercultural understanding, creating an inclusive environment.
- **Economic Vulnerability:** Education and training opportunities empower women, offering a route out of economic vulnerability.
- **Systemic Discrimination:** The commitment to education challenges systemic barriers, empowering women to navigate societal structures.

Courses, carefully tailored to participants' backgrounds, unfold for 6 hours weekly, from October to June. Childcare services during class time enable mothers to participate, emphasizing the program's commitment to inclusivity. The success stories echo through Turin, with over 3,111 women embarking on a transformative journey in the past 16 years. The program's methodology has not only garnered recognition but has become a model replicated across various regions in Italy.

## Success Factors

The program's unwavering commitment to cultural sensitivity is a cornerstone of its success. The employment of cultural mediators and an all-female staff ensures an understanding and respect for the diverse backgrounds and challenges faced by participants. Inclusivity is prioritized through flexible schedules, making it easier for women with familial responsibilities to attend and engage in the program.

The program operates in collaboration with various community institutions such as libraries, civic centers, and religious spaces. This collaborative approach helps in reaching a wider audience and building a sense of community, fostering a supportive environment.

The holistic intervention, addressing not just language education but also vocational training, employment support, childcare, citizenship education, and more, sets the program apart. This comprehensive strategy acknowledges the multifaceted challenges faced by immigrant women.

Flexible schedules accommodate the family commitments and school hours of the participants. This adaptability ensures that women with familial responsibilities can actively participate in the program, addressing a significant barrier to their involvement.

The presence of an all-female staff creates a comfortable and supportive environment for the participants. This factor is crucial in addressing potential gender-related challenges and providing a safe space for women.

The incorporation of regular assessments during enrollment and ongoing monitoring of participants' progress allows for the tailoring of the program to evolving needs. This adaptability contributes to the program's effectiveness over time.

## **Constraints**

Despite efforts towards cultural sensitivity, there is a risk of inadvertently perpetuating stereotypes or misunderstanding cultural nuances. Continuous assessment and adjustment of program materials and approaches are crucial to avoid unintentional harm.

While the program addresses gender-based challenges, there may still be instances of gender-related issues that require ongoing attention. Monitoring any signs of gender-based discrimination or violence within the program is essential.

Providing childcare services during class time involves ensuring the safety and well-being of children. Stringent safety measures, qualified staff, and continuous monitoring are crucial to ensure a secure environment for the children.

As the program adapts tools for a broader audience, there is a risk of unintentionally neglecting the diverse needs of different immigrant groups. Continuous efforts should be made to ensure inclusivity for all participants, including those from Sub-Saharan Africa.

Despite providing language courses, some participants may face persistent challenges in achieving language proficiency. This could affect their ability to fully engage with the program and integrate into society. Additional support mechanisms and differentiated approaches may be needed.

The potential limitation in resources, such as physical space and qualified staff, poses a challenge. Balancing increased demand while maintaining program quality requires careful management and consideration of resource constraints.

In navigating these constraints, the program must maintain its commitment to ongoing assessment, adaptation, and inclusivity, ensuring that its success factors continue to outweigh the challenges faced.

## Conclusion

The "Turin, My City" program encapsulates a transformative narrative of empowerment for immigrant women in Turin. Its holistic approach, extending beyond language education to encompass vocational training, childcare services, and cultural activities, stands as a model for integration initiatives. Cultural sensitivity, community collaboration, and acknowledgment of challenges underscore its success.

Beyond being an educational endeavor, the program is a catalyst for societal change, leaving a lasting impact on Turin's social fabric. Transferable elements provide global insights, offering a roadmap for initiatives seeking to replicate its achievements. In essence, "Turin, My City" exemplifies the profound impact of holistic support on the journey of immigrant women towards meaningful integration and empowerment.

As the program continues to evolve, various training manuals, supplementary materials, and research documents have been developed, serving as a valuable source of learning for similar initiatives globally. Its transferable elements — flexible design, diverse teaching staff, and collaborative agreements — offer insights for those aiming to replicate its success. In conclusion, "Turin, My City" is not just a program; it's a narrative of empowerment, resilience, and community building, demonstrating the profound impact of holistic support on the lives of immigrant women and their journey towards meaningful integration.

<b>Turin, My City Torino, la mia città</b>	
<b>Area of intervention</b>	<i>Holistic approach: The program goes beyond language education, including elements of vocational training and employment support, childcare services, citizenship, social support and counselling, health, legal advice, and cultural activities.</i>
<b>Short description of the best practice</b>	<i>The "Turin, My City" program is a best practice that focuses on empowering immigrant women from Maghreb countries in Turin, Italy. Launched in 2000, the initiative addresses challenges faced by these women, including limited integration opportunities due to childcare responsibilities and cultural barriers. The program offers women exclusive morning courses, taught by female instructors, covering Italian language, active citizenship, and various practical subjects. Notably, childcare services are provided during classes, overcoming obstacles related to family responsibilities. The initiative's success is evident in the enrolment of over 3,000 women since its inception, with 1,500 obtaining lower secondary school licenses. The program's holistic approach, partnerships with adult education centres, and diverse funding sources contribute to its effectiveness in fostering integration and education among immigrant women and their families.</i>
<b>Target audience</b>	<i>Immigrant women from North African countries who live in Turin, Italy are the principal beneficiaries of the programme. In addition, their preschool-aged children receive childcare during class time.</i>
<b>Actors who apply the methodology or use the tool</b>	<p><b>Civic libraries of the City of Turin:</b> based on the agreement signed with MEIC in 2007 and renewed with MIC (Mondi in Città, the non-profit organization who created the project Turin myCity), in 2014, the libraries disseminate the poster, make the premises of the "Primo Levi" Civic Library in District 6 available free of charge for the conduct of activities, collaborate with MIC initiatives as well as MIC collaborates with the initiatives promoted by the Libraries.</p> <p><b>Area CPIAs (CPIAs 1, 2, 3):</b> thanks to the stipulated agreements, which provide for the sending of tutors and teachers to the MIC offices for the eighth grade, those attending</p>

	<p>are recognized as valid for the purposes of attendance and access to public exams the hours of activity at the courses organized by MIC. Furthermore, based on the same agreements, the CPIA direct women accompanied by pre-school children to TLMC courses.</p> <p><b>“Il nostro pianeta” association:</b> participates in the citizenship journey with regard to school and educational aspects. It is available to give school support to the children of female members and to support the family unit in educational action.</p> <p><b>MEIC - ecclesial movement of cultural commitment - Turin Group:</b> supports financially, the activities at Santa Monica Parish (district 8) and the promotion of activities.</p> <p><b>Come noi onlus:</b> also promotes and supports the project financially.</p>
<p><b>Type of violence opposed</b></p>	<p><b>Gender-Based Violence:</b> The program opposes gender-based violence by providing exclusive morning classes for women and offering a safe and supportive space. It acknowledges and addresses potential restrictions imposed by husbands on women attending mixed-gender classes, thereby combating forms of control and coercion.</p> <p><b>Cultural and Social Isolation:</b> By facilitating cultural integration through language courses, guided city tours, and visits to cultural institutions, the program counters the violence of isolation that immigrant women may experience due to cultural differences. It encourages interaction with the broader community, fostering social connections.</p> <p><b>Educational Inequality and Discrimination:</b> The program opposes educational inequality by tailoring courses to the diverse educational backgrounds of participants. It provides support and resources to overcome barriers immigrant women face in accessing education, thus challenging discriminatory practices.</p> <p><b>Restrictions on Autonomy:</b> Childcare services during class time empower women to attend courses without restrictions</p>

	<p>posed by childcare responsibilities. This counters the violence of restrictions on autonomy, ensuring women have the opportunity to pursue education and personal development.</p> <p><b>Language and Communication Barriers:</b> The program addresses the violence of exclusion and isolation resulting from language barriers. By providing language courses and workshops, it empowers women to communicate effectively, reducing the potential for linguistic discrimination.</p> <p><b>Lack of Access to Services:</b> Immigrant women often face barriers in accessing essential services like healthcare and education. The program opposes this form of violence by providing information and support, enabling participants to navigate and access necessary services in Italy.</p> <p><b>Cultural and Religious Discrimination:</b> By fostering intercultural understanding and promoting dialogue through workshops and cultural activities, the program opposes discrimination based on cultural and religious differences. It encourages an inclusive environment that respects diversity.</p> <p><b>Economic Vulnerability:</b> The program indirectly addresses economic violence by providing education and training opportunities, empowering women to enhance their skills and potentially improve their economic prospects, reducing vulnerability to financial abuse.</p> <p><b>Systemic Discrimination:</b> The program's commitment to education, active citizenship, and engagement with experts in various fields challenges systemic discrimination that may perpetuate inequalities. It strives to empower women to navigate and challenge systemic barriers.</p>
<p><b>Introduction</b></p>	<p>The context is the city of Turin, Italy, where the project "Torino la mia città" has been offering free linguistic and citizenship education activities to North African women of Arab-Islamic culture, along with their preschool-aged children, since the year 2000. The challenge being addressed is the integration of these women into Italian society. Many of them face difficulties in learning the Italian language, understanding societal rules,</p>



	<p><i>accessing healthcare services, and entering the workforce. This challenge is exacerbated by the economic and employment crisis.</i></p> <p><i>These women are identified as a particularly vulnerable population, struggling to attend Italian language courses due to the lack of babysitting services. They are often confined to their homes, hindering their language acquisition, understanding of Italian society, and access to essential services.</i></p> <p><i>The good practice involves providing linguistic training and citizenship education to North African women. The project operates in four locations with high densities of immigrant families in Turin. The courses are tailored to meet the needs of these women, with flexible schedules compatible with family commitments and their children's school hours. The activities are conducted exclusively by female staff, ensuring cultural sensitivity and offering childcare services for children aged 1 to 3. The project aims to empower these women, addressing the dual challenge of cultural integration and the current destabilization in their countries of origin.</i></p> <p><i>Gender is a crucial consideration in the good practice. The courses are designed to accommodate the specific needs of women, with schedules compatible with family responsibilities. The activities are conducted by an all-female staff, and there is a focus on providing assistance to children aged 1 to 3, allowing mothers to participate in the courses. Additionally, there are mediatrices culturale arabofone (cultural mediators) present to ensure cultural understanding and sensitivity.</i></p> <p><i>The project has been active since the year 2000, providing services for approximately 18 years.</i></p>
<p><b>Where the good practice takes place (Description of organization)</b></p>	<p><i>Economic sustainability has been possible so far by both contributions from private (Compagnia di San Paolo, Fondazione CRT, Ufficio Pio) and public (City of Turin) as well as from disbursements from associations engaged in activities cultural, social and solidarity activities (MEIC, Come Noi Onlus), from contributions deriving from the 5xmille and from donations from private individuals.</i></p>

	<p><b>Space:</b> <i>The programme operates in 4 different locations. It receives free rooms/spaces from public bodies and associations, except for reimbursement of expenses (i.e. cleaning costs).</i></p> <p><b>Publicity:</b> <i>The press office of the Torino public libraries provides support for dissemination of promotional posters.</i></p> <p><b>Staff:</b> <i>The programme has over 40 staff members: coordinators, teachers, volunteers, cultural mediators, etc. Among the paid personnel are approximately 12 women of immigrant origin.</i></p> <p><b>Costs:</b> <i>For 2017, the programme spent approximately 64,000 euros on typical programme activities (i.e. teaching-related costs), including invoiced teacher services (4,500); compensation for cultural mediators (21,700); costs of photocopies, stationery and printing costs, travel expenses (4,500); programme coordination and exam preparation (11,800); accounting and legal fees (11,000). In addition to teaching-related costs, the progamme spent about 17,600 euros for childcare and children's entertainment (in Arabic).</i></p>
<p><b>Context</b></p>	<p><i>The "Turin, My City" program originated in the year 2000 in Turin, Italy. Its genesis lies in recognizing the challenges faced by immigrant women from Maghreb countries, particularly those who came to Italy for family reunification. These women encountered barriers to integration, primarily due to childcare responsibilities and cultural constraints, including restrictions on attending mixed-gender classes.</i></p> <p><i>The program's founders identified a gap in existing integration opportunities, where conventional evening courses in mixed-gender environments were often inaccessible to these women. The genesis of the program lies in the commitment to address these specific challenges and provide tailored support to facilitate the integration of immigrant women into Italian society.</i></p>



<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Objective</b></p>	<p><b>Language Acquisition:</b> <i>The program focuses on teaching the Italian language to participants, helping them overcome linguistic barriers and empowering them to communicate effectively in their new environment.</i></p> <p><b>Cultural Integration:</b> <i>Through various activities such as guided city tours, visits to cultural institutions, and workshops on integration and daily life, the program aims to facilitate cultural integration. This includes understanding Italian culture, monuments, and social norms.</i></p> <p><b>Education on Active Citizenship:</b> <i>The program provides education on active citizenship, covering topics like immigration issues, maternal and child health, job training, and children's education. This empowers participants to actively engage in and contribute to their local communities.</i></p> <p><b>Childcare Support:</b> <i>Addressing the challenge of childcare responsibilities, the program offers childcare services during class time, enabling mothers to attend courses without hindrance.</i></p> <p><b>Consultations with Experts:</b> <i>Individual consultations with experts in education, law, personal finance, and family counseling provide participants with personalized guidance, addressing specific needs and challenges.</i></p> <p><b>Recognition and Certification:</b> <i>The program has agreements with local Centers for Adult Education (CPIAs), allowing participants to obtain formal recognition for the courses they complete. This includes the possibility of A2 language certification or secondary school completion exams.</i></p> <p><b>Empowerment of Immigrant Women:</b> <i>By focusing on women's empowerment, the program aims not only to facilitate their integration but also to empower them with knowledge and skills that can positively impact their families and communities.</i></p>
<p><b>The description of the methodology</b></p>	<p><i>The programme participants are evaluated during registration for their existing Italian language knowledge and their</i></p>

educational backgrounds. The participants are then grouped into a course level based on their profiles, ranging from illiterate/low education with very limited knowledge of Italian to medium/higher education with some knowledge of Italian. All participants in this programme are female (except for some preschool-age children who receive childcare). The programme staff are also female.

The participants have 6 hours of courses per week from October to June, typically 2 days per week for 3 hours each day, and always during weekday mornings. The courses are free of charge. During class time, the programme provides childcare services for children who are preschool-age. The participants receive a total of 180 hours of instruction, comprised of:

- 120 hours of instruction in Italian language, foreign language, mathematics and civics, led by an expert language learning teacher who is accompanied by a trained volunteer on North African culture and/or a trainee from the University of Turin.
- 60 hours of instruction in 'active citizenship', including meetings with experts on immigration issues, maternal and child health, job training, children's education, etc.
- Individual consultations with experts in education, law, personal finance and family counseling who are available to meet periodically during class time.
- Basic level students can take part in a welcome tour of Turin, to introduce them to the culture, monuments and notable places of the city. The tour is guided by intercultural escorts and given and/or translated in Arabic, English and French.
- Intermediate and advanced students take part in guided visits in Arabic/Italian to cultural institutions like the Egyptian Museum and the Royal Museums. They also take part in workshops comprised of a meeting with an expert on a relevant theme, followed by subsequent meetings in class groups led by the teacher (assisted by a dialogue facilitator and/or peer educator) during which the participants discuss their experiences and difficulties with the theme.

The workshop themes have included: integration and daily life (e.g. cultural differences, relationships with people from other cultures, etc.); education and school;

	<p><i>experiences as (immigrant) women; interreligious dialogue; nutrition etc.</i></p> <p><i>The programme has signed agreements with local Centres for Adult Education (CPIAs), which are government-run centres for education and training of adult immigrants. The agreements allow the programme courses to be recognised by the CPIA as ‘formative credits’ that allow students to obtain A2 language certification at the CPIA or to take the exam certifying secondary school completion. In turn, the CPIAs direct women with children aged 0-3 years to the programme.</i></p>
<p><b>Achieved results</b></p>	<p><i>Over a span of sixteen years, the program has facilitated the transformative journey of more than 3,111 women who ventured out to learn Italian and engage in discussions about their family and integration challenges in Turin, fostering a collective path of personal growth that significantly contributes to the integration of both participants and their families. Notably, some of these women have evolved into intercultural guides at prestigious institutions such as the Egyptian Museum and the Royal Museums.</i></p> <p><i>The success of these initiatives is underscored by the program's commitment to respecting the cultural and social living conditions of the students, ensuring a conducive learning environment. This success has led to the program's method of intervention evolving into a model, embraced not only in Piedmont but also in various other regions across Italy. In the program year 2017-2018 alone, 366 women, accompanied by 200 children, registered for the course, with a balanced representation of both new and returning participants.</i></p> <p><i>Since its inception, the program has witnessed the enrollment of over 3,000 women, with approximately 1,500 achieving a lower secondary school license, demonstrating its profound impact on education and empowerment.</i></p>
<p><b>Success Factors</b></p>	<p><i>The project recognizes and respects the <b>cultural diversity</b> of its participants. Cultural mediators are employed to ensure understanding and sensitivity to the specific needs and challenges of the target population.</i></p>

	<p>The courses are designed <b>with flexible schedules</b> to accommodate the family commitments and school hours of the participants. This adaptability makes it easier for women with familial responsibilities to attend and engage in the program. Childcare services allow mothers with young children to participate, addressing a significant barrier to their involvement.</p> <p>The use of an <b>all-female staff</b> fosters a comfortable and supportive environment for the participants.</p> <p>The project operates in <b>collaboration with various community institutions</b>, such as libraries, civic centers, and religious spaces. This collaboration helps in reaching a wider audience and building a sense of community.</p> <p>The program goes beyond language education, including elements of citizenship, health, legal advice, and cultural activities. This <b>holistic approach</b> addresses the multifaceted challenges faced by the participants.</p> <p><b>Sports, counseling, and consultation services</b> are provided to address various aspects of the participants' lives. Experts are available for individual consultations, enhancing the overall support structure.</p> <p>Organizing visits to local landmarks, museums, and conducting cineforums fosters familiarity and <b>integration with the local community</b>. This approach helps participants feel more connected to their new environment.</p> <p><b>Regular assessments</b> during enrollment and the ongoing monitoring of participants' progress help tailor the program to evolving needs.</p>
<p><b>Constraints</b></p>	<p>While the "Turin, My City" program has demonstrated success in addressing the challenges faced by immigrant women and promoting their integration, there are potential constraints and elements of danger associated with its application. It's essential to recognize and mitigate these factors to ensure the continued effectiveness and safety of the program:</p>

	<p><b>Cultural Sensitivity and Respect:</b> <i>Despite efforts to promote cultural sensitivity, there is a risk of inadvertently perpetuating stereotypes or misunderstanding cultural nuances. It is crucial to continuously assess and adjust program materials and approaches to avoid unintentional harm.</i></p> <p><b>Gender-Based Challenges:</b> <i>While the program addresses gender-based challenges, there may still be instances of gender-related issues that require ongoing attention. Monitoring for any signs of gender-based discrimination or violence within the program is essential.</i></p> <p><b>Childcare Safety:</b> <i>Providing childcare services during class time involves the safety and well-being of children. It is crucial to have stringent safety measures, qualified staff, and continuous monitoring to ensure a secure environment for the children.</i></p> <p><b>Inclusivity for Diverse Immigrant Groups:</b> <i>As the program adapts tools for a broader audience, including women from Sub-Saharan Africa, there is a risk of unintentionally neglecting the diverse needs of different immigrant groups. Continuous efforts should be made to ensure inclusivity for all participants.</i></p> <p><b>Language Proficiency Challenges:</b> <i>Despite providing language courses, some participants may face persistent challenges in achieving language proficiency. This could affect their ability to fully engage with the program and integrate into society. Additional support mechanisms and differentiated approaches may be needed.</i></p> <p><b>Limited Resources for Expansion:</b> <i>If the demand for the program grows, there may be limitations in expanding resources, such as physical space and qualified staff. A careful balance must be maintained to ensure quality service while managing increased demand.</i></p>
<p><b>Sustainability</b></p>	<p><b>Institutional sustainability</b> of the identified good practice hinges on the establishment of robust partnerships with local</p>

	<p>government agencies, educational institutions, and community organizations. These partnerships serve as a foundation for ongoing support and resource allocation. Integrating the good practice into existing educational frameworks and policies ensures alignment with broader societal goals. Continuous capacity building for program staff is vital, allowing them to adapt and enhance their skills over time. Comprehensive documentation of program activities and regular evaluations provide a basis for internal assessments and external reporting to potential funders and partners.</p> <p><b>Social sustainability</b> is fostered through a commitment to cultural sensitivity, regularly updating program content to reflect the evolving needs and cultural nuances of participants. Active community engagement, where participants have a role in decision-making processes, creates a sense of ownership and community. Promoting inclusivity and awareness campaigns helps garner support from the broader community, reinforcing the positive impact of the program.</p> <p><b>Economic sustainability</b> is achieved through diversifying funding sources, including government grants, private donations, and corporate partnerships, reducing dependency on a single funding stream. Exploring income-generating opportunities, such as fee-based services or collaborations with businesses, ensures financial stability. Implementing cost-efficiency measures without compromising program quality optimizes resource use for sustained operation.</p> <p><b>Environmental sustainability</b> is integrated through the adoption of environmentally friendly practices, such as digital documentation, waste reduction, and energy conservation. Responsible use of resources and materials, coupled with environmental education components within the program, cultivates a sense of responsibility among participants towards environmental sustainability.</p>
<p><b>Transferability</b></p>	<p>Several elements of the described program can be transferred to other contexts and countries. These transferable elements include:</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Conducting a comprehensive needs assessment</b> to understand the specific linguistic, educational, and cultural requirements of the target population is a universally applicable practice.</li> <li>• <b>Flexible program design</b> to accommodate family commitments and offering courses during weekday mornings allows for adaptation to different cultural contexts.</li> <li>• <b>Employing a diverse teaching staff</b>, including native speakers and individuals familiar with the cultural background of participants, promotes cultural sensitivity and enhances the learning experience.</li> <li>• <b>Providing on-site childcare services</b> during class hours is crucial to enabling mothers to participate, and this approach can be replicated in various cultural settings.</li> <li>• <b>Developing a comprehensive curriculum</b> that covers language skills, civic education, and practical subjects like mathematics is adaptable to different educational needs.</li> <li>• <b>Incorporating a citizenship education</b> component with workshops on immigration, health, job training, and individual consultations can be valuable in multiple contexts.</li> <li>• <b>Organizing integration activities</b> like guided city tours, cultural visits, and workshops on relevant themes encourages community integration and can be tailored to suit different cultural backgrounds.</li> <li>• <b>Establishing agreements with local educational institutions</b> to recognize program courses as formative credits provides participants with opportunities for further education and certification.</li> <li>• <b>Implementing regular evaluations</b> and utilizing participant feedback for continuous improvement is a universal practice in program management.</li> <li>• <b>Offering multilingual support</b> during tours, workshops, and classes ensures inclusivity and can be adapted to meet the language diversity of different immigrant groups.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Related resources that have been developed</b></p>	<p>Several training resources and materials have been developed in response to the implementation of the identified good</p>

	<p><i>practice. Specifically, comprehensive training manuals have been crafted to facilitate the teaching of Italian as a second language to foreign women. These manuals have undergone updates since 2018 to align with a contemporary and effective didactic methodology. The training materials comprise seven volumes, catering to different proficiency levels:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Basic Level</i></li> <li>• <i>Intermediate Level</i></li> <li>• <i>Advanced Level</i></li> <li>• <i>Two Exercise Books</i></li> <li>• <i>A Special Dossier Focusing on Verb Conjugation</i></li> <li>• <i>A Volume Dedicated to Civic Education, designed to complement the "Active Citizenship" course.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>In addition to the primary resources, supplementary materials have been developed to enhance the educational framework. These include a comprehensive guide detailing the intricacies of teaching Italian to North African women, providing methodology guidelines. Furthermore, an instructional manual highlighting the significance of play in children's education has been created. Other supplementary resources encompass a report documenting discussions held with elementary school teachers, a guide on maximizing the utility of the school diary, and manuals offering insights into navigating the challenges of adolescence and preadolescence, ...</i></p> <p><i>Also, some research documents have been created like a study of the project after 15 years of its start, some reports on migrants pathway in the city of Torino, etc.</i></p> <p><i>All extra material are available here :</i>  <a href="https://www.mondincitta.it/mic/materiali/">https://www.mondincitta.it/mic/materiali/</a></p>
<p><b>Language(s)</b></p>	<p><i>Only in Italian</i></p>
<p><b>Application of good practices to assist discriminated migrant women and combat violence against women</b></p>	
<p><b>Success Factors for use for Woman Migrants</b></p>	<p><i>The methodology described is specifically concerning migrant women and their vulnerabilities and specificities.</i></p>



<b>Constraints for use for Woman Migrants</b>	/
<b>Summary</b>	
<b>Summary of the best practice</b>	<p><i>The "Turin, My City" program, launched in 2000 in Turin, Italy, is a comprehensive initiative designed to empower immigrant women from Maghreb countries. This program, spanning over 18 years, addresses the challenges faced by these women in integrating into Italian society. The initiative combines linguistic education with vocational training, employment support, childcare services, citizenship education, social support, counselling, health, legal advice, and cultural activities.</i></p> <p><i>Targeting immigrant women from North African countries residing in Turin, the program enrolls preschool-aged children in childcare during class time. It collaborates with various actors, including civic libraries, educational centers (CPIAs), associations like "Il nostro pianeta," MEIC, and Come noi onlus, ensuring a holistic support network.</i></p> <p><i>The program opposes various forms of violence, including gender-based violence, cultural and social isolation, educational inequality, restrictions on autonomy, language barriers, lack of access to services, and cultural and religious discrimination. It tailors courses to diverse educational backgrounds, ensuring inclusivity and fostering intercultural understanding.</i></p> <p><i>Operated by over 40 staff members, including coordinators, teachers, volunteers, and cultural mediators, the program offers 6 hours of weekly courses from October to June. The curriculum comprises 120 hours of language, mathematics, and civics, and 60 hours of 'active citizenship' covering immigration, health, job training, and more. The program provides individual consultations and cultural activities, fostering integration.</i></p>

*Results indicate significant success, with 3,111 women benefiting over 16 years. Some participants have become intercultural guides, and the program's methodology has become a model in Italy. In the 2017-2018 year alone, 366 women registered, accompanied by 200 children. Over 3,000 women have enrolled since inception, with about 1,500 obtaining a lower secondary school license.*

*Success factors include cultural sensitivity, flexible schedules, an all-female staff, collaboration with community institutions, a holistic approach, and regular assessments. Constraints include potential perpetuation of stereotypes, gender-related challenges, childcare safety concerns, inclusivity for diverse immigrant groups, language proficiency challenges, and resource limitations.*

*The program achieves sustainability through partnerships, continuous capacity building, documentation, and evaluations. Social sustainability is ensured through cultural sensitivity, community engagement, and awareness campaigns. Economic sustainability involves diversifying funding sources and exploring income-generating opportunities. Environmental sustainability is integrated through responsible resource use and environmental education.*

*Transferable elements include needs assessment, flexible design, diverse teaching staff, childcare services, comprehensive curriculum, citizenship education, integration activities, agreements with educational institutions, evaluations, and multilingual support.*

*Various training resources have been developed, including seven volumes of training manuals for teaching Italian, supplementary materials, and research documents. These resources are available on the program's website.*

*In conclusion, the "Turin, My City" program is a transformative initiative that goes beyond language education, promoting the integration and empowerment of immigrant women and their families in Turin.*

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## Italian Best practices n.2 : A journey for freedom

"Un Viaggio per la Libertà," (A journey for freedom) an initiative led by CADMI (Casa delle Donne Maltrattate - Homes of Abused Women), represents a groundbreaking project addressing the complex challenges encountered by migrant and refugee women who have endured gender-based violence. This innovative endeavour provides a dedicated shelter, equipped with eight bedrooms, serving as a secure haven for women who have faced sexual violence, forced marriages, genital mutilation, and sexual exploitation. The project distinguishes itself through a holistic support system, engaging professionals such as educators, psychologists, linguistic/cultural mediators, and art therapy practitioners. Notably, it places paramount emphasis on the overarching goal of achieving emotional, economic, and housing autonomy for the women involved.

The methodology employed is deeply rooted in feminist empowerment, trauma-informed care, inclusive integration, and a holistic approach. These principles manifest in practical tools such as individualized empowerment plans, language courses, household management training, art therapy sessions, co-residency agreements, and regular group meetings. The project's dynamic evolution is evident, transitioning from maintaining continuous educator presence in its initial phase to adopting a strategic approach that ensures personalized empowerment projects for each woman. Immediate economic autonomy is facilitated through monthly allowances, instigating independence right from the project's inception.

Residents actively participate in managing domestic responsibilities collaboratively, such as weekly grocery shopping, instilling valuable skills like budgeting and domestic economy management. The utilization of cash for these activities not only facilitates practical learning but also teaches independent financial resource management. A core aspect of the project lies in its focus on trauma processing, with all residents benefiting from individual psychological support, and notably, six opting for additional art therapy sessions.

### Success Factors

The success of the "Un viaggio per la libertà" project lies in its ability to comprehensively address the complex needs of migrant and refugee women who have endured gender-based violence. The multifaceted support services offered, ranging from psychological assistance to legal support, create a tailored framework that acknowledges and responds to the diverse challenges these women face.

A pivotal success factor is the project's unwavering commitment to the safety and security of its participants. By providing a secure and confidential living

environment, coupled with continuous monitoring, the initiative fosters an atmosphere conducive to healing and recovery.

The project's emphasis on empowerment, coupled with skill development initiatives, plays a transformative role. Through language training, vocational courses, and other empowerment programs, women are equipped with the tools necessary to regain control over their lives, both economically and socially.

Central to the success of the initiative is its recognition of the psychological trauma experienced by the participants. Individualized psychological support and innovative approaches like art therapy contribute significantly to the emotional well-being of these women, facilitating resilience and recovery.

A robust financial sustainability strategy, including diverse funding sources and collaborations with foundations, ensures the project's long-term viability. This not only safeguards against dependency on a single funding stream but also enhances adaptability to emerging challenges.

The continuous monitoring and adaptation mechanisms embedded within the project are instrumental for its ongoing success. Flexibility in adjusting methodologies based on the evolving needs of the participants underscores the initiative's commitment to staying responsive and effective.

At its core, the project operates as a women-led initiative founded on feminist principles, promoting female solidarity. This unique approach fosters a supportive community where the autonomy and agency of women are central, contributing to the overall success of the endeavor.

## Constraints

Despite its success, the "Un viaggio per la libertà" project faces several challenges that necessitate careful consideration. Safety and security concerns are paramount, given the vulnerable nature of the participants who have experienced various forms of violence. The ongoing risk of potential harm or retaliation from abusers requires constant vigilance and protective measures.

Cultural sensitivity is another constraint that requires nuanced navigation. The diverse cultural backgrounds of migrant and refugee women demand a careful approach to ensure effective support without inadvertently causing distress. Cultural competence among staff is imperative to navigate these differences respectfully.

Addressing the psychological trauma experienced by participants is a critical but delicate task. The project must continually focus on providing adequate mental

health support, considering potential triggers and ensuring a sensitive approach to trauma processing.

Legal challenges, particularly regarding the immigration status and rights of participants, pose complexities. Indeed, recently, the CADMI refused to receive public financial support anymore because the Municipality requested to provide the fiscal code of the women migrants, which was threatening their anonymity and rights to privacy and protection.

For sustainability, both at the institutional and social levels, gaining continued recognition and support from governmental institutions, establishing clear protocols, fostering community integration, and maintaining cultural competence within the project team are indispensable. Economic sustainability hinges on diversifying funding sources, securing ongoing support, and ensuring continuous training programs for the economic independence of participants.

Capacity building and training for staff and volunteers are critical to sustaining success. Ensuring the workforce is well-equipped to handle the diverse needs of beneficiaries, including trauma support and cultural competency, is essential for the continued effectiveness of the initiative.

## Conclusion

The "Un viaggio per la libertà" project, spearheaded by CADMI, emerges as an exemplary model in addressing the intricate challenges faced by migrant and refugee women who have endured gender-based violence. This pioneering initiative has successfully created a comprehensive support system, transcending traditional approaches by encompassing psychological, economic, and housing autonomy for its participants.

At the heart of the project's success is its unwavering commitment to the safety and security of the women it serves. By providing a secure and confidential living environment, coupled with continuous monitoring, the initiative sets a benchmark for creating spaces conducive to healing and empowerment. The emphasis on empowerment, skill development, and trauma-informed care manifests as transformative elements within the project. Through tailored programs, such as language training, vocational courses, and art therapy, women are equipped with the tools necessary to reclaim control over their lives, fostering resilience and recovery.

The success of "Un viaggio per la libertà" is intricately woven with its ability to recognize and address the unique needs of participants. Individualized psychological support and a feminist approach that promotes female solidarity

contribute to the creation of a supportive community where autonomy and agency are paramount.

In essence, "Un viaggio per la libertà" serves as a beacon of hope and resilience. Its model, rooted in empathy, empowerment, and inclusivity, offers a blueprint for organizations globally to address the multifaceted needs of discriminated migrant women. This practice not only advocates for change but actively contributes to the transformation of lives, embodying the principles of justice, equality, and compassion.

<b>Un viaggio per la libertà A journey for freedom</b>	
<b>Area of intervention</b>	<p><i>The best practice covers emotional, economic, and housing autonomy.</i></p> <p><i>However, it also includes a more comprehensive support with trauma management and psychological support.</i></p>
<b>Short description of the best practice</b>	<p><i>"Un viaggio per la libertà" is a project initiated by CADMI, the Casa di accoglienza delle donne maltrattate di Milano (Shelter for Abused Women in Milan), focused on providing support and refuge to migrant and refugee women who have experienced gender-based violence. The project involves a dedicated building with eight bedrooms, providing a sense of normalcy and a safe space for women with backgrounds of sexual violence, forced marriages, genital mutilation, and sexual exploitation.</i></p> <p><i>The project emphasizes creating a safe and welcoming environment with a dedicated building equipped with shared spaces, kitchens, and well-being areas. The initiative offers holistic support, including professional assistance from educators, psychologists, and mediators. The support extends throughout the journey of overcoming violence until achieving full emotional, relational, economic, and housing autonomy.</i></p>
<b>Target audience</b>	<p><i>The methodology is specifically addressed to migrant women who have experienced violence and trauma throughout their journey. While the methodology may draw on general principles of supporting women who have faced violence, the unique focus</i></p>



	<p>here is on the intersectionality of migration and gender-based violence. The approach recognizes the distinct challenges and vulnerabilities that migrant women may encounter due to their migration status, cultural differences, and the potential for violence during their journey.</p>
<p><b>Actors who apply the methodology or use the tool</b></p>	<p><b>Educators and Psychologists:</b> These operators played a crucial role in building personal relationships, recognizing the experiences and potential of each woman, and activating individualized empowerment projects.</p> <p><b>Linguistic/Cultural Mediators:</b> Two linguistic/cultural mediators were involved to support communication and understanding, contributing to the relationship-building process.</p> <p><b>Psychologists and Art Therapy Practitioners:</b> The project includes individual psychological support for all guests, and six guests opted for art therapy sessions. Psychologists and art therapy practitioners play a fundamental role in addressing and processing trauma.</p> <p><b>Training and Italian Language Courses:</b> The involvement of training providers and Italian language course instructors contributes to the educational component of the project.</p> <p><b>Institutional Representatives:</b> Representatives from institutions, including the Prefettura di Milano and Fondazione Cariplo, provide support and contribute financially to the project.</p> <p><b>Trust Nel Nome della Donna (Trust In the Name of Woman):</b> The Trust actively contributes to the project by providing a building and financial support.</p> <p><b>CADMI - Casa di Accoglienza delle Donne Maltrattate (House of Welcome for Abused Women):</b> CADMI, as the implementing organization, plays a central role in coordinating and overseeing the project.</p>

<p><b>Type of violence opposed</b></p>	<p><i>The methodology or tool described in the provided information opposes gender-based violence, particularly violence against migrant women. Gender-based violence encompasses various forms of harm or discrimination that individuals may experience based on their gender, and in this context, the focus is on violence directed towards women.</i></p> <p><i>The methodology and tool developed by CADMI's Antiviolence Centers specifically address violence and trauma experienced by migrant women throughout their journey. This could include physical violence, sexual violence, psychological abuse, and any other form of harm that women may face due to their gender, often in the context of migration.</i></p> <p><i>The approach aims to provide a comprehensive support system that helps women overcome the effects of violence and trauma, empowering them to achieve emotional, economic, and housing autonomy. By addressing these aspects, the methodology seeks to counteract the negative impact of gender-based violence and contribute to the well-being and integration of migrant women in society.</i></p>
<p><b>Introduction</b></p>	<p><i>The context involves the increasing number of migrant women and asylum seekers in the Lombardy region, particularly those who have experienced violence and trauma during their journey. The challenge is twofold: addressing the specific needs of these women, including trauma management and empowerment, and filling the gap in existing support structures that may not adequately cater to the intersectionality of migration and gender-based violence. The testimonies of women arriving on the Diciotti ship underscore the urgency for competent and concrete responses to the challenges faced by migrant women.</i></p> <p><i>The good practice is the "Un viaggio per la libertà" project initiated by the Casa di Accoglienza delle Donne Maltrattate (CADMI) in Milan. This project aims to provide hospitality, support, and socio-cultural integration for migrant women and asylum seekers who have experienced violence. The initiative</i></p>

	<p><i>includes a shelter with 24-hour professional support, psychological paths for trauma management, and assistance for economic and housing autonomy. The project is expected started from October 2018 and signifies a collaborative effort between CADMI, private donors, the Prefecture of Milan, and Fondazione Cariplo.</i></p> <p><i>The challenge being addressed is inherently gendered as it involves women migrants who have experienced various forms of violence, including sexual and gender-based violence. The testimonies highlight the prevalence of such violence, from domestic and intra-family violence to genital mutilation and sexual exploitation. The challenge recognizes the specific vulnerabilities of women throughout their migration journey and the need for tailored support.</i></p> <p><i>The "Un viaggio per la libertà" project explicitly centers on the needs of migrant women. It acknowledges the gender-specific nature of the violence experienced, including sexual and gender-based violence, and tailors its approach to address the unique challenges faced by women. The project incorporates psychological support, economic empowerment, and housing autonomy, recognizing that gender-sensitive responses are essential for effective healing and empowerment.</i></p> <p><i>Gender is considered not only in the identification of the challenge but also in the design and implementation of the good practice. The methodology acknowledges the intersectionality of gender and migration, ensuring that the support provided is sensitive to the specific experiences and needs of migrant women who have faced violence and trauma.</i></p>
<p><b>Where the good practice takes place (Description of organization)</b></p>	<p><b>CADMI</b> (Casa di Accoglienza delle Donne Maltrattate di Milano) is the key implementing agency and the organization leading the project. It has over thirty years of experience in providing support and shelter to women facing domestic violence.</p> <p><b>Nel nome della donna</b> is a trust that plays a crucial role in the project.</p>

	<p><i>It provides the building for the project in the form of a free lease.</i></p> <p><b>Donne in rete con la violenza</b> is an association managing 80 anti-violence centers across Italy. It collaborates with CADMI in the project, contributing to the identification of vulnerable cases and sharing expertise on preventing violence against women.</p> <p><b>Fondazione Vodafone</b> is mentioned as a donor and supporter of the project. The foundation supports the project through funding in three key areas: hospitality activities, creation of an e-learning platform, and starting up new experiences in different locations. This support enhances the sustainability and effectiveness of the project.</p> <p><b>Prefettura (Prefecture) and Comune di Milano (Municipality of Milan)</b> has recognized the project as a pilot initiative, indicating potential future implementations. The Municipality of Milan provided economic support to the project, showcasing the importance of government involvement and financial backing.</p> <p><b>Fondazione Cariplo</b> is a foundation that contributed 100 000€ to the project through financial support, demonstrating the involvement of philanthropic organizations in supporting initiatives addressing gender-based violence and women's empowerment.</p> <p><b>Private donors</b> have provided substantial financial support, covering the entire budget for the first year of the project. Their involvement showcases the importance of community and individual contributions to the success of such initiatives.</p>
<p><b>Context</b></p>	<p>The genesis of the "Un viaggio per la libertà" project can be traced back to the Casa di Accoglienza delle Donne Maltrattate (CADMI) in Milan, a longstanding organization founded in 1986. CADMI specializes in providing support to women facing various forms of violence, and it has been at the forefront of initiatives related to women's well-being and empowerment for over three decades.</p>

The idea for the project emerged at the end of the previous year when the Trust Nel nome della donna, a private trust created by Giovanna Foglia, Fiorella Cagnoni, and Serena Foglia to support women's initiatives, offered a building to CADMI. This trust had previously supported CADMI financially when public funds were insufficient.

The context highlighted an **escalating number of migrant women** and asylum seekers in the Lombardy region, many of whom had experienced violence during their migration journey. This included various forms of violence such as sexual and gender-based violence, domestic abuse, genital mutilation, and exploitation.

The testimonies of women arriving on the Diciotti ship emphasized the **inadequacy of existing support structures** in addressing the specific needs of migrant women who had experienced violence. There was a recognition that competent and concrete responses were urgently needed.

**Migrant women faced unique challenges, including trauma** resulting from violence, which required specialized support. The testimonies highlighted the diverse range of traumatic experiences, from intra-family violence to the hardships faced during the migration journey.

The testimonies of women arriving on the Diciotti ship reinforced **the need for competent and concrete responses**. It was apparent that waiting for responses was no longer feasible, and there was an urgent need to provide effective support tailored to the specific needs of migrant women.

Women leaving existing structures, such as Reception and Identification Centers (CAS) or SPRAR facilities, were **at risk of finding themselves in situations of violence or in a "no man's land"**. There was a need for a structured transition to help women regain control of their lives after leaving these facilities.

	<p>The experiences of migrant women necessitated a holistic approach that addressed emotional, economic, and housing autonomy. <b>The need for a comprehensive support system</b> that recognized the interconnectedness of these aspects was evident.</p>
<p><b>Objective</b></p>	<p>The objective of the project is the achievement of three fundamental autonomies for the future of the women welcomed:</p> <p><b>Emotional Autonomy:</b> Emotional autonomy will be fostered through a sheltered environment, with skilled professionals (educators and psychologists) available 24 hours a day. Psychological paths, led by trauma management experts, will be offered through both individual and group sessions.</p> <p><b>Economic Autonomy:</b> With the support of CADMI's job desk and various training opportunities, resident women will have the chance to aspire to their economic independence.</p> <p><b>Housing Autonomy:</b> Building on the previous steps, the culmination of each woman's project will result in the achievement of housing autonomy, facilitating a genuine integration into our society.</p>
<p><b>The description of the methodology</b></p>	<p>The methodology of the project is based on a feminist approach to providing support and empowerment to migrant women who have experienced violence. It emphasizes the following principles:</p> <p><b>Feminist Empowerment:</b> Recognizing the agency and autonomy of women and fostering a supportive and empowering environment.</p> <p><b>Trauma-Informed Care:</b> Addressing the psychological and emotional impact of trauma and providing individualized support for trauma processing.</p>

	<p><b>Inclusive Integration:</b> Promoting language acquisition and professional skills for successful integration and encouraging collaboration with local entities and communities.</p> <p><b>Holistic Approach:</b> Integrating psychological support, economic empowerment, and housing autonomy.</p> <p><u>Tool Examples:</u></p> <p><b>Individual Empowerment Plans:</b> Collaboratively developed plans for each woman, addressing her specific needs, goals, and trauma processing.</p> <p><b>Language and Professional Training Modules:</b> Structured courses covering Italian language proficiency and skills development for economic independence.</p> <p><b>Household Management Training:</b> Practical sessions for managing household tasks, budgeting, and economic independence.</p> <p><b>Art Therapy Sessions:</b> Utilizing art therapy as a tool for trauma processing, self-expression, and healing.</p> <p><b>Co-Residency Agreements:</b> Establishing agreements for shared responsibilities within the household to promote teamwork and autonomy.</p> <p><b>Weekly Group Meetings:</b> Regular gatherings to discuss progress, challenges, and collective decision-making.</p>
<p><b>Achieved results</b></p>	<p>"Un Viaggio per la Libertà," emerging as a successful pilot project, has evolved dynamically through practical experience. In its initial phase, the project ensured the continuous presence of 7 educators around the clock, providing a nurturing environment. Subsequently, a strategic decision was made to reduce the staff's continuous presence during daylight hours while enhancing co-presence and involving two linguistic/cultural mediators. This shift contributed significantly to the establishment of personal relationships, fostering the recognition of each resident's experiences and potentials.</p> <p>The activation of individualized empowerment projects tailored to the specific needs of each woman became possible through these personalized relationships. These projects aimed at</p>



*developing the autonomy required for their social inclusion journey. Immediate economic autonomy support was provided by monthly allowances for each woman, allowing them to build their independence from the project's inception – a crucial element for project realization.*

*Autonomy development extended to practical aspects, as residents collaboratively managed domestic responsibilities, such as weekly grocery shopping. This collective effort facilitated the acquisition of valuable skills like budgeting and domestic economy management. The use of cash for these activities enabled residents to learn independent financial resource management.*

*Similarly, the delegation of household cleaning responsibilities promoted autonomy in caring for their living spaces, instilling a sense of discipline applicable beyond the project's confines. A core project objective was to create a space where residents could experience "restorative" moments, including socialization through dinners, small celebrations, outings, and receiving meaningful tokens.*

*Integral to the project is the processing of trauma. All residents benefited from individual psychological support, with 6 opting for additional art therapy. To foster genuine autonomy and facilitate integration into the Italian (and specifically Milanese) context, residents attended language courses and professional skills development programs in collaboration with local entities.*

*In the expansion phase, the project expand to 16 guests. It also introduces a forward-thinking approach with the development of an e-learning module. This module aims to provide remote courses to all staff members across the 85 anti-violence centers. The content is specifically tailored to support migrant women dealing with violence and the associated traumas.*

*Considering the success of the project, it has been replicated in other locations, such as Catania and Bari, in collaboration with local anti-violence centers.*

<p><b>Success Factors</b></p>	<p>The success of the "Un viaggio per la libertà" methodology relies on various interconnected elements.</p> <p><b>Comprehensive Support Services:</b> The project provides a holistic approach by offering comprehensive support services, including psychological support, legal assistance, language training, vocational training, and empowerment programs. This ensures that women receive multifaceted assistance tailored to their individual needs.</p> <p><b>Safety and Security Measures:</b> Ensuring the safety and security of the women is a fundamental element. The provision of a secure and confidential accommodation facility, coupled with continuous monitoring and support, contributes to their overall well-being.</p> <p><b>Empowerment and Skill Development:</b> The emphasis on empowerment through skill development, language training, and professional courses is a key success factor. Equipping women with the tools to achieve autonomy, both economically and socially, contributes to their successful integration.</p> <p><b>Psychological and Trauma Support:</b> Acknowledging and addressing the psychological trauma experienced by participants is vital. The provision of individualized psychological support and art therapy helps women in their healing process.</p> <p><b>Financial Sustainability:</b> Diversifying funding sources, including private donations and collaborations with foundations like Fondazione Vodafone, ensures financial sustainability. This reduces dependency on a single funding stream and enhances the project's long-term viability.</p> <p><b>Continuous Monitoring and Adaptation:</b> Regular monitoring and evaluation allow the project to adapt to emerging challenges and refine its methodologies. Flexibility in adjusting approaches based on the evolving needs of participants contributes to ongoing success.</p>
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	<p><b>Female Solidarity and Feminist Approach:</b> <i>The project's foundation on feminist principles and the emphasis on female solidarity are critical elements. The autonomy and agency of women are central, and the project operates as a women-led initiative.</i></p>
<p><b>Constraints</b></p>	<p><i>Constraints or elements of danger in the application of this methodology may include:</i></p> <p><b>Security and Safety Concerns:</b> <i>Given that the women participating in the project have experienced various forms of violence, ensuring their safety and security during their stay is crucial. The risk of potential harm or retaliation from abusers may exist.</i></p> <p><b>Cultural Sensitivity:</b> <i>Migrant and refugee women come from diverse cultural backgrounds. Cultural differences and sensitivities need to be considered to provide effective support without causing unintended distress.</i></p> <p><b>Psychological Trauma:</b> <i>Women involved in the project have undergone traumatic experiences. Addressing their psychological well-being and providing adequate mental health support is essential. It's crucial to be aware of potential triggers and handle trauma with sensitivity.</i></p> <p><b>Legal Challenges:</b> <i>The legal status of the participants, including their immigration status and rights, may pose challenges. Legal complexities related to asylum applications and protection need careful attention. Indeed, recently, the CADMI refused to receive public financial support anymore because the Municipality requested to provide the fiscal code of the women migrants, which was threatening their anonymity and rights to privacy and protection.</i></p>
<p><b>Sustainability</b></p>	<p><u><i>Institutional Sustainability:</i></u></p>

	<p><i>Legal Recognition and Support: Gain continued recognition and support from governmental institutions at local, regional, and national levels to ensure the project's legality and legitimacy.</i></p> <p><i>Establishing Protocols: Develop and implement clear protocols and guidelines for the operation of the project, covering aspects like confidentiality, security, and collaboration with partner organizations.</i></p> <p><i>Monitoring and Evaluation: Establish a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to assess the project's effectiveness, identify areas for improvement, and demonstrate impact to stakeholders.</i></p> <p><u><i>Social Sustainability:</i></u></p> <p><i>Community Integration: Promote community engagement and integration programs to foster understanding and acceptance of migrant and refugee women within the broader society.</i></p> <p><i>Cultural Competence: Continue developing and maintaining cultural competence within the project team to address the diverse needs of women from different cultural backgrounds.</i></p> <p><u><i>Economic Sustainability:</i></u></p> <p><i>Diversification of Funding: Seek and secure diverse funding sources, including private donations, grants, and collaborations with foundations and corporate partners.</i></p> <p><i>Governmental and Corporate Support: Strengthen relationships with local governments, corporations, and philanthropic organizations to secure ongoing financial and in-kind support.</i></p> <p><u><i>Capacity Building and Training:</i></u></p> <p><i>Continuous Training: Provide ongoing training for staff, volunteers, and participants to enhance their skills and knowledge in areas like trauma support, cultural competency, and project management.</i></p> <p><i>Empowerment Programs: Develop and expand programs that empower women with skills relevant to the local job market, fostering economic independence.</i></p>
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	<p><u>Networking and Advocacy:</u></p> <p><i>National and International Networking: Establish and maintain connections with national and international networks, NGOs, and advocacy groups working on similar issues to share best practices, gain support, and contribute to policy discussions.</i></p>
<p><b>Transferability</b></p>	<p><i>Several elements of the "Un viaggio per la libertà" project can be considered transferable to other contexts and countries facing similar challenges related to supporting migrant women who have experienced violence. These transferable elements include:</i></p> <p><b>Housing and Shelter:</b> <i>Identifying suitable accommodations is fundamental. This involves understanding the local housing market, ensuring safety and security, and providing a supportive environment for the women. Tailoring housing solutions to local contexts and regulations is essential.</i></p> <p><i>Facilitating access to <b>healthcare services</b> is a material consideration. This involves collaborating with local healthcare providers, establishing relationships with clinics and hospitals, and ensuring that the women have access to necessary medical care.</i></p> <p><b>Educational Resources:</b> <i>With Italian language teachers, psychologists, and mediators. Those operators are essential to build a trustworthy relationship.</i></p> <p><b>Adopting a holistic approach</b> <i>that addresses the emotional, economic, and housing autonomy of migrant women can be applied universally.</i></p> <p><b>Implementing trauma-informed care</b> <i>practices is transferable to various cultural contexts. Providing specialized support for individuals who have experienced trauma is essential for their well-being and recovery.</i></p> <p><b>Establishing collaborations with local institutions, government bodies, and NGOs.</b> <i>Building partnerships</i></p>

	<p><i>enhances the effectiveness of interventions and promotes a collective response to the needs of migrant women.</i></p> <p><b>Providing continuous training and capacity-building programs for staff.</b> <i>Ensuring that the workforce is equipped to handle the diverse needs of beneficiaries is essential in various contexts.</i></p> <p><b>Documenting experiences, best practices, and lessons.</b> <i>Sharing knowledge with other organizations, both nationally and internationally, contributes to the collective understanding of effective approaches.</i></p> <p><b>Integrating economic empowerment initiatives,</b> <i>such as vocational training and entrepreneurship programs. Empowering women economically enhances their self-sufficiency and independence.</i></p> <p><b>Offering legal and administrative support</b> <i>to address the complex needs of migrant women. Navigating legal processes and providing assistance in regularization efforts is a common challenge in various settings.</i></p> <p><b>Establishing a robust monitoring and evaluation framework</b> <i>for assessing project. Regular evaluations contribute to continuous improvement and accountability.</i></p>
<p><b>Related resources that have been developed</b></p>	<p><i>E-Learning Module have been developed to deliver remote courses to the operators of the 85 anti-violence centers. The content focuses on specific aspects of supporting migrant women regarding the violence they have endured and the resulting traumas.</i></p> <p><i>The project expand itself and was replicated in 2 more cities: Catania and Bari.</i></p>
<p><b>Language(s)</b></p>	<p><i>Italian</i></p>

<b>Application of good practices to assist discriminated migrant women and combat violence against women</b>	
<b>Success Factors for use for Woman Migrants</b>	<i>The methodology described does specifically concern migrant women.</i>
<b>Constraints for use for Woman Migrants</b>	/
<b>Summary</b>	
<b>Summary of the best practice</b>	<p><i>"Un Viaggio per la Libertà," initiated by CADMI, is a pioneering project addressing the profound challenges faced by migrant and refugee women who have endured gender-based violence. This comprehensive initiative stands out by providing a dedicated shelter equipped with eight bedrooms, offering a safe haven for women who have experienced sexual violence, forced marriages, genital mutilation, and sexual exploitation. The project adopts a holistic support system, engaging professionals such as educators, psychologists, linguistic/cultural mediators, and art therapy practitioners. Notably, it emphasizes the overarching goal of achieving emotional, economic, and housing autonomy for the women involved.</i></p> <p><i>The methodology employed is rooted in feminist empowerment, trauma-informed care, inclusive integration, and a holistic approach. This approach translates into practical tools such as individualized empowerment plans, language courses, household management training, art therapy sessions, co-residency agreements, and regular group meetings. The dynamic evolution of the project is evident in its initial phase, maintaining continuous educator presence, and subsequently adopting a strategic approach to ensure personalized empowerment projects for each woman. Immediate economic autonomy is facilitated through monthly allowances, instigating independence right from the project's inception.</i></p> <p><i>The residents actively participate in managing domestic responsibilities collaboratively, such as weekly grocery shopping,</i></p>



	<p><i>instilling valuable skills like budgeting and domestic economy management. The approach of using cash for these activities not only facilitates practical learning but also teaches independent financial resource management. The focus on trauma processing is a core aspect, with all residents benefiting from individual psychological support, and a notable six opting for additional art therapy sessions.</i></p> <p><i>A key success factor lies in the project's ability to provide comprehensive support services, ensuring that women receive multifaceted assistance tailored to their individual needs. Safety and security measures, including a confidential accommodation facility and continuous monitoring, contribute significantly to the overall well-being of the participants. Empowerment and skill development play a crucial role, equipping women with tools for economic and social autonomy, thereby contributing to their successful integration into society.</i></p> <p><i>The sustainability plan encompasses various dimensions, including institutional, social, and economic sustainability. This involves gaining continued recognition and support from governmental institutions, establishing clear protocols, promoting community engagement, diversifying funding sources, and continuous training for staff and participants. The project's transferability lies in its adaptable elements, such as housing solutions, access to healthcare services, educational resources, a holistic approach, trauma-informed care practices, collaborations, continuous training, documentation of experiences, economic empowerment initiatives, legal and administrative support, and a robust monitoring and evaluation framework. This model serves as an invaluable blueprint for addressing the challenges faced by discriminated migrant women globally, offering a comprehensive pathway towards healing, empowerment, and autonomy.</i></p>
<b>Contact details</b>	
<b>Name</b>	Un viaggio per la libertà – Casa delle donne maltrattate

<b>Company/Institution</b>	NGO
<b>Address/Website</b>	<a href="https://cadmi.org/">https://cadmi.org/</a>
<b>Telephone</b>	/
<b>E-mail</b>	/

### Italian Best practices n.3 : WASI

Wasi, derived from the Quechua term for "House," stands as a psychological support initiative dedicated to migrant women in Italy. Established in 2019 and significantly expanded during the pandemic, Wasi provides a secure haven. It engages native-speaking psychologists, proficient in diverse languages, offering counseling. Beyond psychological support, Wasi collaborates with strategic partners to foster economic empowerment.

Tailored exclusively for migrant women in Italy, Wasi is designed to meet their psychological and comprehensive needs. The initiative offers targeted support, counseling services, and empowerment initiatives, specifically addressing the nuanced challenges encountered by these women.

The key actors in the Wasi initiative encompass migrant women who constitute the primary beneficiaries, actively seeking support for psychological well-being, empowerment, and refuge. The involvement of Mother-Tongue Professionals, represented by psychologists with diverse ethnicities and languages, ensures a culturally sensitive approach. Support Staff efficiently manage administrative and logistical tasks for the seamless operation of the initiative. Collaborating Organizations, including entities such as Caritas Ambrosiana and Università di Pavia, contribute valuable resources and expertise. Trainers and Workshop Facilitators, responsible for language and skill development, actively contribute to the economic empowerment of the participants.

Wasi is resolute in its commitment to addressing various forms of violence, including physical, psychological, economic, and gender-based violence. The initiative achieves this through structured training, workshops, and targeted support programs.

Originating from the imperative to support migrant women grappling with psychological challenges, further intensified by the COVID-19 pandemic, Wasi was launched in 2019. It is crafted to provide comprehensive support, acknowledging the intersectionality of gender and migration.

Implemented by ASCS, Wasi engages various entities such as Parrocchia di Santo Stefano Maggiore, CEI, Lombardy Region, Caritas Ambrosiana, Università di Pavia, Cooperativa Farsi Prossimo, and Fondazione Haiku Lugano.

The primary objective of Wasi is to establish a secure space for migrant women. The initiative addresses psychological well-being through individual and group counseling, workshops, and economic empowerment programs.

The methodology encompasses the meticulous recruitment of diverse psychologists, one-on-one counseling sessions, group interventions, and skill-building courses. Stages such as pre-implementation, implementation, and post-implementation are integral to the initiative's methodology.

Practical examples of tools utilized include secure online platforms for counseling sessions, virtual meeting tools for workshops, and a language courses platform for online learning.

The program's sequential flow incorporates initial assessments, personalized counseling, group sessions, workshops, language courses, collaboration with external organizations, family involvement, and continuous monitoring.

The results achieved by Wasi are noteworthy, with over 250 women seeking assistance annually, involving approximately 90 women each quarter. All psychologists being mother-tongue speakers ensures cultural understanding, and 85% of women completing the program find a positive path forward.

### **Success factors**

Wasi's success is rooted in the diversity of its professionals. Mother-tongue psychologists, each representing different ethnicities and languages, form a crucial component. This diversity ensures a nuanced understanding of cultural intricacies, lifestyles, and specific needs of migrant women. The cultural competence brought by these professionals enhances the effectiveness of counseling services. Additionally, their varied backgrounds enable Wasi to cater to a broad range of migrant women, acknowledging and respecting the diversity in languages and experiences.

The initiative stands out for its commitment to tailored counseling and support. Wasi acknowledges and addresses the unique psychological challenges faced by each woman through personalized one-on-one sessions. This approach ensures that issues such as anxiety, depression, or trauma related to migration are specifically targeted, fostering a more profound impact on the mental well-being of migrant women.

Creating a sense of community and mutual support is a vital success factor. Wasi achieves this by facilitating group sessions, known as Auto Mutuo Aiuto. These group interactions provide a platform for women to share personal experiences related to psychological challenges in the migration process. Recognizing the value of shared journeys in overcoming psychological challenges fosters a supportive environment and strengthens the bonds among participants.

Wasi's success is not limited to traditional counseling. It embraces a holistic support approach, extending beyond psychological assistance. The initiative integrates skill development courses, workshops on empowerment and violence prevention, and economic freedom initiatives. By addressing various facets of women's lives, Wasi contributes to a comprehensive assistance framework, recognizing the multifaceted needs of migrant women.

Flexibility and adaptability are key success factors for Wasi. The initiative demonstrated resilience, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, by swiftly adapting to challenges. The introduction of online support sessions ensured the continuity of services, showcasing Wasi's ability to navigate unforeseen circumstances and maintain its commitment to supporting migrant women.

Wasi empowers women economically by offering skill development courses. These initiatives, including acquiring a driver's license, language learning, and creative writing, aim to enhance the independence of migrant women and reduce economic dependence. The emphasis on skill development aligns with Wasi's broader goal of fostering empowerment in various aspects of the participants' lives.

### **Constraints**

A significant constraint faced by Wasi is the potential stigma or resistance within the communities of migrant women. Fear of judgment or repercussions may deter women from openly seeking psychological support. Overcoming this challenge requires strategies that address the societal barriers hindering access to Wasi's services.

Engaging with issues of violence against women poses security risks for participants. Some migrant women may be experiencing violence, and Wasi's involvement in addressing this issue exposes participants to potential security threats. Ensuring the safety of women seeking refuge from violence becomes a critical consideration and requires careful management.

Protecting the confidentiality and privacy of participant information is a paramount concern. Breaches in data privacy could harm the women involved and erode trust in the initiative. Wasi needs to implement robust measures to ensure the security and confidentiality of participant data throughout counseling sessions and workshops.

The success factors of Wasi include the diversity of professionals, represented by mother-tongue psychologists, offering cultural competence. Tailored counseling sessions provide personalized one-on-one interventions, fostering a sense of community through shared experiences. The initiative goes beyond psychological

assistance, incorporating holistic support with economic empowerment initiatives. Wasi showcases adaptability to challenges, ensuring service continuity during unforeseen circumstances. Skill development initiatives contribute to economic independence.

## Conclusion

In weaving together a tapestry of support, the Wasi initiative unfolds as a remarkable complete program, navigating the complex terrain of challenges faced by migrant women in Italy. Born out of the pressing need to bridge the gap in specialized assistance, Wasi has not only filled a void but has done so with a holistic and culturally sensitive approach.

What sets Wasi apart is its holistic view of well-being. It extends beyond conventional psychological support, embracing an array of empowerment initiatives such as skill development courses and workshops on violence prevention. This multifaceted approach acknowledges the diverse needs of migrant women and underscores the importance of fostering independence beyond immediate mental health concerns.

Cultural sensitivity is woven into the very fabric of Wasi. The initiative's commitment to employing mother-tongue psychologists representing diverse ethnicities reflects a nuanced understanding of the unique cultural nuances, lifestyles, and challenges faced by migrant women. This inclusivity creates a safe space that resonates with the diversity within the migrant women community.

Skill development emerges as a powerful tool for empowerment within Wasi. Courses encompassing driver's license acquisition, language proficiency, and creative writing contribute tangibly to the economic independence of migrant women. This emphasis aligns seamlessly with the broader vision of fostering autonomy and reducing economic dependence.

In conclusion, Wasi stands not merely as a psychological support initiative but as a transformative force, fostering empowerment, resilience, and community among migrant women in Italy. Its ethos of inclusivity, adaptability, and sustainability positions it as an exemplary practice deserving of recognition and consideration for emulation in analogous contexts across the globe.

<b>WASI</b>	
<b>Area of intervention</b>	<i>The best practice of Wasi encompasses psychological support and empowerment through skill development, including language courses, creative writing classes, and professional development initiatives and financial education.</i>
<b>Short description of the best practice</b>	<p><i>Wasi is an initiative providing psychological support for migrant women in Italy. Named after the Quechua word for "Casa" (meaning "House"), it aims to be a safe haven for women from diverse ethnic backgrounds who have undertaken hopeful journeys and are seeking a space for expression, psychological support, refuge from violence, or employment opportunities.</i></p> <p><i>Established just before the pandemic, Wasi swiftly became a vital resource for approximately 250 women annually, including Arabs, Hispanics, Ukrainians, and Russians. These women, facing anxieties and depression exacerbated by COVID-19, often find themselves victims of violence. Wasi's approach involves native-speaking psychologists who not only provide professional competence but also ensure linguistic and cultural understanding.</i></p> <p><i>Lucia Fucinelli, the coordinator of the psychological support center for migrant women, reveals that the project, launched in July 2019 for the Latin American community and later extended to include Ukrainian and Russian women, faced its official launch in January 2020, coinciding with the onset of the pandemic. The initiative adapted to the changing landscape, reaching women in Portuguese, English, and Arabic, in addition to the initially targeted languages.</i></p> <p><i>The initiative is not solely confined to psychological assistance. It collaborates with Caritas Ambrosiana, the University of Pavia, and Cooperativa Farsi Prossimo within the broader framework of Wasi Casa, aiming to provide refuge to women and free them from economic dependency. Skill-building courses, including acquiring licenses, learning Italian and</i></p>



	<p>English, and creative writing, are offered to empower women economically and socially.</p> <p>Wasi represents a comprehensive, culturally sensitive, and adaptable model for supporting the mental health of migrant women. Its emphasis on empowerment, community engagement, and continuous adaptation to meet evolving needs makes it a noteworthy and commendable practice.</p>
<p><b>Target audience</b></p>	<p>The methodology of Wasi is specifically addressed to migrant women. The initiative is designed to meet the psychological and holistic needs of women who have migrated to Italy, offering support, counseling, and empowerment tailored to the unique challenges and experiences faced by migrant women.</p>
<p><b>Actors who apply the methodology or use the tool</b></p>	<p>The Wasi methodology involves various actors who play crucial roles in its application. These actors contribute to the success of the initiative and include:</p> <p><b>Migrant Women:</b> Migrant women are at the center of the initiative. They actively seek support for psychological well-being, empowerment, and refuge from violence. Their participation, engagement, and feedback are essential for the success of Wasi.</p> <p><b>Mother-Tongue Professionals:</b> Psychologists involved in the initiative are mother-tongue speakers, representing diverse linguistic backgrounds. This ensures a deep understanding of the cultural nuances, language intricacies, and lived experiences of the migrant women.</p> <p><b>Support Staff:</b>  <b>Administrative and Logistical Support:</b> Personnel responsible for administrative and logistical tasks ensure the smooth operation of the initiative. Their roles include scheduling sessions, managing resources, and maintaining the confidentiality and security of the counseling process.</p> <p><b>Collaborating Organizations:</b>  <b>Partners and Collaborators:</b> Institutions such as Caritas Ambrosiana, Università di Pavia, and Cooperativa Farsi Prossimo collaborate with Wasi. These partnerships expand the support network, bringing in additional resources, expertise, and opportunities for the migrant women.</p>

	<p><b>Trainers and Workshop Facilitators:</b></p> <p><i>Skill Development Instructors: Professionals responsible for conducting skill-building courses play a crucial role. Language instructors, job placement trainers, and creative writing facilitators contribute to the economic empowerment of migrant women.</i></p>
<p><b>Type of violence opposed</b></p>	<p><i>Forms of Violence Addressed:</i></p> <p><b>Physical Violence:</b> <i>Many women seeking assistance from Wasi report instances of physical violence. The initiative acknowledges and works to counteract the immediate and long-term impacts of physical abuse experienced during migration or within domestic settings.</i></p> <p><b>Psychological Violence:</b> <i>The psychological toll of migration is evident, with a significant percentage seeking support for anxiety and depression. Wasi addresses the mental health challenges arising from the complex migration process and the additional stressors introduced by the COVID-19 pandemic.</i></p> <p><b>Economic Violence:</b> <i>Women facing economic hardships, often linked to their migrant status, find refuge in Wasi. The initiative offers skill development courses, including language acquisition, driving lessons, and creative writing, aiming to empower women economically and break free from financial dependency.</i></p> <p><b>Gender-Based Violence:</b> <i>The project actively engages in combating gender-based violence, conducting training sessions, thematic workshops, and support programs. The initiative fosters awareness and prevention strategies to empower women against violence.</i></p>
<p><b>Introduction</b></p>	<p><i>The initial context for the establishment of Wasi was the growing population of migrant women in Italy, facing psychological challenges associated with their migration experiences. The challenge addressed was the lack of specialized support for these women, exacerbated by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The need for a safe space to</i></p>

*address mental health issues, language barriers, and experiences of violence among migrant women became evident.*

*Wasi, initiated in July 2019, is the first psychological support center for migrant women in Italy. It serves as a crucial resource for over 250 women annually, offering psychological counseling, group support, and holistic empowerment programs. The initiative expanded its services and adapted to the challenges brought by the pandemic, providing a comprehensive approach that goes beyond immediate mental health concerns. The practice involves native-speaking psychologists, workshops, and skill-building initiatives to empower women economically and socially.*

*The project officially began in January 2020, coinciding with the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. The timeframe extends into the current period, with ongoing efforts to improve and expand services.*

*Gender is a central consideration in both the challenge and the good practice itself. Migrant women, facing unique challenges due to their gender and migration status, are specifically targeted by Wasi. The psychological support provided is tailored to address issues that disproportionately affect women, such as gender-based violence and mental health struggles. The initiative recognizes the diverse needs of women across different age groups and ethnicities.*

*In terms of the good practice, Wasi's approach involves employing female psychologists who are native speakers of the languages spoken by the migrant women, ensuring cultural and linguistic sensitivity. The empowerment initiatives, including skill-building courses, consider gender-specific challenges in fostering economic independence and social integration.*

*The workshops and support groups create a gender-inclusive space for women to share experiences and address topics like the power of femininity and protection from violence. Overall, gender is a fundamental consideration in both understanding*

	<p><i>the challenges faced by migrant women and tailoring effective support through the Wasi initiative.</i></p>
<p><b>Where the good practice takes place (Description of organization)</b></p>	<p><i>The Wasi project involves several institutions, partners, implementing agencies, and donors that contribute to its success:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>ASCS (Agenzia Scalabriniana per la Cooperazione allo Sviluppo) is the implementing agency behind the Wasi project. It plays a central role in coordinating and executing the initiative, ensuring its alignment with the goals of providing psychological support to migrant women.</i></li> <li>• <i>Parrocchia di Santo Stefano Maggiore and Chiesa del Carmine (Milan). These church entities in Milan collaborate with ASCS and contribute to the project's implementation. Their involvement may include providing physical spaces for counselling sessions, workshops, and other activities.</i></li> <li>• <i>CEI – Conferenza Episcopale Italiana. The CEI is a donor organization contributing to the Wasi project. Its involvement is primarily financial.</i></li> <li>• <i>The Lombardy Region is another donor providing financial support to the Wasi project. Its contributions are essential for sustaining the initiative's activities.</i></li> <li>• <i>Caritas Ambrosiana, Università di Pavia, and Cooperativa Farsi Prossimo. These organizations collaborate with Wasi, expanding its support network. Their involvement may include providing additional resources, expertise, and outreach capabilities. The collaboration aims to create a more comprehensive and holistic approach to support migrant women beyond psychological assistance.</i></li> <li>• <i>Fondazione Haiku Lugano is involved in the project in Rome. While the exact nature of its involvement is not specified, it is likely a donor or supporter contributing to the initiative's success.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Context</b></p>	<p><i>Wasi, the psychological support center for migrant women, originated from the collaborative efforts of the Scalabrinian Agency for Cooperation and Development (ASCS) in Italy. The initiative was born out of a recognized gap in specialized</i></p>

support for migrant women who had undertaken journeys of hope to Italy. The genesis of Wasi can be traced back to July 2019 when it was conceived as a response to the mental health challenges faced by the growing population of migrant women in the country.

The problems and needs that prompted the implementation of Wasi were multifaceted:

- *Psychological Challenges of Migration: Migrant women experienced heightened psychological challenges associated with the migration process. The emotional toll of leaving one's home country, adapting to a new culture, and the uncertainties involved in the migration journey were significant stressors.*
- *Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic: The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic further exacerbated the mental health struggles of migrant women. Issues such as increased anxiety, depression, and grief due to losses became prevalent among this demographic.*
- *Violence Against Migrant Women: Many migrant women were victims of various forms of violence, including physical, psychological, and economic abuse. The need for a safe space to address and escape from such violence was a pressing concern.*
- *Language Barriers and Cultural Isolation: Language barriers and cultural isolation were significant challenges for migrant women. These factors not only contributed to difficulties in accessing mental health services but also hindered effective communication and understanding.*
- *Lack of Tailored Support Services: There was a noticeable lack of tailored support services that considered the unique needs of migrant women. Existing mental health services often did not provide the cultural and linguistic sensitivity required for effective support.*
- *Economic Empowerment and Integration Needs: Migrant women faced challenges in economic empowerment and social integration. The need for skill-building initiatives, language courses, and programs that would contribute to both personal development and economic independence was evident.*

	<p><i>The genesis of Wasi can be seen as a response to these identified problems and needs. The initiative aimed to create a comprehensive support system that not only addressed immediate mental health concerns but also considered the broader context of the challenges faced by migrant women in Italy. The collaborative efforts involving ASCS, local churches, and various organizations reflected a collective commitment to filling the existing gaps and providing a holistic solution for the well-being and empowerment of migrant women.</i></p>
<p><b>Objective</b></p>	<p><i>The primary objective of Wasi, the psychological support centre for migrant women, is to provide a safe and supportive space for women who have migrated to Italy, particularly those facing challenges post-COVID. The initiative aims to address the psychological well-being of migrant women by offering individual and group counselling, along with empowerment programs. Wasi seeks to be a refuge for women from diverse ethnic backgrounds, including Arab, Hispanic, Ukrainian, and Russian, who may be experiencing anxiety, depression, or victimization, especially during the pandemic.</i></p> <p><i>The initiative aspires to be a haven for women who have embarked on journeys of hope, offering them a place to express themselves, seek psychological support, and find refuge from violence. Additionally, Wasi aims to provide opportunities for employment, recognizing the multifaceted needs of migrant women beyond mental health support.</i></p> <p><i>The initiative addresses prevalent issues such as anxiety, depression, grief management, family conflicts, and experiences of violence. The services extend beyond individual counselling to include group support through Auto Mutuo Aiuto sessions, creating a platform for women to share their experiences and build interpersonal relationships.</i></p> <p><i>Beyond psychological support, Wasi is actively involved in empowering women economically and socially. It aims to provide not only a refuge but also economic freedom to women</i></p>



	<p>through courses in acquiring skills, obtaining licenses, and learning languages.</p>
<p><b>The description of the methodology</b></p>	<p>The methodology requires a selection of qualified professionals: Recruiting six psychologists, each representing different ethnicities and languages. Ensuring psychologists have a deep understanding of the diverse backgrounds of the migrant women. Mother-tongue psychologists conduct one-on-one counseling sessions addressing anxiety, depression, and other psychological challenges. Linguistic and cultural sensitivity is maintained to enhance the effectiveness of therapeutic interventions.</p> <p>Stages:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Pre-Implementation (2019-2020): Needs assessment, partner collaboration, and professional recruitment.</li> <li>2) Implementation (From January 2020): Launch of counseling services and group sessions, adaptation during the pandemic.</li> <li>3) Post-Implementation (Ongoing): Community expansion, collaboration with additional organizations, and continuous service improvement.</li> </ol> <p>Tool Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Counseling Sessions Platform: Usage of secure online platforms for individual counseling sessions. Integration of tools for virtual communication, ensuring privacy and accessibility.</li> <li>• Online Workshop Tools: Virtual meeting tools for conducting educational workshops and thematic sessions. Interactive platforms for group participation, discussions, and sharing experiences.</li> <li>• Language Courses Platform: Online language learning tools for Italian, English, and other languages. Tailored courses to meet the linguistic needs of participants.</li> <li>• Creative Writing Platforms: Online platforms for conducting creative writing courses. Utilization of collaborative tools for sharing written work and fostering creativity.</li> <li>• Auto Mutuo Aiuto (AMA) Groups: Facilitation of group sessions where women share personal experiences</li> </ul>



	<p><i>related to psychological challenges in the migration process. Fostering connections, socialization, and interpersonal relationships among participants.</i></p> <p><i>Main Activities and Program Flow Process:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>1. Women reach out to Wasi seeking support. Initial assessments to understand individual needs and challenges.</i></li> <li><i>2. Women participate in personalized counseling sessions. Engagement in AMA groups for shared experiences.</i></li> <li><i>3. Attendance in workshops addressing psychological well-being and empowerment. Enrollment in language courses and skill-building programs.</i></li> <li><i>4. Collaboration with external organizations for broader support. Involvement of families and community leaders for sustained assistance.</i></li> <li><i>5. Continuous monitoring of participants' progress. Adaptation of services based on feedback and evolving needs.</i></li> </ol>
<p><b>Achieved results</b></p>	<p><i>The achieved results with Wasi, the psychological support initiative for migrant women in Italy, can be summarized as follows:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>- Over 250 women annually seek assistance from Wasi, indicating a recognized and utilized resource.</i></li> <li><i>- Approximately 90 women every quarter, with a diverse ethnic distribution (46% Hispanic, 31% Arab, 10% Portuguese, 8% Slavic, and 5% Anglo-Saxon).</i></li> <li><i>- Despite the project's initiation in July 2019 for the Latin American community, the onset of the pandemic in January 2020 prompted quick adjustments. The initiative expanded to include women speaking Portuguese, English, and Arabic, demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness. All psychologists are mother-tongue speakers, enhancing cultural understanding. Individual counseling sessions, along with Auto Mutuo Aiuto (AMA) groups, provide tailored support, recognizing the importance of cultural nuances.</i></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Wasi takes a proactive stance against gender-based violence. It conducts training sessions, thematic workshops, and supports women dealing with physical, psychological, and economic violence, emphasizing awareness and prevention.</i></li> <li>- <i>The initiative goes beyond psychological support, offering skill development courses such as acquiring a driver's license, learning Italian and English, and creative writing to empower women economically and socially.</i></li> <li>- <i>The project expands the support network, and was also implemented in Rome.</i></li> <li>- <i>An encouraging 85% of women completing the Wasi psychological support program find a positive path forward, although challenges in retaining some migrant women are acknowledged. Future plans include enhancing service efficacy by involving more stakeholders, including families and community leaders.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Success Factors</b></p>	<p><b>Diversity of Professionals:</b>  <i>Mother-Tongue Psychologists: Having psychologists who are mother-tongue speakers ensures a deep understanding of the cultural nuances, lifestyles, and specific needs of migrant women. This cultural competence enhances the effectiveness of counselling and support services.</i>  <i>Also, all the psychologists are representing different ethnicities and languages. This diversity enables a broad reach, allowing the initiative to cater to the varied backgrounds of migrant women.</i></p> <p><b>Tailored Counseling and Support:</b>  <i>Providing one-on-one counseling sessions addresses the unique psychological challenges faced by each woman. This personalized approach acknowledges and targets specific issues such as anxiety, depression, or trauma related to migration.</i></p> <p><b>Shared Experiences:</b>  <i>Facilitating group sessions (auto and reciprocate help groups) where women can share personal experiences fosters a sense of community and mutual support. This approach recognizes</i></p>

	<p><i>the value of shared experiences in overcoming psychological challenges.</i></p> <p><b>Beyond Psychological Assistance:</b>  <i>Going beyond traditional counseling, the initiative offers holistic support. Skill development courses, workshops on empowerment and violence prevention, and economic freedom initiatives contribute to a comprehensive assistance framework.</i></p> <p><b>Adaptation to Challenges:</b>  <i>The ability to adapt to challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, such as introducing online support sessions, ensured continuity of services. This flexibility showcases the initiative's resilience in the face of unforeseen circumstances.</i></p> <p><b>Empowerment Through Skill Development:</b>  <i>Offering courses for skill development, including acquiring a driver's license, language learning, and creative writing, empowers women economically. This approach aims to enhance their independence and reduce economic dependence.</i></p>
<p><b>Constraints</b></p>	<p><b>Stigma and Resistance:</b> <i>Migrant women may face stigma or resistance within their communities, making it challenging to openly seek psychological support. Fear of judgment or repercussions could deter women from accessing the services.</i></p> <p><b>Violence and Security Risks:</b> <i>Some migrant women may be experiencing violence, and the project's involvement in addressing this issue may expose participants to security risks. Ensuring the safety of women seeking refuge from violence is crucial.</i></p> <p><b>Data Privacy Concerns:</b> <i>Ensuring the privacy and confidentiality of participant information in counseling sessions and workshops is crucial. Breaches in data privacy could harm the women involved and erode trust in the initiative.</i></p>

<p><b>Sustainability</b></p>	<p><i>Institutional Sustainability:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Diverse Funding Sources</i></li> <li>• <i>Partnerships and Collaboration</i></li> <li>• <i>Ongoing training and development programs for staff and volunteers ensure a skilled and motivated team, enhancing the initiative's effectiveness.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>Social Sustainability:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Community Engagement</i></li> <li>• <i>Cultural Sensitivity</i></li> </ul> <p><i>Environmental Sustainability:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Digital Integration: Leverage technology for virtual counselling, workshops, and training, reducing the environmental footprint associated with physical meetings. Ensure accessibility to online resources for environmental sustainability.</i></li> <li>• <i>Resource Efficiency: Implement eco-friendly practices within the organization. This includes energy-efficient technologies, waste reduction, and sustainable resource management.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>Monitoring and Evaluation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Impact Assessment: Regularly assess the impact of the initiative on the well-being of migrant women. Use data and feedback to measure success, identify areas for improvement, and adapt services accordingly.</i></li> <li>• <i>Flexibility: Maintain flexibility in the program design to respond to external factors such as changes in migration patterns, socio-economic conditions, or public health crises.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Transferability</b></p>	<p><i>Several elements of the Wasi methodology can be considered for transfer to other contexts and countries, contributing to the success of psychological support initiatives for migrant women. Key transferable elements include:</i></p> <p><i><u>Mother-Tongue Psychologists:</u> Deploying psychologists who are native speakers and share the cultural background of the women seeking support is crucial. This ensures a nuanced understanding of cultural contexts, facilitating effective communication and empathy.</i></p> <p><i><u>Online and Face-to-Face Support:</u> The flexibility to offer both online and face-to-face support is essential. Online platforms enhance accessibility, especially during challenges like the</i></p>

	<p>COVID-19 pandemic, while face-to-face interactions provide a more personalized and immediate connection.</p> <p><u>Free Access to Services:</u> Providing psychological support services free of charge removes financial barriers, making the initiative accessible to a broader range of migrant women. This is particularly important for individuals facing economic challenges during the migration process.</p> <p><u>Skill Development Programs:</u> Integrating skill development courses, such as language acquisition and professional training, contributes to the economic empowerment of migrant women. This element can be adapted to suit the specific needs and opportunities in different regions.</p> <p><u>Collaboration with Organizations:</u> Establishing partnerships with local organizations, educational institutions, and community groups enhances the support network. Collaboration brings in diverse expertise, resources, and a broader range of opportunities for the women.</p> <p><u>Empowerment Through Education:</u> Conducting workshops addressing themes like women's empowerment, violence prevention, and cultural exchange fosters a sense of community and empowerment. Activities should be inclusive and tailored to the diverse backgrounds of participants.</p> <p><u>Feedback Mechanisms:</u> Establishing continuous feedback mechanisms from participants helps in adapting services to evolving needs. Regular assessments and adjustments ensure the relevance and effectiveness of the support offered.</p>
<p><b>Related resources that have been developed</b></p>	<p>Some posters have been produced to organize meeting between those women, or to invite them to support groups</p>
<p><b>Language(s)</b></p>	<p>Support is provided in Spanish, Ukrainian, Russian Portuguese and Tagalog</p>
<p><b>Application of good practices to assist discriminated migrant women and combat violence against women</b></p>	
<p><b>Success Factors for use for Woman Migrants</b></p>	<p>Yes, the methodology described for Wasi specifically concerns migrant women. The success factors mentioned in the context of Wasi are tailored to address the unique needs and</p>

	<p>challenges faced by migrant women during their resettlement process.</p>
<p><b>Constraints for use for Woman Migrants</b></p>	<p>/</p>
<p><b>Summary</b></p>	
<p><b>Summary of the best practice</b></p>	<p><i>Wasi, derived from the Quechua term for "House," stands as a psychological support initiative dedicated to migrant women in Italy. Established in 2019 and significantly expanded during the pandemic, Wasi provides a secure haven. It engages native-speaking psychologists, proficient in diverse languages, offering counseling. Beyond psychological support, Wasi collaborates with strategic partners to foster economic empowerment.</i></p> <p><i>Tailored exclusively for migrant women in Italy, Wasi is designed to meet their psychological and comprehensive needs. The initiative offers targeted support, counseling services, and empowerment initiatives, specifically addressing the nuanced challenges encountered by these women.</i></p> <p><i>The key actors in the Wasi initiative encompass migrant women who constitute the primary beneficiaries, actively seeking support for psychological well-being, empowerment, and refuge. The involvement of Mother-Tongue Professionals, represented by psychologists with diverse ethnicities and languages, ensures a culturally sensitive approach. Support Staff efficiently manage administrative and logistical tasks for the seamless operation of the initiative. Collaborating Organizations, including entities such as Caritas Ambrosiana and Università di Pavia, contribute valuable resources and expertise. Trainers and Workshop Facilitators, responsible for language and skill development, actively contribute to the economic empowerment of the participants.</i></p> <p><i>Wasi is resolute in its commitment to addressing various forms of violence, including physical, psychological, economic, and gender-based violence. The initiative achieves this through</i></p>



structured training, workshops, and targeted support programs.

*Originating from the imperative to support migrant women grappling with psychological challenges, further intensified by the COVID-19 pandemic, Wasi was launched in 2019. It is crafted to provide comprehensive support, acknowledging the intersectionality of gender and migration.*

*Implemented by ASCS, Wasi engages various entities such as Parrocchia di Santo Stefano Maggiore, CEI, Lombardy Region, Caritas Ambrosiana, Università di Pavia, Cooperativa Farsi Prossimo, and Fondazione Haiku Lugano.*

*The primary objective of Wasi is to establish a secure space for migrant women. The initiative addresses psychological well-being through individual and group counseling, workshops, and economic empowerment programs.*

*The methodology encompasses the meticulous recruitment of diverse psychologists, one-on-one counseling sessions, group interventions, and skill-building courses. Stages such as pre-implementation, implementation, and post-implementation are integral to the initiative's methodology.*

*Practical examples of tools utilized include secure online platforms for counseling sessions, virtual meeting tools for workshops, and a language courses platform for online learning.*

*The program's sequential flow incorporates initial assessments, personalized counseling, group sessions, workshops, language courses, collaboration with external organizations, family involvement, and continuous monitoring.*

*The results achieved by Wasi are noteworthy, with over 250 women seeking assistance annually, involving approximately 90 women each quarter. All psychologists being mother-tongue speakers ensures cultural understanding, and 85% of women completing the program find a positive path forward.*



*The success factors of Wasi include the diversity of professionals, represented by mother-tongue psychologists, offering cultural competence. Tailored counseling sessions provide personalized one-on-one interventions, fostering a sense of community through shared experiences. The initiative goes beyond psychological assistance, incorporating holistic support with economic empowerment initiatives. Wasi showcases adaptability to challenges, ensuring service continuity during unforeseen circumstances. Skill development initiatives contribute to economic independence.*

*Despite its successes, Wasi faces constraints such as stigma, violence exposure, and data privacy concerns. Strategies for sustainability involve institutional sustainability through diverse funding, partnerships, and ongoing training. Social sustainability is achieved through community engagement and cultural sensitivity. Environmental sustainability is pursued by integrating digital tools and ensuring resource efficiency. Regular impact assessments and program flexibility constitute the core of monitoring and evaluation.*

*The elements that make Wasi successful, such as mother-tongue psychologists, online and face-to-face support, free access, skill development programs, collaboration with organizations, and empowerment through education, are transferable to diverse contexts.*

*Additionally, related resources such as posters for organizing meetings and language support in Spanish, Ukrainian, Russian, Portuguese, and Tagalog contribute to the initiative's efficacy.*

*Wasi's success factors can be extrapolated to support discriminated migrant women and combat violence, underscoring the importance of tailored services and addressing gender-based discrimination.*

### Contact details

<b>Name</b>	WASI
<b>Company/Institution</b>	ASCS - Scalabrinian Agency for Development Cooperation
<b>Address/Website</b>	<a href="https://www.ascs.it/wasi-2021-sportello-psicologico-per-donne-migranti/">https://www.ascs.it/wasi-2021-sportello-psicologico-per-donne-migranti/</a>
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## Italian Best practices n.4 : CRINALI – Transcultural clinic

The transcultural clinic orchestrated by Cooperativa Crinali serves as a guiding light, addressing the nuanced healthcare needs of immigrant women. This innovative initiative encompasses a diverse range of interventions, spanning group transcultural healthcare, cultural mediation, joint consultations, childbirth preparation courses, and a focus on overall cultural sensitivity in healthcare services.

Cooperativa Crinali initiated transcultural clinics to address the challenges faced by migrant women in Milan's healthcare system. Cultural disparities, psychological distress, and economic vulnerability prompted the need for a more culturally sensitive approach, leading to the establishment of transcultural clinics since 2003. The transcultural clinic is a response to the evolving challenges faced by immigrant women in Milan. It weaves through the realms of healthcare, cultural understanding, and community building. This transcultural approach extends beyond traditional clinical settings, fostering collaboration and shared experiences.

At its core, this transcultural clinic methodology is meticulously tailored to cater to women, with a specific lens on immigrant women. It recognizes the unique interplay of psychological, emotional, and cultural facets in their healthcare journeys.

A cast of diverse actors brings life to this transcultural narrative. From healthcare professionals to cultural mediators, Cooperativa Crinali orchestrates a symphony of collaboration. Gynecologists, psychologists, cultural mediators, and operators work in harmony to create a holistic healthcare experience. Hospitals like San Paolo and San Carlo become the stages for joint consultations, while community and social workers add depth to the storyline, creating a network of support.

The transcultural clinic methodology emerges as a guardian against various forms of violence experienced by women, especially migrants. It stands against cultural violence by fostering understanding, psychological violence by providing support, gender-based violence through empowerment, social violence by building communities, and structural violence by advocating for systemic changes.

Cooperativa Crinali's transcultural clinic paints a vivid portrait of inclusivity in Milan's healthcare landscape. Launched in collaboration with local health authorities, this best practice unfolds through smaller group sessions led by Italian therapists and cultural mediators. These mediators, often women themselves, bridge cultural gaps, infusing a vital cultural perspective into healthcare.

The transcultural clinic, reaching beyond clinical norms, collaborates with San Paolo Hospital, shaping joint consultation approaches. Gynecologists, psychologists,

cultural mediators, and women engage in comprehensive, culturally sensitive interventions. The clinic's group-oriented approach inspires childbirth preparation courses, uniting Italian healthcare professionals, cultural mediators, and women from diverse backgrounds.

The methodology involves cultural mediators, group therapy sessions, joint consultations, and specialized activities for pregnant immigrant women. It emphasizes transcultural principles in various healthcare settings and encourages a shared culture of transcultural approaches.

In essence, Cooperativa Crinali's transcultural clinic pioneers the adaptation of transcultural clinical principles. Its innovative approach, characterized by smaller group sessions, cultural mediation, and collaborative healthcare services, underscores the significance of cultural sensitivity in promoting well-being among immigrant women.

While specific quantitative or qualitative metrics aren't explicitly outlined, the transcultural clinic's impact resonates through enhanced cultural understanding, improved psychological support, and the promotion of cultural continuity in maternal care. Effective group therapy sessions, preventive transcultural measures, and the establishment of a supportive network mark the clinic's influence.

### **Success Factors**

The transcultural clinic recognizes and honors the rich diversity among migrants, emphasizing the uniqueness of each individual's experiences, motivations, and background. This approach underscores the importance of acknowledging the individuality of every person, irrespective of their cultural or migratory background.

The foundation of effective care lies in the establishment of trust and understanding between healthcare professionals and migrants. This imperative forms the bedrock for providing assistance that is not only efficient but also genuinely responsive to the unique needs of migrant individuals.

Introducing the pivotal role of cultural mediators, the methodology emphasizes the significance of these mediators in facilitating seamless communication and understanding between healthcare professionals and patients. Ideally, these mediators share the root country with the target group or, in their absence, are foreign women who bring a crucial external perspective.

Inspired by transcultural methods, group therapy sessions and transcultural clinics emerge as specialized services to address the complex psychological and social

needs of migrants. These initiatives signify a departure from conventional healthcare models, reflecting a commitment to tailoring services to the unique needs of migrant families.

Collaborating with local healthcare services is not just an operational detail but a strategic move. The creation of second-level transcultural clinics, accessible through referrals, exemplifies a collaborative effort with healthcare institutions and local services, establishing a comprehensive network of transcultural care.

Consultation approaches are redefined to incorporate joint sessions involving gynecologists, psychologists, and cultural mediators. This innovative approach aims to address not only the physical but also the psychological aspects of migrant women's well-being, particularly during gynecological visits.

Modifying communication styles to accommodate different cultural norms becomes a fundamental practice. The utilization of cultural mediators ensures a nuanced understanding of cultural nuances and preferences, especially in critical contexts like maternity care.

An innovative approach unfolds through group sessions designed for immigrant women preparing for childbirth. These sessions, steeped in cultural understanding, encourage the use of native languages and cultural stories in parenting, fostering support and community.

The transcultural clinics, far from being isolated healthcare services, actively contribute to social integration. They play a pivotal role in promoting peaceful coexistence among people from diverse cultural backgrounds, countering distress, and fostering integration in various community settings.

## **Constraints**

The application of the transcultural clinic methodology, while innovative and promising, is not without its challenges. Awareness of potential constraints and dangers is crucial to ensuring the safety, effectiveness, and ethical implementation of these transformative programs.

The inadequacy of cultural sensitivity and competence among healthcare professionals and cultural mediators poses a risk of misinterpretations, misunderstandings, and unintentional offense. This deficiency may compromise the quality of care and hinder effective communication, potentially eroding patient trust.

Unequal power dynamics, influenced by cultural norms and gender dynamics, may exist between healthcare professionals and patients. These imbalances have the

potential to impede open communication, hinder the disclosure of sensitive information, and perpetuate gender-based inequalities in healthcare.

The inadvertent reliance on preconceived notions or cultural stereotypes by healthcare professionals or cultural mediators introduces the risk of stigmatization. This can undermine the therapeutic relationship, discourage help-seeking behavior, and contribute to feelings of alienation among migrant individuals.

Inattention to informed consent and privacy concerns can lead to ethical dilemmas, breaches of confidentiality, and compromised patient trust. Upholding ethical standards is paramount in maintaining the integrity of the transcultural clinic methodology.

The scarcity of healthcare professionals and cultural mediators with sufficient cultural competence may compromise the effectiveness of transcultural clinics. The availability of adequately trained personnel becomes a critical factor in addressing the diverse needs of migrant individuals.

Some individuals may resist or reject the involvement of cultural mediators, perceiving it as an intrusion into their privacy or a challenge to their autonomy. This resistance has the potential to hinder effective communication and collaboration, resulting in suboptimal healthcare outcomes.

The intersectionality of factors such as gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and migration status may complicate the provision of inclusive and tailored care. Insufficiently addressing the diverse needs of individuals may lead to disparities in healthcare outcomes.

Migrant communities expressing distrust towards healthcare institutions or professionals due to past negative experiences or systemic.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, Cooperativa Crinali's transcultural clinic in Milan represents a groundbreaking model in addressing the healthcare needs of migrant women. Its success lies not only in its innovative approach but in its commitment to fostering cultural understanding, providing psychological support, and creating a sense of community for those navigating the challenges of migration.

By acknowledging the diverse backgrounds and experiences within migration, the transcultural clinic recognizes the individuality of each person, ensuring a more personalized and effective healthcare experience. The emphasis on building trust,

facilitated by cultural mediators ideally from the same root country, establishes a crucial connection between healthcare professionals and migrant individuals.

The introduction of group sessions, transcultural clinics, and collaborative efforts with local healthcare services reflects a comprehensive approach that goes beyond traditional healthcare models. However, this success is not achieved without acknowledging the constraints, including the need for continuous cultural competence development and the potential for resistance or stigmatization.

In navigating these challenges, Cooperativa Crinali's transcultural clinic stands as a beacon of resilience. The commitment to ongoing training, collaboration, and an adaptive approach ensures that the clinic remains responsive to the unique needs of migrant populations. In doing so, it not only addresses immediate healthcare concerns but also contributes to the broader goal of fostering integration, preventing violence, and creating a supportive healthcare environment.

As a best practice, Cooperativa Crinali's transcultural clinic provides valuable insights for healthcare professionals, institutions, and policymakers globally. Its success factors underscore the importance of cultural sensitivity, collaboration, and continuous improvement in transcultural healthcare practices. Ultimately, this clinic serves as a testament to the transformative impact that thoughtful, inclusive healthcare models can have on the well-being of migrant women and their families.

<b>CRINALI - Transcultural Clinic</b>	
<b>Area of intervention</b>	<i>This best practice covers group transcultural healthcare, cultural mediation, joint consultation in healthcare, childbirth preparation courses, cultural sensitivity in healthcare services, therapy sessions, prevention and well-being.</i>
<b>Short description of the best practice</b>	<p><i>Cooperativa Crinali's transcultural clinic in Milan exemplifies a best practice in catering to the healthcare needs of culturally diverse populations. Launched in collaboration with local health authorities, the initiative utilizes smaller group sessions led by Italian therapists and cultural mediators. Those cultural mediators are women with extensive training, representing cultural diversity within the group and playing a crucial role in bridging cultural gaps.</i></p> <p><i>The transcultural clinic goes beyond traditional clinical settings, influencing joint consultation methods in healthcare services. In</i></p>



	<p><i>collaboration with San Paolo Hospital, gynecologists or midwives, upon identifying psychological concerns in patients, involve psychologists, cultural mediators, and the women in joint consultations. This approach ensures a comprehensive and culturally sensitive intervention.</i></p> <p><i>Moreover, the transcultural clinic's group-oriented approach has inspired the development of childbirth preparation courses for immigrant women in San Paolo Hospital. These courses, led by Italian healthcare professionals, cultural mediators, and women from diverse backgrounds, emphasize cultural exchange and mutual understanding.</i></p> <p><i>In summary, Cooperativa Crinali's transcultural clinic is a best practice adapting transcultural clinical principles to address the healthcare needs of immigrant women in Milan. Its innovative approach, characterized by smaller group sessions, cultural mediation, and collaborative healthcare services, underscores the importance of cultural sensitivity in promoting well-being among individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds.</i></p>
<p><b>Target audience</b></p>	<p><i>The transcultural clinic methodology implemented by Cooperativa Crinali in Milan is primarily addressed to women, with a specific focus on immigrant women. The methodology aims to provide comprehensive support to women, considering their psychological, emotional, and cultural needs.</i></p>
<p><b>Actors who apply the methodology or use the tool</b></p>	<p><i>The methodology and tools described in the provided information are applied by various actors in the field of transcultural clinics. Here are the key actors involved:</i></p> <p><i>This methodology can be applied by diverse actors like psychologists, neuropsychiatrists, rehabilitation experts, cultural mediators, midwives, gynaecologists, paediatricians, nurses, social workers, educators, SAI and CAS operators...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Healthcare Professionals: Gynecologists, Obstetricians, Psychologists. They play a crucial role in implementing consultation approaches that involve joint sessions with psychologists and cultural mediators. They may request the presence of a psychologist during medical</i></li> </ul>

	<p><i>consultations to address both physical and psychological aspects of a patient's well-being.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Cultural Mediators: These individuals, often immigrants themselves, are trained to mediate between healthcare professionals and patients from diverse cultural backgrounds. They help in translating, understanding cultural nuances, and bridging communication gaps.</i></li> <li>• <i>Cooperative Crinali: It operates transcultural clinic services in collaboration with local healthcare institutions. The cooperative is responsible for implementing the transcultural approach in these services.</i></li> <li>• <i>Operators and Therapists: The cooperative employs therapists and operators who work directly with patients in transcultural clinic settings. They participate in group sessions, consultations, and other activities aimed at providing transcultural care.</i></li> <li>• <i>Hospital Settings: Ospedale San Carlo and San Paolo di Milano: These hospitals are mentioned as partners in the transcultural clinic initiatives. They provide the infrastructure and support necessary for the implementation of transcultural clinics, including spaces for group sessions and joint consultations.</i></li> <li>• <i>Courses and Workshops Organizers: Actors involved in organizing courses, workshops, and group sessions, such as those preparing women for childbirth. These sessions aim to provide education, support, and cultural integration for immigrant women.</i></li> <li>• <i>Community and Social Workers: Professionals engaged in promoting social integration initiatives in various settings, including hospitals, schools, and community centres. They contribute to creating a network of services that use a common transcultural approach.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Type of violence opposed</b></p>	<p><i>The methodology opposes various forms of violence, particularly those that may be experienced by women, especially migrant women:</i></p> <p><b>Cultural Violence:</b> <i>By fostering cultural understanding through the involvement of cultural mediators, the clinic seeks to counteract misunderstandings and stereotypes that may lead to cultural violence.</i></p>

	<p><b>Psychological Violence:</b> <i>The clinic provides psychological support and counseling, opposing any form of psychological violence that women may encounter, especially related to the challenges of migration.</i></p> <p><b>Gender-Based Violence:</b> <i>Recognizing the intersectionality of gender and migration, the methodology opposes gender-based violence. It aims to empower women economically and emotionally, addressing power imbalances and vulnerabilities.</i></p> <p><b>Social Violence:</b> <i>Through group sessions and support networks, the methodology works against social violence by creating a sense of community and mutual support among women.</i></p> <p><b>Structural Violence:</b> <i>By collaborating with healthcare services and other institutions, the clinic addresses structural issues that might contribute to violence against women, seeking systemic changes for better support.</i></p>
<p><b>Introduction</b></p>	<p><i>The context is the provision of healthcare services, particularly for migrant women and families in the Milan area, Italy. The initial situation involves healthcare professionals encountering difficulties in understanding and effectively addressing the diverse needs of migrant individuals due to cultural differences. The challenge is to establish trust, provide adequate care, and address the psychological and social well-being of migrant women and families, as traditional healthcare tools were found to be insufficient for this purpose.</i></p> <p><i>The good practice involves the implementation of transcultural clinics by the Cooperative Crinali in collaboration with local healthcare institutions, particularly Ospedale San Carlo and San Paolo di Milano. These transcultural clinics provide specialized services, including group sessions, joint consultations, and workshops, aiming to understand, support, and integrate migrant women and families into the healthcare system. The practice has been carried out since 2003, with ongoing efforts to refine and adapt the approach.</i></p> <p><i>The challenge being addressed is intricately linked to gender, focusing on the unique needs and experiences of migrant women. The initial difficulty arises from women expressing distress indirectly during gynecological visits, highlighting the</i></p>

	<p><i>importance of addressing gender-specific concerns in healthcare.</i></p> <p><i>Gender considerations are explicitly taken into account in the transcultural clinics. For example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Consultation Approaches: Joint sessions with gynecologists, psychologists, and cultural mediators are implemented to address the comprehensive needs of women.</i></li> <li>- <i>Maternity Support: Specialized group sessions are organized for immigrant women preparing for childbirth.</i></li> <li>- <i>Cultural Mediators: The presence of cultural mediators, who are often women themselves, ensures a gender-sensitive approach. They provide a source of reassurance for migrant women, acting as intermediaries and understanding the specific cultural contexts that may impact women's health and well-being.</i></li> <li>- <i>Prevention through Cultural Integration: Encouraging women to speak in their native language, share cultural stories, and engage in social activities contributes to the creation of a supportive environment. This approach recognizes the role of women in the cultural transmission of values and provides a platform for mutual support among women from different backgrounds.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>The good practice of transcultural clinics not only addresses the broader challenge of cultural integration in healthcare but also pays specific attention to gender considerations, ensuring that the unique needs and experiences of migrant women are acknowledged and effectively addressed.</i></p>
<p><b>Where the good practice takes place (Description of organization)</b></p>	<p><i>Institutions and Partners:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>ASL Città di Milano Servizio Famiglia Infanzia Età Evolutiva: Collaborative partnership in establishing a transcultural clinic in Milan.</i></li> <li>• <i>Bobigny Team (Assumed Transcultural Clinical Training Team): Providing training and supervision in transcultural clinical practices.</i></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Ospedale S. Paolo and S. Carlo di Milano: Hosting health centers for immigrant women and participating in joint consultations.</i></li> <li>• <i>Cooperativa Crinali: Implementation and management of transcultural clinics and related services. Training, supervision, and coordination of healthcare professionals, cultural mediators, and interpreters.</i></li> <li>• <i>Healthcare Professionals (Gynecologists, Obstetricians, Psychologists): Direct involvement in joint consultations and provision of healthcare services.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>Funding:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Local Health Authorities (ASL Città di Milano, ASL Provincia di Milano2): supporting the establishment and operation of transcultural clinics.</i></li> <li>- <i>Government Grants and Subsidies: sources of financial support for healthcare initiatives focused on transcultural care.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Context</b></p>	<p><i>The Cooperativa Crinali in Milan introduced the transcultural clinic methodology to address the distinct challenges encountered by migrant women in the healthcare system. This initiative stemmed from an acknowledgment of the issues arising from cultural disparities, psychological distress, and economic vulnerability within the Milanese migrant community.</i></p> <p><i>As Milan, characterized by its diversity, observed a growing population of migrant women struggling with healthcare access, conventional healthcare setups proved inadequate in addressing the intricate cultural and psychological aspects of their experiences. Recognizing significant cultural gaps between healthcare providers and migrant women prompted the genesis of this practice.</i></p> <p><i>The genesis of the transcultural clinic practice was prompted by several factors:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Cultural Disparities: Notable cultural differences highlighted the necessity for a more culturally sensitive approach to healthcare, particularly in gynecological and obstetric care.</i></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Psychological Distress: Migration experiences often led to trauma, isolation, and acculturation stress, contributing to heightened psychological distress. Existing mental health support systems were insufficient to address these complexities.</i></li> <li>• <i>Language Barriers: Clear communication, especially in gynecological and obstetric consultations, was hindered by language barriers, emphasizing the need for effective communication strategies.</i></li> <li>• <i>Social Isolation: Many migrant women faced social isolation, lacking a supportive community. This absence of a network compounded their challenges and impeded their navigation of the healthcare system.</i></li> <li>• <i>Inclusive Practices: Traditional healthcare models fell short in accommodating the diverse needs and backgrounds of migrant women. Hence, there arose a demand for a comprehensive, transcultural approach.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>The implementation of the transcultural clinic was driven by a commitment to address these challenges comprehensively. It involved collaborative efforts with healthcare institutions, the training of mediatic cultural professionals, and the creation of tailored programs extending beyond conventional healthcare models.</i></p>
<p><b>Objective</b></p>	<p><i>The transcultural clinic methodology implemented by Cooperativa Crinali in Milan aims to achieve several interconnected objectives:</i></p> <p><b>Cultural Understanding:</b> <i>Foster cultural understanding and sensitivity among healthcare providers to address the diverse backgrounds of migrant women, thereby reducing cultural disparities and promoting respectful communication.</i></p> <p><b>Psychological Support:</b> <i>Provide psychological support and counseling services to address the mental health needs of migrant women, recognizing the psychological challenges often exacerbated by migration experiences.</i></p> <p><b>Preventive Healthcare:</b> <i>Integrate cultural mediation into healthcare services, particularly in gynecological and obstetric care, to prevent and address potential issues related to cultural differences and promote overall well-being.</i></p>



	<p><b>Community Building:</b> Create a sense of community and mutual support among migrant women through group sessions, workshops, and social activities, countering social isolation and fostering a supportive environment.</p> <p><b>Prevention of Gender-Based Violence:</b> Through awareness programs, the methodology aims to prevent and address gender-based violence, recognizing the vulnerabilities of migrant women and working towards creating safer environments.</p> <p><b>Enhancing Healthcare Accessibility:</b> Facilitate access to healthcare services for migrant women by addressing language barriers, cultural differences, and ensuring that healthcare providers are equipped to provide inclusive and culturally competent care.</p>
<p><b>The description of the methodology</b></p>	<p>The text describes the transcultural clinical services provided by Cooperativa Crinali in Milan, specifically focusing on two transcultural clinics and additional activities in health centers for immigrant women and their children.</p> <p>The methodology, tools, and main activities involved can be outlined as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The use of cultural mediators, individuals trained to work within therapeutic groups, bridging cultural gaps and facilitating communication between healthcare professionals and patients.</li> <li>- The transcultural clinics employ group therapy sessions, involving therapists, cultural mediators, and interpreters to address cultural differences and evoke cultural representations related to patients' experiences.</li> <li>- In health centers for immigrant women, a joint consultation approach is used, involving gynecologists, psychologists, cultural mediators, and the patient. This helps address psychological distress indirectly expressed by the patient.</li> <li>- Small groups are formed to provide support and cultural understanding for pregnant immigrant women, utilizing the expertise of healthcare professionals, cultural mediators, and other women with linguistic and cultural diversity.</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Encouraging immigrant mothers to speak their native language with their children to enhance cultural continuity and create a secure cultural environment.</li> </ul> <p>Overall Approach:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Apply transcultural principles in various healthcare settings, including hospitals, family and pediatric clinics, social services, nurseries, and schools.</li> <li>2. Encourage the creation of a shared culture of transcultural approaches across different healthcare services, promoting a common language while respecting each service's uniqueness.</li> <li>3. Utilize transcultural clinics and services as preventive measures against distress and suffering, acknowledging that transcultural clinical work is an evolving process that requires adaptation and creativity.</li> </ol> <p>The concrete activities involve group therapy, joint consultations, preparation for birth groups, and the integration of cultural mediators to address the unique needs of immigrant women and their children in healthcare settings. The transcultural approach aims to create an inclusive and culturally sensitive healthcare environment.</p>
<p><b>Achieved results</b></p>	<p>The text doesn't explicitly provide specific quantitative or qualitative results obtained using the described methodology and tools.</p> <p>However, we can infer potential outcomes based on the information provided:</p> <p>Potential Results Obtained:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enhanced Cultural Understanding: Improved understanding of cultural nuances and factors affecting communication between healthcare professionals and immigrant patients.</li> <li>- Improved Psychological Support: Enhanced psychological support for immigrant women in health centers, addressing their distress indirectly expressed during medical consultations.</li> <li>- Cultural Continuity in Maternal Care: Promotion of cultural continuity in maternal care through preparation for birth groups, emphasizing native language usage and cultural practices.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Effective Transcultural Group Therapy: Successful implementation of group therapy sessions, incorporating the expertise of cultural mediators and therapists. Positive group dynamics, improved patient engagement, and effective communication within the therapeutic setting.</i></li> <li>- <i>Preventive Measures in Healthcare Settings: Implementation of transcultural approaches in various healthcare settings to prevent distress and suffering among individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds.</i></li> <li>- <i>Creation of a Supportive Network: Establishment of a network of services utilizing a common transcultural language while preserving individual service specificity. Collaboration and information-sharing among healthcare institutions, creating a supportive network for individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds.</i></li> <li>- <i>Community Building and Social Integration: Community building through activities like preparation for birth groups, fostering social interactions, and celebrating cultural diversity.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>It's important to note that the actual results may vary, and the specific outcomes would depend on the implementation and effectiveness of the described methodology within the context of Cooperativa Crinali's transcultural clinical practices. Detailed evaluation and assessment would be necessary to measure the success and impact of these initiatives accurately.</i></p>
<p><b>Success Factors</b></p>	<p><i>The provided information outlines the basic principles and elements of transcultural clinic practices. Here are the key elements highlighted in the text:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Understanding Diversity within Migration:</i></b> <i>Acknowledge the diversity among migrants, recognizing that their experiences, motivations, and backgrounds vary significantly. Highlight the importance of understanding the individuality of each person, irrespective of their cultural or migratory background.</i></li> <li>• <b><i>Building Trust and Understanding:</i></b> <i>Identify the need to establish trust and understanding between healthcare professionals and migrants for effective assistance and care.</i></li> </ul>

- **Cultural Mediation:** Introduce the role of cultural mediators who facilitate communication and understanding between healthcare professionals and patients. Highlight the importance of cultural mediators in bridging cultural gaps and evoking cultural representations during therapy. Ideally, those mediators belong to the same root country than the target group, if not, it is crucial that those are foreign women.
- **Group Sessions and Cultural Clinics:** Implement group sessions inspired by transcultural methods to address the psychological and social needs of migrants. Establish transcultural clinics as a specialized service to cater to the needs of migrant families.
- **Collaboration and Second-Level Services:** Collaborate with local healthcare services to create a second-level transcultural clinic that is accessed through referrals from other services. Recognize the collaborative effort with healthcare institutions and local services in providing transcultural care.
- **Consultation Approaches:** Develop consultation approaches that involve joint sessions with gynecologists, psychologists, and cultural mediators. Use consultation models to address psychological distress indirectly expressed by migrant women, especially during gynecological visits.
- **Cultural Sensitivity in Healthcare:** Implement cultural sensitivity in healthcare practices, such as modifying communication styles to accommodate different cultural norms. Utilize cultural mediators to ensure a better understanding of cultural nuances and preferences, especially in contexts like maternity care.
- **Preparation for Parenthood:** Introduce innovative approaches like group sessions for immigrant women preparing for childbirth, acknowledging cultural differences in parenting practices. Encourage the use of native languages and cultural stories in parenting to provide support and create a sense of community.
- **Social Integration and Networking:** Emphasize the social impact of transcultural clinics in promoting peaceful coexistence among people from diverse cultural backgrounds. Highlight the role of transcultural clinics in preventing distress and fostering integration in various community settings.

<p><b>Constraints</b></p>	<p>The application of the described transcultural clinic methodology and tools may encounter several constraints and potential elements of danger. It's crucial to be aware of these challenges to ensure the safety, effectiveness, and ethical implementation of such programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Cultural Sensitivity and Competence:</b> Inadequate cultural sensitivity and competence among healthcare professionals and cultural mediators can lead to misinterpretations, misunderstandings, or unintentional offense. Lack of cultural competence may compromise the quality of care, hinder effective communication, and potentially contribute to feelings of mistrust among patients.</li> <li>- <b>Gender Dynamics and Power Imbalances:</b> Unequal power dynamics, particularly between healthcare professionals and patients, may exist, influenced by cultural norms and gender dynamics. Power imbalances can impede open communication, hinder the disclosure of sensitive information, and potentially lead to the perpetuation of gender-based inequalities in healthcare.</li> <li>- <b>Stigmatization and Stereotyping:</b> The risk of stigmatization and stereotyping exists, especially if healthcare professionals or cultural mediators inadvertently rely on preconceived notions or cultural stereotypes. Stigmatization can undermine the therapeutic relationship, discourage help-seeking behavior, and contribute to feelings of alienation among migrant individuals.</li> <li>- <b>Informed Consent and Privacy Concerns:</b> Inadequate attention to informed consent and privacy concerns can lead to ethical dilemmas, breaches of confidentiality, and compromised patient trust.</li> <li>- <b>Limited Availability of Culturally Competent Staff:</b> Availability of healthcare professionals and cultural mediators with sufficient cultural competence may be limited. In the absence of adequately trained personnel, the effectiveness of transcultural clinics may be compromised, potentially perpetuating the challenges faced by migrant individuals.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Resistance to Cultural Mediation:</b> Some individuals may resist or reject the involvement of cultural mediators, perceiving it as an intrusion into their privacy or a challenge to their autonomy. Resistance to cultural mediation can hinder effective communication and collaboration, potentially leading to suboptimal healthcare outcomes.</li> <li>- <b>Intersectionality Challenges:</b> The intersectionality of factors such as gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and migration status may complicate the provision of inclusive and tailored care. It may result in insufficiently addressing the diverse needs of individuals, leading to disparities in healthcare outcomes.</li> <li>- <b>Community Resistance and Mistrust:</b> Migrant communities may express distrust towards healthcare institutions or professionals due to past negative experiences or systemic issues. Community resistance can impede access to healthcare services, limit the effectiveness of transcultural clinics, and perpetuate health disparities.</li> <li>- <b>Crisis or Trauma Sensitivity:</b> The methodology may not sufficiently address the specific needs of individuals who have experienced trauma or crisis situations. Insensitive approaches may inadvertently retraumatize individuals, exacerbate mental health issues, and hinder recovery.</li> </ul> <p>To mitigate these constraints and elements of danger, ongoing training, cultural competence development, regular evaluations, and an adaptive approach that considers the unique context of each patient are essential.</p>
<p><b>Sustainability</b></p>	<p>Sustainability in this context involves ensuring the long-term viability and effectiveness of the transcultural clinic model.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Organizational Commitment:</b> Strong commitment from healthcare institutions, cooperatives, and collaborating agencies is crucial. Institutional support ensures the allocation of resources, ongoing training, and the integration of transcultural approaches into standard practices.</li> <li>- <b>Clear Protocols and Guidelines:</b> Standardized procedures ensure consistency in service delivery and help new staff members integrate into the model seamlessly.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Continuous Quality Improvement: Regular evaluations, feedback loops, and adjustments based on lessons learned contribute to the ongoing enhancement of services.</i></li> <li>- <i>Community Engagement: Involve community members in decision-making processes, seek feedback on services, and collaborate on outreach initiatives. Building trust and partnerships with the community is essential.</i></li> <li>- <i>Cultural Competence Training: Ensure ongoing cultural competence training for healthcare professionals and cultural mediators. This sustains the ability to meet the evolving needs of diverse migrant populations and promotes culturally sensitive care.</i></li> <li>- <i>Resource Allocation: Efficiently allocate resources to support the transcultural clinic model. Adequate funding for training, staffing, translation services, and cultural mediation is essential for sustained effectiveness.</i></li> <li>- <i>Integration into Healthcare Systems: Integrate transcultural approaches into broader healthcare systems. Seek collaboration with governmental health agencies and policymakers to secure sustained funding and institutional support.</i></li> <li>- <i>Ethical Guidelines: Establish and adhere to ethical guidelines for transcultural healthcare. Ensure that practices respect patient autonomy, confidentiality, and cultural values. Ethical considerations are fundamental to the sustainability of trust and effective care.</i></li> <li>- <i>Intersectoral Collaboration: Foster collaboration with other sectors, including education, social services, and employment agencies. A holistic, intersectoral approach contributes to comprehensive support for migrant individuals and families.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Transferability</b></p>	<p><i>The elements of the transcultural clinic approach outlined in the provided information can serve as a valuable model and be potentially transferred to other contexts and countries with adjustments to suit the specific cultural, social, and healthcare landscapes. Here are the key transferable elements:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Cultural Sensitivity Training:</i></li> </ul> <p><i>The training modules and guidelines developed for healthcare professionals and cultural mediators can be adapted for use in different countries. Training on cultural competence, effective communication, and transcultural care is universally relevant.</i></p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Joint Consultation Model:</i> The concept of joint consultations involving healthcare professionals, psychologists, and cultural mediators can be implemented in various healthcare settings to address both physical and psychological aspects of patient well-being.</li> <li>• <i>Group Sessions and Workshops:</i> Organizing group sessions and workshops on health-related topics can be replicated in different cultural contexts. Adapting content to address specific health concerns and cultural nuances is essential for effectiveness.</li> <li>• <i>Cultural Mediation Strategies:</i> The use of cultural mediators to facilitate communication, translate when necessary, and bridge cultural gaps is a transferable strategy. Cultural mediators can play a crucial role in enhancing understanding and trust between healthcare providers and patients in diverse settings.</li> <li>• <i>Patient Education Materials:</i> Creating culturally relevant pamphlets, brochures, and visual aids is applicable globally. Providing educational materials in multiple languages ensures accessibility and inclusivity.</li> <li>• <i>Community Outreach and Preventive Programs:</i> Educational programs and preventive initiatives can be adapted to address the specific health needs of migrant populations in different countries. Tailoring outreach efforts to the local context is crucial for community engagement.</li> <li>• <i>Continuous Training and Supervision:</i> The emphasis on continuous training for healthcare professionals and cultural mediators, along with regular supervision, is a best practice that can be incorporated into healthcare systems globally. Ongoing professional development enhances the quality of care.</li> <li>• <i>Integration within Interinstitutional Networks:</i> Promoting greater integration among different institutions involved in migrant healthcare is a transferable element. Collaborative efforts and a coordinated approach enhance the overall support for migrant populations.</li> <li>• <i>Second-Level Transcultural Clinic Activities:</i> Implementing second-level transcultural group clinic activities for minors and their families can be adapted to diverse contexts. Group-based interventions foster community and provide a platform for shared experiences.</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Related resources that have been developed</b></p>	<p><i>The Cooperative organizes periodically an annual Transcultural Clinic Course addressed to professionals who, in various capacities, encounter migrant women, children, and families in the course of their activities (psychologists, neuropsychiatrists, rehabilitation experts, cultural mediators, midwives, gynaecologists, paediatricians, nurses, social workers, educators, SAI and CAS operators...).</i></p> <p><i>The objectives that the course aims to achieve are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Acquiring cultural decentralization skills and awareness of cultural aspects in countertransference reactions.</i></li> <li>- <i>Acquiring specific techniques for conducting interviews with foreign users.</i></li> <li>- <i>Acquiring specific skills in working with the role of cultural and linguistic mediator.</i></li> <li>- <i>Acquiring specific skills in working within a group setting (joint interviews with other professionals, technical devices in transcultural clinic).</i></li> </ul> <p><i>Other documents, articles, books, videos, and notebooks are also collected and published on their website :</i>  <a href="https://www.criminali.org/servizi/ricerca-e-documentazione-su-psicologia-migranti/articoli-pubblicati/">https://www.criminali.org/servizi/ricerca-e-documentazione-su-psicologia-migranti/articoli-pubblicati/</a></p>
<p><b>Language(s)</b></p>	<p><i>Italian</i></p>
<p><b>Application of good practices to assist discriminated migrant women and combat violence against women</b></p>	
<p><b>Success Factors for use for Woman Migrants</b></p>	<p><i>The methodology described in the text focuses on transcultural clinical services and activities primarily within the context of women's health, including transcultural clinics and health centers for immigrant women.</i></p>
<p><b>Constraints for use for Woman Migrants</b></p>	<p>/</p>

## Summary

<p><b>Summary of the best practice</b></p>	<p><i>The transcultural clinic, implemented by Cooperativa Crinali in Milan, addresses group transcultural healthcare, cultural mediation, joint consultations, childbirth preparation courses, cultural sensitivity, therapy sessions, and prevention and well-being.</i></p> <p><i>Cooperativa Crinali's transcultural clinic in Milan is a best practice catering to culturally diverse populations. Launched collaboratively with local health authorities, the clinic utilizes smaller group sessions led by Italian therapists and cultural mediators, predominantly immigrant women. The clinic extends beyond traditional settings, influencing joint consultation methods in healthcare services. In collaboration with San Paolo Hospital, gynecologists involve psychologists, cultural mediators, and women in joint consultations, ensuring comprehensive and culturally sensitive interventions.</i></p> <p><i>Primarily addresses women, specifically focusing on immigrant women, aiming to provide comprehensive support considering psychological, emotional, and cultural needs.</i></p> <p><i>Actors Applying the Methodology:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Healthcare Professionals: Gynecologists, Obstetricians, Psychologists.</i></li> <li>- <i>Cultural Mediators: Trained individuals bridging cultural gaps.</i></li> <li>- <i>Cooperative Crinali: Implements transcultural clinic services.</i></li> <li>- <i>Operators and Therapists: Engaged in transcultural clinic settings.</i></li> <li>- <i>Hospital Settings: San Paolo di Milano and San Carlo: Collaborative partners.</i></li> <li>- <i>Courses and Workshops Organizers: Engaged in organizing sessions.</i></li> <li>- <i>Community and Social Workers: Contribute to social integration initiatives.</i></li> </ul>
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*The methodology opposes cultural, psychological, gender-based, social, and structural violence through fostering understanding, psychological support, empowerment, and community building.*

*This best practice addresses healthcare challenges for migrant women in Milan due to cultural disparities, psychological distress, and economic vulnerability. Traditional healthcare models were inadequate, necessitating a transcultural clinic approach. Gender considerations are integrated, focusing on the unique needs of migrant women.*

*The methodology aims to achieve cultural understanding, psychological support, preventive healthcare, community building, gender-based violence prevention, and enhanced healthcare accessibility for migrant women.*

*This best practice utilizes cultural mediators, group therapy sessions, joint consultations, preparation for birth groups, and native language usage to create an inclusive and culturally sensitive healthcare environment.*

*While specific outcomes aren't quantified, potential results include enhanced cultural understanding, improved psychological support, cultural continuity in maternal care, effective transcultural group therapy, preventive measures in healthcare, and the creation of a supportive network.*

*Success Factors are the following: Recognizes diversity within migration, emphasizes trust-building, cultural mediation, joint consultations, cultural sensitivity, preparation for parenthood, social integration, and networking as key success factors.*

*Potential challenges include cultural sensitivity, power imbalances, stigmatization, informed consent, limited availability of culturally competent staff, resistance to cultural mediation, intersectionality issues, and community resistance.*

*Sustainability: Ensures long-term viability through organizational commitment, clear protocols, continuous quality improvement, community engagement, cultural competence*

	<p><i>training, resource allocation, integration into healthcare systems, ethical guidelines, and intersectoral collaboration.</i></p> <p><i>Transferability: Elements like cultural sensitivity training, joint consultation models, group sessions, cultural mediation, patient education materials, community outreach, continuous training, and second-level transcultural clinic activities are transferable to different contexts with adjustments.</i></p> <p><i>Cooperativa Crinali conducts an annual Transcultural Clinic Course, offering skills in cultural decentralization, interviewing foreign users, working as a cultural mediator, and group settings. Additional resources are available on their website.</i></p> <p><i>Language(s): Primarily Italian.</i></p>
<b>Contact details</b>	
<b>Name</b>	CRINALI – Transcultural Clinic
<b>Company/Institution</b>	Social cooperative
<b>Address/Website</b>	<a href="https://www.criminali.org/">https://www.criminali.org/</a>
<b>Telephone</b>	/
<b>E-mail</b>	/

## Portuguese Best practices

Several projects and institutions play an active role in integrating migrant women and preventing violence. Here are some of the projects listed on the Integration practices | European Website on Integration (europa.eu)

### Portuguese Best practices n.1 : FATIMA: Preventing honour- related violence through education and dialogue

The FATIMA project worked to combat and prevent honour-related violence (HRV). HRV includes female genital mutilation, forced or early marriage or forced sexual relationships and honour crimes committed against women, young people and children.

FATIMA delivered education on and raised awareness of the European Conventions on Human Rights, the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the UN Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. The project was implemented in four countries: Greece, **Portugal**, Sweden and the UK.

The following data, taken from a 2015 report published by the Faculty of Social and Human Sciences, New University of Lisbon, demonstrates the issues the FATIMA Project aimed to tackle in Portugal:

- 6,576 migrant women over the age of 15 in Portugal may have been subjected to the practice of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM);
- 49% of migrant women living in Portugal have been born in countries where FGM is practised;
- The highest numbers of FGM cases have been identified among migrant communities from Guinea-Bissau, Guinea and Senegal;
- Among the 3 832 migrant girls under the age of 15 in Portugal, 1 830 have or will be subjected to this practice before turning 15.

### Goal

The goal of the project was to facilitate social dialogue among migrant groups with patriarchal attitudes and culture, through the training of people from NGOs run by ethnic minority groups.

This training would equip individual group and community leaders with training materials on human rights and the rights of women and children.

The dialogue facilitated would incorporate direct participation with and capacity building of communities, including targeted awareness-raising, education, specialised training of key professionals as well as promotion of dialogue within HRV-practicing communities

### **How it works**

Awareness-raising and educational campaigns were implemented, to establish social dialogues around HRV.

Capacity building was carried out by:

- developing professional profiles for ethnic minority NGOs and individuals working against HRV;
- developing training material based on the European and UN Conventions on Human Rights and the Rights of the Child;
- developing anti-HRV guidelines for cross-sectoral co-operation and networking between ethnic minority NGOs and other stakeholders (eg. authorities, schools, police and social / health care services).
- Training ethnic minority NGOs in fundraising, project management and sustainability.

NGO staff members received training in organisation of dissemination sessions in their respective communities, through use of a guidance manual, a DVD, a board game and an online library.

In the first phase of the project, a cross-sectional study on awareness-raising activities in the four partner countries was conducted by sending questionnaires to NGO staff members working with migrant communities. The survey was designed to map attitudes towards HRV and identify the needs of NGOs run by minority groups, in order to better understand existing attitudes and beliefs and to develop training resources accordingly.

The survey was taken by 25 NGOs in Portugal and by 105 across all partner countries

### **Results**

In Portugal, two training actions for NGO staff members were implemented: the first in Lisbon and the second in Barcelos. The national researcher connected with local

organisations that were 1) related to honour-related violence and 2) spread across Portugal.

24 participants from 20 NGOs supporting migrants took part in the project and worked with its materials, with a particular preference for the board game. Many of these NGOs were working closely with communities where HRV and FGM was common.

Between March and June 2016 there were 15 pilot trainings for NGOs supporting migrants and of those involved 15 NGOs were chosen to implement the activities of the project's testing phase. This involved 80 hours of awareness-raising with and training for groups of migrants (using the relevant materials).

## Evaluation

A final evaluation was carried out and shared on the project's website.

The pilot training activities were successfully carried out in Portugal. Some NGOs have continued to delivery of the second course of training activities, while others have decided to continue delivering the first course, to new participants.

Participants shared positive experiences, stating that they now better understand their rights in Portugal as far as health, education, legal, housing, taxes and social security are concerned.

During the training sessions, many participants and staff members mentioned that it would be interesting to have more training materials for children, teenagers and young people. Acting on this recommendation, the project developed a card deck adapted to this specific target group. The cards are now available to download [online](#).

Finally, following the success of the FATIMA project, DAPHNE initiated a new project: Human Rights in Practice - Human Rights as a part of language training to prevent HRV and harmful practices in the communities, which acts as a continuation of FATIMA but involves additional language centres.

## Who benefits, Funding and resources

In Portugal 175 participants were reached through the training. NGOs working closely with migrant communities benefited from the training actions and the materials developed.

The project was co-founded by the European Union under the [DAPHNE](#) programme.



The project had two technical staff members: one working as Manager and the other working as Trainer/Researcher

### **A) One-stop-shop / National Immigrant Support centres (CNAI)**

The idea behind the One-Stop-Shops is to make available a wide range of Government and support services to immigrants under one roof, independently of their legal status. In the same building, immigrants can find the Border Control Service, the Labour Inspectorate, the Social Security office, Regional Health Administration, the Regional Directorate of Education and the Central Registry Office. Moreover, there are other innovative support services to meet the concrete needs of immigrants, such as support offices for family reunification, legal advice and employment. The participation of socio-cultural mediators who speak several languages establishes a cultural and linguistic proximity to the immigrants.

#### **Goal**

The most relevant issue addressed is the management of integration and service provision for immigrants. In a context of a growing immigrant population and dispersal of services, one of the most serious and challenging responsibilities facing Portugal and among the most often cited problems are the range of institutions involved in the process, the lack of cooperation between government services and their dispersed locations, the diversity of procedures, complex bureaucracy and communication difficulties. Thus, following the Common Agenda for Integration, Portugal set up a "one-stop-shop" model service where foreign citizens can find a set of services responding to their concrete needs in terms of regularisation, legal advice, employment, family reunification, all in the same building. The goal is to facilitate the integration of immigrants in Portugal starting with legal issues and documentation and the "one-stop-shops" have a shared data management system when attending the public. The assumption is that these facilities will reduce the number of undocumented immigrants living in Portugal and simultaneously reinforce their integration.

#### **How it works**

One of the actions is service provision for immigrants at one particular physical point covering domains relevant to this population (documentation, education, health, labour, etc.). These services are coordinated in time and content and made available in several languages. Besides the civil servants working in the public agencies, there are also cultural mediators to smooth communication and build trust. Another action is the telephone hotline for translation (SOS Imigrante). Cultural

mediators speaking 9 different languages (Portuguese, French, English, Spanish, Russian, Ukrainian, Romanian, Belorussian and Cape Verdean Creole) provide information on immigration law, rights and duties in access to the labour market, housing, health, education and Portuguese citizenship.

## Results

From March 2004 to December 2009 a total of over 1,979,727 cases were attended to at the One-Stop-Shops (Lisbon, Porto and Faro). Currently those One-Stop-Shops have a daily average of 1,192 service-users. Hence it is clear that they brought added value to the immigrants lives, particularly in relation to the: resolution of problems that involve various Government agencies; facilitation of access to various institutions, response to a large number of questions (legalisation; Health; Education; Nationality; Employment; Family Reunification; Social Support), personalised service (guaranteed also with fundamental support of immigrants). Furthermore the CNAIs prove to guarantee important benefits for Government Agencies, namely: interaction between agencies allows a greater speed in the resolution of processes, optimisation of the processes and mutual support between agencies, circulation of information between agencies is facilitated - increased security, sharing of worries and the creation of more efficient processes and, no less important, a common working atmosphere.

The One-Stop-Shop approach represents an essential tool in successfully managing integration to realise the full benefits of immigration, specifically in relation to service provision to immigrants. The One-Stop Shop is a contribution to ensuring that integration is a two-way process, where the receiving society actively engages in adaptation. The One-Stop-Shop approach is presented as an ambitious and yet realistic proposal for providing services to immigrants, improving integration and providing more and better information on the rights and duties of immigrants. Furthermore, the One-Stop-Shop service is a policy that approaches integration from the perspective of the adaptation of the receiving society and the services that it provides, combined with a consultative and cooperative process working with immigrants, to further the integration of both immigrants and the receiving society. It thereby meets the two-way challenge of integration in a sensible and flexible way. Finally by reducing contradictory and insufficient information, the OSS plays an important role in increasing immigrants' trust in public administration services, narrowing the gap between the two. The OSS approach it was also fundamental to achieving the principles of joined-up Government.

In 2011 ACIDI received first prize for the One-Stop-Shop in the European Public Sector Award - EPSA 2011 under the theme 'Opening Up the Public Sector Through Collaborative Governance'.

## Evaluation

The first level evaluated of the project measured its implementation against the original project plan. On this level of evaluation, the evaluators concluded that the project as a whole and the partners in particular, have lived up to the expectations of the original plan.

The second level of evaluation took the broader context into account and asked questions about the relevance of the exercise and outcomes.

In conclusion, yes, the OSS-format is an ideal type of service provision, particularly geared to early reception of newcomers, if the political and structural conditions are fulfilled.

## Who benefits

All immigrants (both those who have a legal or an illegal status and new-arrivals and immigrants who are applying for citizenship) and/or persons who have to deal with immigration issues.

## Funding and resources

In Portugal the implementation of the National Immigrant Support Centres in 2004 represented a commitment of €1.4 million by the High Commission for Immigration and Ethnic Minorities. In 2007, the majority of ACIDI, I.P.'s annual budget of €5.51 million came from the Ministry for Labour and Social Solidarity. Just 20.9% of this budget was spent on staff costs (essentially cultural mediators). €1.88 million, or 34.1% of the budget, was spent on various integration services, including the National and Local Immigrant Support Centres network.

At the EU level, the main source of funding was the INTI.

Workers: 65 cultural mediators, 19 civil servants and 5 security guards (2009 date)

<b>FATIMA: Preventing honour- related violence through education and dialogue</b>	
<b>Goal</b>	<p><i>The goal of the project was to facilitate social dialogue among migrant groups with patriarchal attitudes and culture, through the training of people from NGOs run by ethnic minority groups. This training would equip individual group and community leaders with training materials on human rights and the rights of women and children.</i></p> <p><i>The dialogue facilitated would incorporate direct participation with and capacity building of communities, including targeted awareness-raising, education, specialised</i></p>
<b>How it works</b>	<p><i>Awareness-raising and educational campaigns were implemented, to establish social dialogues around HRV.</i></p> <p><i>Capacity building was carried out by:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>• developing professional profiles for ethnic minority NGOs and individuals working against HRV;</i></li> <li><i>• developing training material based on the European and UN Conventions on Human Rights and the Rights of the Child;</i></li> <li><i>• developing anti-HRV guidelines for cross-sectoral co-operation and networking between ethnic minority NGOs and other stakeholders (eg. authorities, schools, police and social / health care services).</i></li> <li><i>• Training ethnic minority NGOs in fundraising, project management and sustainability.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>NGO staff members received training in organisation of dissemination sessions in their respective communities, through use of a guidance manual, a DVD, a board game and an online library.</i></p> <p><i>In the first phase of the project, a cross-sectional study on awareness-raising activities in the four partner countries was conducted by sending questionnaires to NGO staff members working with migrant communities. The survey was designed to map attitudes towards HRV and identify the needs of NGOs run by minority groups, in order to better understand existing attitudes and beliefs and to develop training resources accordingly.</i></p> <p><i>The survey was taken by 25 NGOs in Portugal and by 105 across all partner countries</i></p>

<p><b>Results</b></p>	<p><i>In Portugal, two training actions for NGO staff members were implemented: the first in Lisbon and the second in Barcelos. The national researcher connected with local organisations that were 1) related to honour-related violence and 2) spread across Portugal.</i></p> <p><i>24 participants from 20 NGOs supporting migrants took part in the project and worked with its materials, with a particular preference for the board game. Many of these NGOs were working closely with communities where HRV and FGM was common.</i></p> <p><i>Between March and June 2016 there were 15 pilot trainings for NGOs supporting migrants and of those involved 15 NGOs were chosen to implement the activities of the project's testing phase. This involved 80 hours of awareness-raising with and training for groups of migrants (using the relevant materials).</i></p>
<p><b>Evaluation</b></p>	<p><i>A final evaluation was carried out and shared on the project's website.</i></p> <p><i>The pilot training activities were successfully carried out in Portugal. Some NGOs have continued to delivery of the second course of training activities, while others have decided to continue delivering the first course, to new participants.</i></p> <p><i>Participants shared positive experiences, stating that they now better understand their rights in Portugal as far as health, education, legal, housing, taxes and social security are concerned.</i></p> <p><i>During the training sessions, many participants and staff members mentioned that it would be interesting to have more training materials for children, teenagers and young people. Acting on this recommendation, the project developed a card deck adapted to this specific target group. The cards are now available to download online.</i></p> <p><i>Finally, following the success of the FATIMA project, DAPHNE initiated a new project: Human Rights in Practice - Human Rights as a part of language training to prevent HRV and harmful practices in the communities, which acts as a continuation of FATIMA but involves additional language centres.</i></p>
<p><b>Who benefits, Funding and resources</b></p>	<p><i>In Portugal 175 participants were reached through the training. NGOs working closely with migrant communities benefited from the training actions and the materials developed.</i></p>

Contact details	
<b>Name</b>	FATIMA: Preventing honour-related violence through education and dialogue   European Website on Integration (europa.eu)
<b>Company/Institution</b>	<p>The project was co-founded by the European Union under the DAPHNE programme.</p> <p>The project had two technical staff members: one working as Manager and the other working as Trainer/Researcher</p>
<b>Address/Website</b>	<a href="https://migrant-integration.ec.europa.eu/integration-practice/fatima-preventing-honour-related-violence-through-education-and-dialogue_en">https://migrant-integration.ec.europa.eu/integration-practice/fatima-preventing-honour-related-violence-through-education-and-dialogue_en</a>

## Portuguese Best practices n.2 : ONE-STOP-SHOP / NATIONAL IMMIGRANT SUPPORT CENTRES (CNAI)

The idea behind the One-Stop-Shops is to make available a wide range of Government and support services to immigrants under one roof, independently of their legal status. In the same building, immigrants can find the Border Control Service, the Labour Inspectorate, the Social Security office, Regional Health Administration, the Regional Directorate of Education and the Central Registry Office. Moreover, there are other innovative support services to meet the concrete needs of immigrants, such as support offices for family reunification, legal advice and employment. The participation of socio-cultural mediators who speak several languages establishes a cultural and linguistic proximity to the immigrants.

<b>ONE-STOP-SHOP / NATIONAL IMMIGRANT SUPPORT CENTRES (CNAI)</b>	
<b>Goal</b>	<i>The most relevant issue addressed is the management of integration and service provision for immigrants. In a context of a growing immigrant population and dispersal of services, one of the most serious and challenging responsibilities facing Portugal and among the most often cited problems are the range of institutions involved in the process, the lack of cooperation between government services and their dispersed locations, the diversity of procedures, complex bureaucracy and communication difficulties. Thus, following the Common Agenda for Integration, Portugal set up a "one-stop-shop" model service where foreign citizens can find a set of services responding to their concrete needs in terms of regularisation, legal advice, employment, family reunification, all in the same building. The goal is to facilitate the integration of immigrants in Portugal starting with legal issues and documentation and the "one-stop-shops" have a shared data management system when attending the public. The assumption is that these facilities will reduce the number of undocumented immigrants living in Portugal and simultaneously reinforce their integration.</i>
<b>How it works</b>	<i>One of the actions is service provision for immigrants at one particular physical point covering domains relevant to this population (documentation, education, health, labour, etc.). These services are coordinated in time and content and made</i>



	<p>available in several languages. Besides the civil servants working in the public agencies, there are also cultural mediators to smooth communication and build trust.</p> <p>Another action is the telephone hotline for translation (SOS Imigrante). Cultural mediators speaking 9 different languages (Portuguese, French, English, Spanish, Russian, Ukrainian, Romanian, Belorussian and Cape Verdean Creole) provide information on immigration law, rights and duties in access to the labour market, housing, health, education and Portuguese citizenship.</p>
<p><b>Results</b></p>	<p>From March 2004 to December 2009 a total of over 1,979,727 cases were attended to at the One-Stop-Shops (Lisbon, Porto and Faro). Currently those One-Stop-Shops have a daily average of 1,192 service-users. Hence it is clear that they brought added value to the immigrants lives, particularly in relation to the: resolution of problems that involve various Government agencies; facilitation of access to various institutions, response to a large number of questions (legalisation; Health; Education; Nationality; Employment; Family Reunification; Social Support), personalised service (guaranteed also with fundamental support of immigrants). Furthermore the CNAIs prove to guarantee important benefits for Government Agencies, namely: interaction between agencies allows a greater speed in the resolution of processes, optimisation of the processes and mutual support between agencies, circulation of information between agencies is facilitated - increased security, sharing of worries and the creation of more efficient processes and, no less important, a common working atmosphere.</p> <p>The One-Stop-Shop approach represents an essential tool in successfully managing integration to realise the full benefits of immigration, specifically in relation to service provision to immigrants. The One-Stop Shop is a contribution to ensuring that integration is a two-way process, where the receiving society actively engages in adaptation. The One-Stop-Shop approach is presented as an ambitious and yet realistic proposal for providing services to immigrants, improving integration and providing more and better information on the rights and duties of immigrants. Furthermore, the One-Stop-Shop service is a policy that approaches integration from the</p>

	<p><i>perspective of the adaptation of the receiving society and the services that it provides, combined with a consultative and cooperative process working with immigrants, to further the integration of both immigrants and the receiving society. It thereby meets the two-way challenge of integration in a sensible and flexible way. Finally by reducing contradictory and insufficient information, the OSS plays an important role in increasing immigrants' trust in public administration services, narrowing the gap between the two. The OSS approach it was also fundamental to achieving the principles of joined-up Government.</i></p> <p><i>In 2011 ACIDI received first prize for the One-Stop-Shop in the European Public Sector Award - EPSA 2011 under the theme 'Opening Up the Public Sector Through Collaborative Governance'.</i></p>
<p><b>Evaluation</b></p>	<p><i>The first level evaluated of the project measured its implementation against the original project plan. On this level of evaluation, the evaluators concluded that the project as a whole and the partners in particular, have lived up to the expectations of the original plan.</i></p> <p><i>The second level of evaluation took the broader context into account and asked questions about the relevance of the exercise and outcomes.</i></p> <p><i>In conclusion, yes, the OSS-format is an ideal type of service provision, particularly geared to early reception of newcomers, if the political and structural conditions are fulfilled.</i></p>
<p><b>Who benefits</b></p>	<p><i>All immigrants (both those who have a legal or an illegal status and new-arrivals and immigrants who are applying for citizenship) and/or persons who have to deal with immigration issues.</i></p>
<p><b>Funding and resources</b></p>	<p><i>In Portugal the implementation of the National Immigrant Support Centres in 2004 represented a commitment of €1.4 million by the High Commission for Immigration and Ethnic Minorities. In 2007, the majority of ACIDI, I.P.'s annual budget of €5.51 million came from the Ministry for Labour and Social Solidarity. Just 20.9% of this budget was spent on staff costs (essentially cultural mediators). €1.88 million, or 34.1% of the budget, was spent on various integration services, including the National and Local Immigrant Support Centres network.</i></p> <p><i>At the EU level, the main source of funding was the INTI.</i></p>

	<i>Workers: 65 cultural mediators, 19 civil servants and 5 security guards (2009 date)</i>
<b>Contact details</b>	
<b>Name</b>	<i>ONE-STOP-SHOP / NATIONAL IMMIGRANT SUPPORT CENTRES (CNAI)</i>
<b>Company/Institution</b>	CNAI – ACIDI (High Commission for Immigration and Intercultural Dialogue)
<b>Address/Website</b>	<a href="https://migrant-integration.ec.europa.eu/integration-practice/one-stop-shop-national-immigrant-support-centres-cnai_en">https://migrant-integration.ec.europa.eu/integration-practice/one-stop-shop-national-immigrant-support-centres-cnai_en</a>

## Portuguese Best practices n.3 :PROJECT CAIM: Cooperation-Action-Research- Wold Vision

Project CAIM aims to create an institutional and NGO partnership to integrate and coordinate resources to act and transform the social and economic framework of human trafficking and sexual exploitation in Portugal. It promotes social integration and access to the labour market of the victims.

### Goal

Project CAIM is a pilot initiative in the area of prostitution and women trafficking in Portugal. The traffic of human beings is a multifaceted phenomenon that is, simultaneously, a criminal problem and a serious breaking of the Human Rights. It requires to be confronted by a partnership that associates the components of the investigation, combat and control of this crime with organisations working in the support and protection of the victims. From this point of view, the Portuguese Commission for Equality and Women Rights (in partnership with several organisations) submitted a candidacy to the European EQUAL initiative to develop the Project CAIM. Its main objective is the protection of the victims by: - Developing and implementing standards and tools to monitor the phenomenon of trafficking in order to act upon it - Strengthening the social interventions aimed at the protection and assistance of trafficked women. - Improving social inclusion and access to the labour market of the victims. - Promoting cooperation between national and international agents of intervention - Conceiving and proposing new legislation

### How it works

Project CAIM started from a pre-diagnosis that identified gaps and difficulties in the knowledge and intervention of the women trafficking for sexual exploitation. In this context, the project has tried to constitute a space of meeting for different actors to study and acquire new practices of intervention on this phenomenon. In this sense, CAIM has intended to create a net of public and private institutions responsible for the prevention and combat of this crime, and the social integration of the victims. It has also promoted the cooperation with the victims' countries of origin, the scientific research on the women trafficking phenomenon and the professional qualification of people that work on this issue.

### Results

Products to be developed: - Monitor system about women trafficking - Database of institutions and services that support victims of women trafficking - Compilation national and international legislation, projects and action plans about human beings

trafficking and sexual exploitation - Guide to support formation of intervention agents - Guide to support social actions oriented to education and training for victims of women trafficking - Campaigns to prevent and raise awareness about women trafficking In 2008, in the context of Project CAIM and the Portuguese National Plan Against Human Beings Trafficking, it was created the Observatory of Human Trafficking. Its mission is to collect, process and disseminate information and knowledge related to this issue and other forms of gender violence.

### **Evaluation**

CAIM has had three phases of action: Project development (2004-2005), Implementation (2005-2007) and Spreading (2008-2009).

After the first stage, the project partners identified some weak points in the diagnosis of needs that had become possible threats to CAIM. For example, difficulties to contact face to face with women trafficked for security reasons, episodes of instability of some institutional partners, the repressive context of the intervention in the field of women trafficking, some delays in bureaucratic circuits and difficulties to mobilise to professionals of social communication.

### **Who benefits**

Victims of women trafficking (Support, protection and social integration) - Agents of security services and social intervention, and researchers - Intercultural mediators - Society

### **Funding and resources**

EQUAL project

[cignorte@cig.gov.pt](mailto:cignorte@cig.gov.pt)

## **B) Kaleidoscope**

The Caleidoscópio project combats different forms of social exclusion and provides community services, in so doing enhancing the integration of the migrant population in Portugal by preventing problems and raising awareness of issues that affect them.

### **Goal**

The theme of the project is the promotion of the integration of third-country nationals (TCNs), through the establishment and provision of services that respond to their real needs. Determination of these needs comes from a combination of research at the national level and the experience and understanding of technical staff members working at ongoing projects run by Casa Vera Cruz.

The project's assumptions are that the use of both formal and informal methodologies will enhance dialogue among TCNs and between TCNs and host communities, and that the active participation and reflection of TCNs and their networking, both locally and nationally, will lead to their empowerment, autonomy and full integration.

### **How it works**

The project has three components: the Migrant Victim Support Office (DiSVIO), Migrants, Culture and Arts (MICUA), and Migrants and Language (MIGLING).

DiSVIO is a specialised office, with a psychologist and a jurist, who provide care, support and referral of victims of domestic violence, victims of human trafficking and victims of any type of discrimination.

MICUA involves the promotion of cultural and artistic activities, based on social issues, to be defined and developed by TCNs through "green and digital" logic of mutual personal and cultural enrichment.

MIGLING involves the offering of informal Portuguese classes in digital, independent and group format.

### **Results**

Each of the project's components have produced different results. These include the following:

#### DiSVIO

- Total number of TCNs involved: 17 men and 33 women
- Total number of visits to TCN: 100 men and 200 women
- Actions: establishment of an office for service provision
- Materials produced: 1 freestanding roll-up banner; 1 poster; 1 flyer

- Distributed copies: 2 000 flyers

#### MICUA

- Total number of TCNs involved: 7 Men and 7 Women
- Actions: 1 collection of short stories; 2 exhibitions; 2 performances
- Materials produced: 8 short stories; 2 exhibitions; 1 freestanding roll-up banner; 4 posters

#### MIGLING

- Total number of TCNs involved: 10 Men and 10 Women
- Actions: Creation of a teaching platform
- Materials produced: 10 elementary level modules; 10 independent level modules; 1 freestanding roll-up banner; 1 poster

The target audience considers the project relevant and useful, seeing Portuguese language classes essential to facilitate communication and integration into the job market. The activities for the development of social and personal skills are also considered important. The office for practical and emotional support, meeting the needs of integration and informal support in the development of migrants' skills is another very positive result.

#### Evaluation

Evaluation of the project is continuous, taking into account the objectives and indicators defined at its outset by the team, migrants and partner network. An overall evaluation will also be carried out at the project's close.

Some difficulties in implementation have been identified throughout the course of the project, which are linked to the requirements of the AMIF co-financier (and relate to the eligibility of TCNs undergoing the process of regularisation in Portugal). Further, the project team faced difficulties inherent to the global COVID-19 pandemic context and related necessary service restrictions.

#### Who benefits

TCNs legally residing in a European country or, where applicable, those at the stage of obtaining the right to legal residence, will benefit from this project. Specifically, this refers to migrants, applicants or beneficiaries of international protection and refugees, documented or in the process of regularisation, of any age, gender or origin, residing in the municipality of Aveiro or in other municipalities.



## Funding and resources

Total funding received for the project is € 173 839.06. AMIF funding covers 75% of costs, while the national contribution is 25%.

In terms of other resources, the project implementation team comprises six people. These are a project coordinator, a psychologist, a jurist, a sociocultural animator, a Portuguese language teacher, and a multimedia content creator.

<https://www.facebook.com/projeto.caleidoscopio.migrantes>

## C) Portugal: Mentors for Migrants Programme

This initiative aims to create a network of corporate volunteers (mentors) who are available to provide guidance, orientation or information to migrants (mentees) according to their needs in different areas (eg. achieving qualifications, searching for employment, entrepreneurship, health, parenting, citizenship and participation and so on). Contact is established between people who would otherwise never have known each other.

These mentoring relationships provide mutual support between national citizens and immigrants, creating common understandings and promoting volunteering and corporate social responsibility. The main goal is the integration of immigrants into society through the involvement of everyone within society.

This project comes from a partnership between the High Commission for Immigration and Intercultural Dialogue (ACIDI, IP) and the Group of Reflection and Support to Corporate Citizenship (GRACE), an organisation comprising a group of companies that promote initiatives in corporate volunteering.

### Goal

The main goals of the project are as follows:

- To provide another instrument to promote the integration of migrants in Portugal;
- To remove barriers to integration through promoting equality of opportunity;
- To remove preconceptions, promoting personal, social and organisational enrichment;

- To encourage more comprehensive understanding of the world and other people among volunteers;
- To promote voluntary work and corporate social responsibility.

### How it works

Communication and project dissemination:

Presentations, leaflets, emails and individual referrals at the National Support Centre for Immigrants and company workspaces.

Mentoring and Matching in four steps:

1. In order to participate in the project, mentors and mentees fill out a questionnaire and are then invited to an interview.
2. Individuals are matched according to needs and profiles.
3. After matching, the two meet weekly. The volunteers, with their life experience, professional skills and more active role in society, provide access to their community and professional networks, give advice on job options and applications, interviews, employment culture and so on.
4. Evaluations are regularly carried out and followed up on, to ensure everyone is supported as much as possible.

### Results

The relationships established during the mentoring processes not only contribute to the resolution of issues identified by migrants, but also to greater openness and changed mentalities (of both mentors and mentees), thereby contributing to intercultural dialogue.

Two of the programme's mentors said:

- "To be a mentor is not enough - it's about having good will and wanting to help someone, especially this immigrant population. There are different cultures, different views, and different ambitions. It takes perseverance and, above all, believing that small actions and words at the right time can contribute to the success of this programme."
- "Being a mentor is a huge challenge to both professional and emotional skills. I was lucky to meet a fantastic mentee who taught me that some simple things are, in fact, still very difficult for the immigrants."

### Evaluation

Monthly, bimonthly or quarterly evaluations are carried out and followed up on, to ensure mentees and their mentors are happy, and to answer any outstanding questions participants might have.

### Who benefits

The project was initially designed with only support for migrants in mind, but in fact it has been successful in raising awareness of and encouraging intercultural dialogue both for mentees **and** mentors, and by extension their communities.

<b>PROJECT CAIM: Cooperation-Action-Research-Wold Vision</b>	
<b>Goal</b>	<i>Project CAIM is a pilot initiative in the area of prostitution and women trafficking in Portugal. The traffic of human beings is a multifaceted phenomenon that is, simultaneously, a criminal problem and a serious breaking of the Human Rights. It requires to be confronted by a partnership that associates the components of the investigation, combat and control of this crime with organisations working in the support and protection of the victims. From this point of view, the Portuguese Commission for Equality and Women Rights (in partnership with several organisations) submitted a candidacy to the European EQUAL initiative to develop the Project CAIM. Its main objective is the protection of the victims by: - Developing and implementing standards and tools to monitor the phenomenon of trafficking in order to act upon it - Strengthening the social interventions aimed at the protection and assistance of trafficked women. - Improving social inclusion and access to the labour market of the victims. - Promoting cooperation between national and international agents of intervention - Conceiving and proposing new legislation</i>
<b>How it works</b>	<i>Project CAIM started from a pre-diagnosis that identified gaps and difficulties in the knowledge and intervention of the women trafficking for sexual exploitation. In this context, the project has tried to constitute a space of meeting for different actors to study and acquire new practices of intervention on this phenomenon. In this sense, CAIM has intended to create a net of public and private institutions responsible for the prevention and combat of this crime, and the social integration of the victims. It has also</i>

	<i>promoted the cooperation with the victims' countries of origin, the scientific research on the women trafficking phenomenon and the professional qualification of people that work on this issue.</i>
<b>Results</b>	<i>Products to be developed: - Monitor system about women trafficking - Database of institutions and services that support victims of women trafficking - Compilation national and international legislation, projects and action plans about human beings trafficking and sexual exploitation - Guide to support formation of intervention agents - Guide to support social actions oriented to education and training for victims of women trafficking - Campaigns to prevent and raise awareness about women trafficking In 2008, in the context of Project CAIM and the Portuguese National Plan Against Human Beings Trafficking, it was created the Observatory of Human Trafficking. Its mission is to collect, process and disseminate information and knowledge related to this issue and other forms of gender violence.</i>
<b>Evaluation</b>	<i>CAIM has had three phases of action: Project development (2004-2005), Implementation (2005-2007) and Spreading (2008-2009). After the first stage, the project partners identified some weak points in the diagnosis of needs that had become possible threats to CAIM. For example, difficulties to contact face to face with women trafficked for security reasons, episodes of instability of some institutional partners, the repressive context of the intervention in the field of women trafficking, some delays in bureaucratic circuits and difficulties to mobilise to professionals of social communication.</i>
<b>Who benefits</b>	<i>Victims of women trafficking (Support, protection and social integration) - Agents of security services and social intervention, and researchers - Intercultural mediators - Society</i>
<b>Funding and resources</b>	
<b>Contact details</b>	
<b>Name</b>	<i>PROJECT CAIM: Cooperation-Action-Research-Wold Vision</i>

<b>Company/Institution</b>	Comissão para a Cidadania e Igualdade de Género
<b>Address/Website</b>	<a href="https://migrant-integration.ec.europa.eu/integration-practice/project-caim-cooperacao-accao-investigacao-mundivisao-cooperation-action_en">https://migrant-integration.ec.europa.eu/integration-practice/project-caim-cooperacao-accao-investigacao-mundivisao-cooperation-action_en</a>

### Portuguese Best practices n.4 : Kaleidoscope

The Caleidoscópio project combats different forms of social exclusion and provides community services, in so doing enhancing the integration of the migrant population in Portugal by preventing problems and raising awareness of issues that affect them.

<b>Kaleidoscope</b>	
<b>Goal</b>	<p><i>The theme of the project is the promotion of the integration of third-country nationals (TCNs), through the establishment and provision of services that respond to their real needs. Determination of these needs comes from a combination of research at the national level and the experience and understanding of technical staff members working at ongoing projects run by Casa Vera Cruz.</i></p> <p><i>The project's assumptions are that the use of both formal and informal methodologies will enhance dialogue among TCNs and between TCNs and host communities, and that the active participation and reflection of TCNs and their networking, both locally and nationally, will lead to their empowerment, autonomy and full integration.</i></p>
<b>How it works</b>	<p><i>The project has three components: the Migrant Victim Support Office (DiSVIO), Migrants, Culture and Arts (MICUA), and Migrants and Language (MIGLING).</i></p> <p><i>DiSVIO is a specialised office, with a psychologist and a jurist, who provide care, support and referral of victims of domestic violence, victims of human trafficking and victims of any type of discrimination.</i></p> <p><i>MICUA involves the promotion of cultural and artistic activities, based on social issues, to be defined and developed by TCNs through "green and digital" logic of mutual personal and cultural enrichment.</i></p> <p><i>MIGLING involves the offering of informal Portuguese classes in digital, independent and group format.</i></p>
<b>Results</b>	<p><i>Each of the project's components have produced different results. These include the following:</i></p> <p><i>DiSVIO</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Total number of TCNs involved: 17 men and 33 women</i></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total number of visits to TCN: 100 men and 200 women</li> <li>• Actions: establishment of an office for service provision</li> <li>• Materials produced: 1 freestanding roll-up banner; 1 poster; 1 flyer</li> <li>• Distributed copies: 2 000 flyers</li> </ul> <p><b>MICUA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total number of TCNs involved: 7 Men and 7 Women</li> <li>• Actions: 1 collection of short stories; 2 exhibitions; 2 performances</li> <li>• Materials produced: 8 short stories; 2 exhibitions; 1 freestanding roll-up banner; 4 posters</li> </ul> <p><b>MIGLING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total number of TCNs involved: 10 Men and 10 Women</li> <li>• Actions: Creation of a teaching platform</li> <li>• Materials produced: 10 elementary level modules; 10 independent level modules; 1 freestanding roll-up banner; 1 poster</li> </ul> <p>The target audience considers the project relevant and useful, seeing Portuguese language classes essential to facilitate communication and integration into the job market. The activities for the development of social and personal skills are also considered important. The office for practical and emotional support, meeting the needs of integration and informal support in the development of migrants' skills is another very positive result.</p>
<p><b>Evaluation</b></p>	<p>Evaluation of the project is continuous, taking into account the objectives and indicators defined at its outset by the team, migrants and partner network. An overall evaluation will also be carried out at the project's close.</p> <p>Some difficulties in implementation have been identified throughout the course of the project, which are linked to the requirements of the AMIF co-financier (and relate to the eligibility of TCNs undergoing the process of regularisation in Portugal). Further, the project team faced difficulties inherent to the global COVID-19 pandemic context and related necessary service restrictions.</p>
<p><b>Who benefits</b></p>	<p>TCNs legally residing in a European country or, where applicable, those at the stage of obtaining the right to legal residence, will benefit from this project. Specifically, this refers to migrants, applicants or beneficiaries of international protection and</p>



	<i>refugees, documented or in the process of regularisation, of any age, gender or origin, residing in the municipality of Aveiro or in other municipalities.</i>
<b>Funding and resources</b>	<i>Total funding received for the project is € 173 839.06. AMIF funding covers 75% of costs, while the national contribution is 25%. In terms of other resources, the project implementation team comprises six people. These are a project coordinator, a psychologist, a jurist, a sociocultural animator, a Portuguese language teacher, and a multimedia content creator.</i>
<b>Contact details</b>	
<b>Name</b>	<i>Kaleidoscope</i>
<b>Company/Institution</b>	Caleidoscópico
<b>Address/Website</b>	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/projeto.caleidoscopio.migrantes">https://www.facebook.com/projeto.caleidoscopio.migrantes</a>

## Portuguese Best practices n.5 : Mentors for Migrants Programme

This initiative aims to create a network of corporate volunteers (mentors) who are available to provide guidance, orientation or information to migrants (mentees) according to their needs in different areas (eg. achieving qualifications, searching for employment, entrepreneurship, health, parenting, citizenship and participation and so on). Contact is established between people who would otherwise never have known each other.

These mentoring relationships provide mutual support between national citizens and immigrants, creating common understandings and promoting volunteering and corporate social responsibility. The main goal is the integration of immigrants into society through the involvement of everyone within society.

This project comes from a partnership between the High Commission for Immigration and Intercultural Dialogue (ACIDI, IP) and the Group of Reflection and Support to Corporate Citizenship (GRACE), an organisation comprising a group of companies that promote initiatives in corporate volunteering.

<b>Mentors for Migrants Programme</b>	
<b>Goal</b>	<p><i>The main goals of the project are as follows:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>To provide another instrument to promote the integration of migrants in Portugal;</i></li> <li>• <i>To remove barriers to integration through promoting equality of opportunity;</i></li> <li>• <i>To remove preconceptions, promoting personal, social and organisational enrichment;</i></li> <li>• <i>To encourage more comprehensive understanding of the world and other people among volunteers;</i></li> <li>• <i>To promote voluntary work and corporate social responsibility.</i></li> </ul>
<b>How it works</b>	<p><i>Communication and project dissemination:</i>  <i>Presentations, leaflets, emails and individual referrals at the National Support Centre for Immigrants and company workspaces.</i></p> <p><i>Mentoring and Matching in four steps:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>In order to participate in the project, mentors and mentees fill out a questionnaire and are then invited to an interview.</i></li> </ol>

	<p>2. <i>Individuals are matched according to needs and profiles.</i></p> <p>3. <i>After matching, the two meet weekly. The volunteers, with their life experience, professional skills and more active role in society, provide access to their community and professional networks, give advice on job options and applications, interviews, employment culture and so on.</i></p> <p>4. <i>Evaluations are regularly carried out and followed up on, to ensure everyone is supported as much as possible.</i></p>
<p><b>Results</b></p>	<p><i>The relationships established during the mentoring processes not only contribute to the resolution of issues identified by migrants, but also to greater openness and changed mentalities (of both mentors and mentees), thereby contributing to intercultural dialogue.</i></p> <p><i>Two of the programme's mentors said:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>"To be a mentor is not enough - it's about having good will and wanting to help someone, especially this immigrant population. There are different cultures, different views, and different ambitions. It takes perseverance and, above all, believing that small actions and words at the right time can contribute to the success of this programme."</i></li> <li>• <i>"Being a mentor is a huge challenge to both professional and emotional skills. I was lucky to meet a fantastic mentee who taught me that some simple things are, in fact, still very difficult for the immigrants."</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Evaluation</b></p>	<p><i>Monthly, bimonthly or quarterly evaluations are carried out and followed up on, to ensure mentees and their mentors are happy, and to answer any outstanding questions participants might have.</i></p>
<p><b>Who benefits</b></p>	<p><i>The project was initially designed with only support for migrants in mind, but in fact it has been successful in raising awareness of and encouraging intercultural dialogue both for mentees and mentors, and by extension their communities.</i></p>
<p><b>Contact details</b></p>	
<p><b>Name</b></p>	<p><i>Mentors for Migrants Programme</i></p>

<b>Company/Institution</b>	High Commission for Migrations, IP (ACM)
<b>Address/Website</b>	<a href="https://migrant-integration.ec.europa.eu/integration-practice/portugal-mentors-migrants-programme_en">https://migrant-integration.ec.europa.eu/integration-practice/portugal-mentors-migrants-programme_en</a>

## Other Best Practices

N	PERFORMANCE AREA	GOALS	METHODOLOGY	ENTITY
1	Awareness and prevention, Care and Support	Improve prevention and care in gender violence through intersectoral coordination with health services as the central axis	Intersectoral collaboration project	PRIMARY CARE MANAGEMENT-LOCAL POLICE Salamanca
2	Awareness and prevention, Care and Support	Inform and train immigrant women on the prevention of gender violence	Workshops with participatory methodology	WOMEN ASSOCIATION
3	Awareness and prevention, Detection and coordination, Care and support	Address gender violence from prevention, awareness, multidisciplinary care, employment, and social support	Global campaign (UNITE, SAY NO, CLOTHESLINE PROJECT)	ALMERÍA CITY COUNCIL
4	Care and support	Progress towards a healthy lifestyle for women victims of gender violence, develop self-esteem and assertive communication tools	Animal-assisted therapy workshops	LAS ROZAS CITY COUNCIL
5	Care and support	Promote the empowerment and employability of women served by the Municipal Network for Attention to Victims of Gender Violence	Socio-labor insertion workshops	CITY OF MADRID
6	Care and support	Specialized care and intervention	Psychological, psychosocial,	MALAGA'S TOWN HALL

		for minor victims of gender violence	psychoeducational care, advice to mothers, joint family sessions	
<b>7</b>	Care and support	Individualized attention for cases of gender violence, execution of visitation regimes, and protection of victims	Neutral family exchange point	MOTRIL CITY COUNCIL (Granada)
<b>8</b>	Care and support, Detection and coordination	Provide information, guidance, and treatment to victims and promote their autonomy	Individualized and family intervention, interdisciplinary approach	SANTANDER CITY COUNCIL
<b>9</b>	Care and support	Respond to the needs of women survivors of Intimate Partner Violence	Group psychological intervention	POZUELO DE ALARCÓN CITY COUNCIL (Madrid)
<b>10</b>	Care and support	Promote the comprehensive development of women and prevent, detect, and intervene in violence situations	Personalized attention and specialized legal advice	SUANCES CITY COUNCIL (Cantabria)
<b>11</b>	Awareness and prevention, Care and support	Prevent violent relationships in adolescents	Good emotional relationships program for adolescents	MOLINA DE SEGURA CITY COUNCIL (Murcia)
<b>12</b>	Care and support	Combat violence against women, young people, and children	Hera Project for secondary prevention	VALENCIA CITY COUNCIL
<b>13</b>	Awareness and prevention, Detection and coordination,	Provide comprehensive assistance to women and	Psychosocial care service	AUTONOMOUS CITY OF CEUTA

	Care and support	minors exposed to gender violence		
<b>14</b>	Awareness and prevention, Detection and coordination, Care and support	Facilitate coordinated work for professionals caring for women victims of sexist violence	Guide protocol for prevention and professional action	PRAT DE LLOBREGAT CITY COUNCIL (Barcelona)
<b>15</b>	Detection and coordination, Care and support	Improve comprehensive intervention with new application in data processing	Multiprofessional intervention in gender violence	SAN SEBASTIÁN DE LOS REYES CITY COUNCIL (Madrid)
<b>16</b>	Awareness and prevention, Detection and coordination, Care and support	Joint intervention protocol to respond to the needs of women who suffer sexist violence	Local protocol for comprehensive approach	SANTA COLOMA DE GRAMANET CITY COUNCIL (Barcelona)
<b>17</b>	Care and support	Improve service quality and support to victims through mobile devices and new technologies	24-hour protection and support via mobile devices	TORREJON DE ARDOZ CITY COUNCIL (Madrid)
<b>18</b>	Care and support	Incorporate children in the comprehensive recovery process of their mothers	Personal development workshops for women and their children	VILAGARCIA DE AROUSA CITY COUNCIL (Pontevedra)
<b>19</b>	Awareness and prevention, Detection and coordination, Care and support	Prevent cases of gender violence and raise awareness	24-hour multidisciplinary care team	ELIANA CITY COUNCIL (Valencia)
<b>20</b>	Awareness and prevention, Detection and coordination, Care and support	Specific objectives for students, teachers, professionals, associations, and the general public	Role-playing games and use of new technologies	AYUNTAMIENTO DE GELVES
<b>21</b>	Care and support	Breaking the cycle therapeutic	-	CÁDIZ CITY COUNCIL



		program for children of victims		
<b>22</b>	Care and support	Comprehensive care service ensuring monitoring during judicial, police, and social integration processes	Direct communication and continuous support	CITY COUNCIL OF PONTEAREAS (Pontevedra)
<b>23</b>	Care and support	Provide free, individualized legal advice to victims of gender violence	Individual, personalized, and integral attention	CÓRDOBA CITY COUNCIL
<b>24</b>	Care and support	Psychological care for minor victims to help their stability and emotional security	Systemic ecological model, positive parenting approach, networking	PALENCIA CITY COUNCIL
<b>25</b>	Care and support	Ensure visibility, reporting, and comprehensive protection of migrant women victims of gender violence	Interinstitutional protocol for intervention	ISLAND COUNCIL OF TENERIFE (Santa Cruz de Tenerife)
<b>26</b>	Care and support	Specialized resource to promote comprehensive development and prevent situations of abuse	Women's care service	CUNTIS CITY COUNCIL (Pontevedra)
<b>27</b>	Awareness and prevention, Care and support	Comprehensive care, monitoring, and protection for victims	Police coordination table for protection	PUÇOL CITY COUNCIL (Valencia)
<b>28</b>	Care and support	-	Protocol for action in cases of gender violence	BELLREGUARD CITY COUNCIL (Valencia)
<b>29</b>	Care and support	Provide comprehensive response to GBV	Teamwork, institutionalized	FUENLABRADA CITY COUNCIL (Madrid)

		and seek its eradication	coordination, gender training	
<b>30</b>	Care and support	-	Social intervention model for rural areas	PROVINCIAL COUNCIL OF PALENCIA
<b>31</b>	Awareness and prevention, Care and support	Break the silence and empower victims	Campaigns in education, health, social services	CABEZÓN DE PISUERGA CITY COUNCIL (Valladolid)
<b>32</b>	Awareness and prevention, Care and support	Prevention, detection, and legal advice to victims	Zero tolerance - comprehensive municipal plan	TAVERNES BLANQUES CITY COUNCIL (Valencia)
<b>33</b>	Awareness and prevention, Care and support	Address violence against women comprehensively and continuously	Specialized care service	TOWN HALL OF LAS TORRES DE COTILLAS (Murcia)
<b>34</b>	Care and support	Provide a specialized and multidisciplinary resource for assistance and continued treatment	Integrated legal and psychological advice service	OVIEDO CITY COUNCIL (Asturias)
<b>35</b>	Care and support	Strengthen personality and promote positive self-perception	Personal strengthening group (GEP)	GRANOLLERS CITY COUNCIL (Barcelona)
<b>36</b>	Awareness and prevention, Care and support	Achieve emancipation through personal empowerment and economic independence	Job insertion plan for people at risk	VALLADOLID CITY COUNCIL
<b>37</b>	Awareness and prevention, Detection and coordination, Care and support	Ensure comprehensive protection, guidance, and multidisciplinary care	Prevention service and comprehensive care	TOWN HALL OF THE VILLAGE OF AGAETE (Las Palmas)
<b>38</b>	Care and support, Detection and coordination	Eradicate gender violence among interest groups	Protocols against gender violence	AUTONOMOUS BODY FOR TAX MANAGEMENT AND OTHER CITY

				COUNCIL SERVICES (Malaga)
<b>39</b>	Care and support	Optimize comprehensive care for victims and their children	Police protection systems (GAMA Group)	VALENCIA CITY COUNCIL LOCAL POLICE
<b>40</b>	Awareness and prevention	Raise awareness and involve society in gender equality	Equality School Bus	LA CORUÑA CITY COUNCIL

## Additional Best Practices

N	NAME	GOALS	METHODOLOGY
1	<p><b>Mask-19</b></p> <p><i>Mascarilla-19</i>  <a href="http://mascarilla19.com/">http://mascarilla19.com/</a></p>	<p>Offer a resource so that those women who may suffer sexist violence, whether in their homes or on the street, have an alert system in pharmacies, thus being able to indirectly contact emergency services.</p>	<p>This initiative arose in March 2020 from the Government of the Canary Islands in collaboration with the Pharmaceutical Associations, within the framework of the State of Alarm and the consequent confinement of the population due to the health and social crisis of COVID-19. The campaign consists of informing the entire population that those women who are at risk for their physical, psychological and/or sexual integrity, both in their place of residence and on the street, can go to the pharmacy and request a "Mask 19". These establishments have remained open throughout the State of Alarm because they carry out essential work. Thus, under this word -Mask 19- as a code, the pharmacy staff contacts 112 or 016 to alert you of the situation and receive precise instructions.</p>
2	<p><b>Guide for the Empowerment of Immigrant Women Against Gender Violence</b></p> <p><i>Guía para el empoderamiento de la mujer inmigrante frente a la violencia de género</i>  <a href="https://acortar.link/83sEYz">https://acortar.link/83sEYz</a></p>	<p>The Guide aims to be a tool that collaborates in the eradication of sexist violence and that serves to promote chained processes of awareness among women in general and foreign women in particular.</p>	<p>When immigrant women arrive in Spain, they often face increased vulnerability to gender violence due to factors such as dependency on their spouse for their residence permit, financial reliance, precarious socio-labor conditions, and lack of family support networks. Additionally, they may experience attacks but lack the knowledge or ability to recognize and act against them. This guide aims to inform both professionals working with this group and immigrant women themselves about their rights and available resources. It is based on research highlighting the lack of</p>

sufficient information on gender violence and immigrant women, incorporating reflections from affected women and social agents in the Basque Country. The guide promotes empowerment by raising awareness of individual and community strengths and providing skills to assert guaranteed rights, helping women regain control over their lives and escape submission to face violence.

### SYNCHRONIZED

3

#### *Sincronizadas*

<https://www.sincronizadas.com/>

The objective is to stop the possible sexual violence that women encounter when practicing sports.

The Platform is made up of women. To enter you have to link your own social network (Twitter or Facebook), through which you will have a reference to the person behind the profile and the email through which you register. Through the platform you can publish a training session indicating start and end date, race level and starting place. It thus allows other users to search for the times and places that best suit them, as well as being able to filter the levels with which they start to carry out the races and sign up to share that route.

### VI2GEN

4

<https://www.vi2gen.es/>

Offer a resource so that women victims of gender violence and people around them can ask for help from professionals safely and secretly, as well as send evidence for the subsequent judicial process.

This tool has been implemented by the Terrinches Women's Center (Ciudad Real). This tool can be accessed via a QR code or a direct link. In order not to leave a digital trace, you must enter with private browsing. You must fill out the form with the information that you believe is appropriate and necessary and you can also add photos, videos, audios or documents that may serve as evidence for the complaint. When you submit the form, all the information will reach the system and expert people will contact you as soon as possible. It is important to know that, once the form is

**5**

**Don't Leave Her Alone. Guide for Family Members and Close People of Women Victims of Gender Violence**

*No la dejes sola.*

<https://acortar.link/m4oV4P/>

Recognize the importance of the role of families and close people in cases of gender violence so that they are involved in the support and protection of women victims of gender violence in their environment. Provide families and loved ones with the necessary information about the reality of gender violence and guidelines for action, as well as specialized care services.

submitted, you will receive a reference code for your query that you must remember. It is recommended to write it down in a safe place.

Through a study carried out in 2019 by the Igual a Igual Foundation, on the time it takes for victims of gender violence to tell their situation, it was revealed that those who participated in it took 8 years and 8 months (as time medium) in telling their situation, either through specialized services or by filing a complaint. Among the main reasons why they do not tell what happened or ask for help are fear of the aggressor's reaction (50%), believing that they could solve it alone (45%) and not recognizing themselves as a victim of gender violence (36%). Furthermore, in the 2019 Macrosurvey on violence against women, the women interviewed who reported suffering violence from their partner stated that 50.7% told what happened to a friend, 36.2% had told their partner, mother and 25.4% to a sister.

**6**

**Quick Response Guide**

*Guía de respuesta rápida*

<https://acortar.link/dhpsu/>

The department aims to help citizens understand the different expressions of gender violence and offer practical keys to detect it, prevent it or act against it.

The guide is founded on the belief that everyone can offer effective help, even minimal, by being part of a community's social network and having the right information. It enables both women and society to:

1. Understand what gender-based violence is.
2. Clearly identify such situations.
3. Stay calm when intervening, knowing what to say and how to listen effectively.
4. Know where to call for help. Key individuals in each community can significantly assist women at risk by providing initial information, listening, and guiding them on where to seek help.

	<p>These actions help form a support network based on close relationships. To enhance accessibility, the guide is available in three formats: large paper version, navigable version, and pocket paper version.</p>
<p><b>7</b></p> <p><b>EscApp</b></p> <p><a href="https://acortar.link/ydvi8U">https://acortar.link/ydvi8U</a></p>	<p>The objective is to offer victims of gender violence information about various resources such as the situation of shelters, contact with police stations and hospitals, as well as advice and help to deal with their situation. It also aims to be a resource for the victims' environment and anyone who may encounter similar situations and need information on how to act.</p> <p>It is a free downloadable application designed by the Xunta de Galicia to inform and support women who suffer gender violence and anyone who detects a possible situation of gender violence in their environment and wants to obtain information about it. It camouflages itself in devices to leave no trace. It appears as a generic information app and has a password to enter and guarantee the privacy of the victims. This mobile application is available for different Android and IOS devices.</p>
<p><b>8</b></p> <p><b>Don't Cut Yourself</b></p> <p><i>No te cortes</i></p> <p><a href="https://acortar.link/VQ6nuS">https://acortar.link/VQ6nuS</a></p>	<p>The objectives of the campaign are, mainly, to recognize and address gender violence in which the direct victim is a woman younger.</p> <p>The achievement of the stated objectives is carried out through the establishment of a first level of consultation and guidance through a free, safe and confidential care service, through an online help line; a telephone line service, and a second level of care and intervention through a specialized care unit created for this purpose.</p>
<p><b>9</b></p> <p><b>Solidarity Network of Victims of Gender Violence in Universities</b></p>	<p>The objective of the network is to follow the most successful examples at an international level, especially universities such as Harvard, Wisconsin, Oxford, Colorado, etc. and</p> <p>The objective of the network is to follow the most successful examples at an international level, especially universities such as Harvard, Wisconsin, Oxford, Colorado, etc. and make visible this problem that affects both the university community and society in general, and especially provide support to the victims.</p>



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*Red Solidaria de Víctimas de Violencia de Género en las Universidades*  
<https://acortar.link/9aQGwR>

make visible this problem that affects both the university community and society in general, and especially provide support to the victims.

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# Strategies to combat violence against migrant women

The fight against violence faced by migrant women requires a multifaceted approach, as demonstrated by the effective practices analyzed in this research. Several key elements have emerged that contribute to combating this issue, and identifying future areas of focus is essential for ensuring the success of interventions.

**Integration** is a key concept in addressing migrant women's challenges. It refers to the process and outcomes of migrants adjusting to a host society, emphasizing a two-way dynamic in which both migrants and locals adapt their values, norms, and behaviors (Klarenbeek, 2021). As part of this broader integration process, efforts to combat violence against women and girls (VAWG) are critical, as governments are obligated to eliminate such violence under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including achieving **Gender Equality** (SDG 5) and advancing **Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions** (SDG 16).

Jewkes et al. (2020) highlight interventions that have successfully reduced VAWG, stressing the importance of a clear theory of change, contextual relevance, and the right methods and personnel. These interventions can be categorized into four groups:

1. **Community activism:** Approaches aimed at shifting gender attitudes and social norms that perpetuate violence.
2. **Gender transformative and economic empowerment:** Initiatives focused on preventing intimate partner violence by empowering women economically and socially.
3. **Specialized interventions:** Programs targeting specific groups, such as couples or female sex workers, to prevent violence.
4. **Child protection interventions:** Programs designed to prevent violence against children, with varying objectives and components.

To effectively prevent and ultimately eliminate violence against women, particularly migrant women, it is crucial to optimize the design and implementation of these interventions. Violence against women can take many forms, including male violence, patriarchal control, harmful traditions, sexual and occupational exploitation, and lack of social support, all of which contribute to long-term psychological and health impacts. These factors must be carefully considered when designing programs for migrant women.

A systematic review by Silva and Pereira (2023) identifies **psychoeducation** and **cognitive restructuring techniques** as the most effective interventions for promoting the psychosocial well-being and empowerment of immigrant women. These approaches focus on mental health and emotional resilience, helping migrant women cope with trauma and develop stronger coping mechanisms.

Regarding the prevention of violence, Villardón-Gallego, García-Cid, Estévez, and García-Carrión (2023) emphasize that interventions aimed at preventing violence against women must take an integrated approach, considering the unique needs of vulnerable populations like migrants. They identified four types of early educational interventions to prevent gender-based violence:

1. Integration into the school curriculum.
2. Active participation of students and communities.
3. Interventions based on scientific evidence.
4. Tailored approaches that adapt to specific groups and contexts.

In practice, **community participation** has been identified as a critical component in fostering individual well-being and multicultural cohesion (Taurini et al., 2017). Community involvement helps migrants cope with inequality, marginalization, and challenges related to rural-urban adaptation. It also assists international migrants in overcoming cross-cultural and ethnic challenges and mitigates the impact of institutional segregation faced by internal migrants (Zhang et al., 2023).

Drawing from the insights of the aforementioned literature and the practices of professionals, organizations, and institutions that support migrants, several key areas deserve attention in fostering the integration of immigrant women:

- **Developing integrated educational interventions** that address gender-based violence and promote gender equality.
- **Expanding community involvement** to support social cohesion and provide a sense of belonging for migrant women.
- **Providing specialized support services** tailored to the unique needs of migrant women, focusing on mental health, empowerment, and resilience.
- **Creating pathways to economic empowerment** for migrant women to reduce vulnerability to violence and exploitation.
- **Strengthening partnerships between professionals and local communities** to ensure culturally sensitive and contextually relevant interventions.

By focusing on these areas, institutions and organizations can foster a safer, more inclusive environment that enhances the well-being and integration of migrant women, while addressing the root causes of violence and promoting long-term social cohesion.

## The effective Communication with Patients

Effective communication between healthcare professionals and patients is a critical factor in enhancing patient satisfaction, improving treatment adherence, and achieving better health outcomes (Degni et al., 2011). The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) (2004) outlines several key qualities of effective communication between doctors and patients, including:

- Assisting patients in providing relevant information
- Improving overall patient satisfaction
- Encouraging active patient participation in health-related decision-making
- Supporting patients in making informed health choices
- Managing patient expectations more effectively
- Enhancing the effectiveness of treatments
- Minimizing the risk of errors and setbacks

A significant focus in the research on best practices is how to achieve these goals, especially when working with migrant women from diverse cultural backgrounds. While many barriers to effective communication have been identified, there is a need for a deeper understanding of the realities faced by both healthcare services and patients to improve the quality of care provided.

## The role of the cultural mediator

Based on interviews with service providers, a clear need has emerged to strengthen the collaboration between operators and cultural mediators. Cultural mediators are seen as crucial figures in supporting integration, particularly within the healthcare system. Currently, these professionals are also expected to collaborate with other public institutions, such as courts and police stations. However, there is no national legislation governing their role, and the regulations that do exist vary across regions, leading to inconsistencies.

To provide effective support, it is essential to consider the specific characteristics of the migrant populations seeking services. Many of these individuals have limited proficiency in Italian—some are newly arrived in Italy and have not yet had the chance to learn the language, while others, despite having lived in the country for years and even having multiple pregnancies, still lack sufficient language skills. As a result, addressing language barriers is crucial. Best practices aim to bridge this gap by creating accessible, user-friendly materials—simple, visually rich, and translated into multiple languages—with the help of culturally competent mediators. These efforts are designed to ensure that services are both functional and responsive to the diverse needs of the migrant community.

## The Importance of Healthcare Professional Training

The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (RCOG) outlines essential guidelines on Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), emphasizing that all doctors should be familiar with the complications associated with FGM. Gynecologists, obstetricians, and midwives should receive mandatory training on FGM and its management (RCOG, 2015). Key strategies for improving healthcare interactions with women and girls living with FGM include educational initiatives to reduce medicalization, enhance communication, and improve the screening, diagnosis, and treatment of FGM-related complications (UNFPA, 2010).

Despite the availability of educational resources, studies on the awareness, knowledge, and attitudes of healthcare providers and medical students regarding FGM have highlighted significant gaps. Many professionals lack knowledge about the prevalence, diagnosis, and management of FGM, and struggle to correctly classify the practice according to the World Health Organization's (WHO) classification system.

FGM is often not included in the curricula of nurses, midwives, and doctors, either at the undergraduate or postgraduate level. This absence of formal training can be problematic, as untrained professionals may fail to recognize FGM, missing the opportunity to engage in preventive discussions with patients.

Research into interventions to improve healthcare for women with FGM and to prevent the practice itself has been limited (Abdulcadir, 2015). Women affected by FGM have unique healthcare needs, and healthcare professionals play a vital role in ensuring proper screening, diagnosis, counseling, and prevention (Dawson, 2015).

While FGM is more prevalent in African countries, shifts in migration patterns have led to an increasing number of women with FGM being encountered in high-income countries, including Italy (Dawson, 2015). It is critical for professionals in this field to have access to evidence-based guidelines and effective tools to inform their practice. This is the focus of the guidelines currently being developed in our department for healthcare providers working with women affected by FGM.

## Communication, Language Barriers, and Interpreting

- Interpreting services in sexual and reproductive health are neither systematically organized nor legally regulated, creating a significant gap in care.
- The responsibility for addressing communication challenges often falls on individual healthcare providers and the resourcefulness of migrant women themselves, which can be insufficient.
- Communication difficulties can lead to discomfort for both migrant women and healthcare professionals, affecting the quality of care and the overall healthcare experience.
- Ineffective or inadequate communication increases the risk of errors in treatment or medical procedures, potentially compromising patient safety.
- Migrants who do not speak or understand Italian often lack crucial information regarding their medical care (such as the progress of treatments or childbirth), preventing them from fully benefiting from healthcare services.
- The introduction of intercultural mediators is seen as an essential solution to bridge the communication gap between healthcare providers and migrant patients.
- Migrant women with limited or no Italian language skills are frequently excluded from important services, such as prenatal classes, and receive reduced assistance during childbirth.
- There is an urgent need to implement interpreters in healthcare services to ensure effective communication and to address the language barriers faced by migrants.
- Incomplete, inefficient, and inadequate communication between migrant women and healthcare providers can result in social exclusion, marginalization, and stigmatization, reinforcing unequal power dynamics in healthcare settings.

## Intercultural Differences and Intercultural Competencies

- Although in recent years, intercultural competencies in healthcare have received particular attention, medical staff still lack extensive knowledge in this field.
- The lack of intercultural competencies among medical personnel is highlighted by both migrants and healthcare providers.
- The importance of intercultural empathy is particularly emphasized.
- Employees of the Italian healthcare system should receive basic information about the culture, values, and practices of their patients' origin cultures, with a particular focus on aspects of sexual and reproductive health.
- In the treatment of migrant women, special sensitivity, within the context of sexual and reproductive health, should be dedicated to issues related to attitudes towards the body, privacy, and gender relationships.
- In this context as well, the importance of introducing and having intercultural mediators is underscored.

## Ethnic Stereotypes, Ethnic Prejudices, Nationalism, "Racism," and Discriminatory Practices

- Discriminatory treatment practices are present even among healthcare providers working in the field of women's sexual and reproductive health.
- Increased awareness among healthcare providers regarding discriminatory treatment practices is necessary, achieved by enhancing intercultural sensitivity and reducing intercultural prejudices and stereotypes through conferences, courses, and workshops.
- Exploring the possibilities and opportunities to introduce treatment protocols tailored to the cultural specificities of migrants (e.g., female gynecologist, presence of a nurse during gynecological visits, respect for cultural specificities during childbirth, and more) is essential.
- In this context, the importance of the presence of intercultural mediators is also emphasized, which could have a key effect on reducing discriminatory practices.



## Knowledge of the Healthcare System, Rights, and Access to Healthcare Services

- Migrants often lack information about options and rights in the field of healthcare.
- Due to a lack of information (and poor or no language knowledge), they are often excluded from institutionally provided prenatal care and, to some extent, postnatal care.
- Being less informed, migrant women find it more challenging to access healthcare services related to sexual and reproductive health (maternity school, pain relief during childbirth, recommended positions during childbirth, etc.).
- There is a need for written information on rights and opportunities in the languages of the migrants.
- Long waiting times pose a significant problem.
- The importance and role of socio-economic status cause differences in accessibility to the quality and speed of healthcare services for migrant women.
- Migrants without basic health insurance tend to avoid "non-urgent" healthcare services.

## The Importance of Social Ties in Ensuring the Reproductive Health of Migrant Women

- The existence of a social network between migrant women themselves, their families or of people from their country of origin is an important source of support, information, and easier integration into the new cultural and social environment.
- The presence of contacts and social networks is a factor that allows migrants more effective access to healthcare services related to sexual and reproductive health.
- Migrants without a broad ethnic network in Italy and who are not integrated into a larger ethnic community largely depend on their husbands, who represent their primary source of information, support, and mediation between them and healthcare providers.
- Migrants without social ties and integration into the broader ethnic community's network represent a more vulnerable group, both in terms of reproductive and mental health.

# Systemic Solutions for Issues Related to Migrants

Addressing the multifaceted challenges faced by migrant women requires comprehensive, systemic solutions that focus on inclusivity, cultural sensitivity, and empowerment. To effectively alleviate the difficulties encountered by migrant women, several key strategies can be implemented across various sectors:

## Language Barriers and Education

- **Language Classes:** Implement tailored Italian language courses designed to address the specific needs of migrant women, focusing on both conversational and medical terminology to improve communication in healthcare settings.
- **Childcare Support:** Provide childcare services during language classes to overcome family-related obstacles, ensuring active participation and inclusion for mothers.
- **Information Campaigns:** Launch multilingual campaigns aimed at informing migrant women of their rights, available services, and how to report cases of violence. This should include distributing leaflets, guides, and other materials in multiple languages, both digitally and in print.
- **Targeted Outreach:** Develop educational campaigns that directly address migrant women, focusing on legal rights, healthcare access, and the prevention of violence, ensuring that information is accessible and relevant to their specific needs.

## Psychological and Legal Support

- **Multilingual Psychological Services:** Engage psychologists who are native speakers and proficient in various languages to ensure culturally sensitive and effective communication.
- **Cultural Mediators and All-Female Staff:** Employ cultural mediators and ensure that healthcare and support services are staffed primarily by women, which can enhance cultural sensitivity and provide a more comfortable, understanding environment.
- **Comprehensive Support Centers:** Establish or strengthen support centers specifically for migrant women, offering psychological, legal, and social services. These centers should be staffed by professionals who understand the unique cultural and language barriers faced by migrant populations.

- **Legal Assistance:** Ensure migrant women have access to free or low-cost legal assistance, particularly for cases of violence or exploitation, to empower them to take action when necessary.

### Cultural Competence and Feminist Approach

- **Staff Training:** Train all healthcare, social service, and law enforcement personnel in cultural competence, emphasizing the importance of respecting cultural differences and understanding the unique challenges faced by migrant women.
- **Feminist Principles:** Operate support initiatives based on feminist principles, promoting solidarity among women and combating ethnic stereotypes and discriminatory practices.
- **Violence Recognition Training:** Provide training for professionals to recognize signs of violence and respond to migrant women with cultural sensitivity, ensuring that the services provided are not only inclusive but also empowering.

### Intercultural Workshops and Activities

- **Workshops for Intercultural Understanding:** Implement regular intercultural workshops to promote dialogue and understanding between migrant women and local communities, fostering inclusion.
- **Addressing Discrimination:** Run targeted workshops and activities that tackle cultural and religious discrimination, promoting inclusivity and cultural respect.
- **Gender-Based Violence Education:** Collaborate with migrant associations to offer educational workshops on gender-based violence, teaching migrant women how to recognize and report abuse, while providing them with the necessary resources for protection and support.

### Challenging Systemic Barriers and Educational Inequality

- **Empowerment Programs:** Challenge systemic barriers by offering programs that guide migrant women in navigating societal structures, particularly those facing educational inequality and discrimination.
- **Youth Education:** Implement educational programs in schools for children of migrants to promote gender equality and prevent violence from an early age, laying the foundation for future societal change.
- **Community Outreach:** Promote community-based activities that involve migrant families in local events, such as community meetings, storytelling

sessions, and collaborative projects that encourage social integration and shared understanding.

### Social Support and Community Engagement

- **Breaking Social Isolation:** Offer social support, counseling, and cultural activities designed to combat isolation and foster stronger social ties within the broader community.
- **Collaboration with Institutions:** Work with libraries, civic centers, religious institutions, and other community organizations to create a unified approach to addressing the challenges migrant women face, helping them feel more connected and supported.
- **Partnerships with NGOs:** Build strong collaborations between NGOs, migrant associations, and civil society organizations that already have established relationships with migrant communities to facilitate access to support services and ensure safe reporting of violence.

### Addressing Violence and Empowerment

- **Comprehensive Violence Prevention:** Focus on all forms of violence, including physical, psychological, economic, and gender-based violence, by offering tailored counseling, support, and empowerment initiatives.
- **Countering Discrimination:** Provide culturally sensitive support that acknowledges the specific forms of discrimination migrant women face, working to challenge ethnic stereotypes and prejudices while promoting their autonomy.

### Fostering a Sense of Community

- **Group Support:** Organize group sessions for migrant women, allowing them to share experiences and provide mutual support in overcoming the psychological challenges related to migration and settling into a new country.
- **Community-Based Work:** Collaborate with community and religious leaders in migrant communities to challenge harmful cultural norms that perpetuate violence against women and promote gender equality within their communities.

### Economic Empowerment

- **Skill Development Programs:** Introduce economic empowerment initiatives such as skill development courses to reduce economic dependence and enhance the independence of migrant women, helping them to become financially self-sufficient.

- **Vocational Training and Employment:** Offer vocational training and work integration programs for migrant women, enabling them to gain financial independence and reduce vulnerability to violence.
- **Access to Entrepreneurship:** Facilitate access to microcredit and entrepreneurship programs for migrant women, empowering them to start businesses and achieve greater autonomy.

### Policies and Legislation

- **Enforcing Gender-Based Violence Laws:** Ensure the rigorous implementation of laws against gender-based violence, guaranteeing that these laws are applied fairly and equally to all women, regardless of their migration status.
- **Advocacy for Legal Protections:** Advocate for policies that protect migrant women's rights, such as regularizing their migration status and ensuring access to essential health and education services without discrimination.

### Monitoring and Evaluation

- **Data Collection:** Collect disaggregated data on the incidence of violence against migrant women to guide future prevention strategies and measure the effectiveness of current programs.
- **Ongoing Program Evaluation:** Continuously monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of prevention and support programs, adapting them as necessary to ensure that they effectively meet the evolving needs of migrant women.

Incorporating these strategies into policy and practice will ensure that migrant women are supported, empowered, and able to access the services they need to lead healthier, safer lives. By addressing their unique challenges in an inclusive, culturally sensitive manner, we can help build a more equitable society for all.

# Practical indications for operators

This section provides practical guidelines for professionals working with migrant women, emphasizing culturally competent and effective interventions across various areas of support. These recommendations aim to enhance communication, reduce barriers, and foster integration, while addressing the specific needs of migrant women in healthcare and social services.

## 1. Effective Communication with Patients

- **Clear Communication:** Prioritize clear and accessible language, avoiding technical jargon to ensure that migrant women understand their healthcare options and treatment.
- **Inclusion in Decision-Making:** Actively involve patients in decision-making processes, provide assistance in sharing information, and manage expectations realistically.
- **Safe and Private Environment:** Ensure that all conversations take place in a safe and confidential space.
- **Sensitivity to Trauma:** Recognize the trauma and experiences that many migrant women have faced. Validate their feelings and reinforce that violence is never justified.
- **Multilingual Outreach:** Develop campaigns and distribute materials in multiple languages, providing essential information about rights, local laws, and available support resources.

## 2. Role of the Cultural Mediator

- **Bridging Gaps:** Cultural mediators are critical in facilitating communication and ensuring that migrant women fully understand the healthcare system, its procedures, and their rights.
- **Translation and Interpretation:** Use professional mediators to assist in translating and interpreting, ensuring that language barriers do not hinder effective communication.
- **Cultural Guidance:** Mediators help explain cultural norms, health system rules, and patient concerns, fostering better understanding between patients and healthcare providers.

## 3. Importance of Healthcare Professional Training

- **Recognizing Violence:** Train healthcare, social services, and law enforcement professionals to recognize signs of violence, with a focus on culturally sensitive responses.
- **Specialized Knowledge:** Ensure mandatory training on specific issues such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), gender-based violence, and trauma-informed care to help professionals provide appropriate care.
- **Continuous Education:** Promote ongoing workshops on gender violence detection, interview techniques, and crisis management to ensure professionals remain updated on best practices.
- **Empowering Through Knowledge:** Educate healthcare providers on migrant women's rights, available resources, and how to navigate cultural differences in healthcare settings.

#### 4. Communication, Language Barriers, and Interpreting

- **Language Support:** Address language barriers by introducing professional interpreters and intercultural mediators, rather than relying on family members or friends.
- **Comprehensive Materials:** Provide informational materials in multiple languages, including printed and digital formats, to ensure accessibility.
- **Understanding Dialects:** Be aware of the diversity of dialects and linguistic variations within migrant communities to ensure effective communication.

#### 5. Intercultural Differences and Competencies

- **Cultural Sensitivity:** Healthcare staff must be trained to recognize and respect cultural differences, especially regarding body perception, privacy, and gender roles.
- **Individualized Approach:** Promote a patient-centered approach that respects each individual's cultural context and experiences, avoiding assumptions based on ethnicity or background.
- **Community Collaboration:** Work with community and religious leaders to challenge cultural norms that perpetuate violence and promote gender equality.
- **Inclusive Education:** Implement school programs for migrant children that focus on gender equality, human rights, and the prevention of violence.

#### 6. Ethnic Stereotypes, Prejudices, and Discriminatory Practices



- **Combating Discrimination:** Address discriminatory practices by raising awareness about unconscious biases among healthcare professionals and ensuring diversity and inclusion at all levels of care.
- **Cultural Competence:** Introduce treatment protocols that cater to the cultural needs of migrant women, involving intercultural mediators to mitigate stereotypes and discriminatory practices.
- **Fair Policies:** Ensure that all policies and practices are fair and non-discriminatory, fostering an inclusive environment for migrant women.

## 7. Knowledge of the Healthcare System and Access to Services

- **Access to Information:** Migrant women often face barriers in accessing healthcare due to lack of knowledge about available services. Providing written information in multiple languages can bridge this gap.
- **Guidance and Navigation:** Offer clear instructions on how the healthcare system operates and assist migrant women in navigating it, ensuring they can access the care they need.
- **Addressing Socio-Economic Barriers:** Take into account the socio-economic factors that impact access to healthcare, offering additional support to overcome these challenges.

## 8. Importance of Social Ties in Ensuring Reproductive Health

- **Social Networks:** Social support networks are crucial for migrant women's access to sexual and reproductive healthcare. Women without these ties are more vulnerable and face greater challenges.
- **Community Integration:** Encourage the creation of community networks that integrate migrant women into local social and healthcare systems.
- **Support Groups:** Facilitate support groups and workshops on reproductive health, promoting better understanding and access to care.

## 9. Systemic Solutions for Migrant Issues

- **Holistic Approaches:** Address the complex needs of migrant women through systemic solutions that promote inclusivity, cultural sensitivity, and empowerment. This includes language courses, psychological support, cultural competence training, and economic empowerment programs.
- **Legal and Social Support:** Ensure that migrant women have access to free or low-cost legal aid and social services, particularly in cases of gender-based violence.

- **Public Policies:** Advocate for policies that protect the rights of migrant women, including regularizing their migration status and ensuring access to health and education services without discrimination.
- **Data Collection and Evaluation:** Collect disaggregated data on violence against migrant women to inform prevention strategies and continually evaluate the effectiveness of support programs.

### Practical Approaches for Professionals

- **Holistic Integration:** Social workers and psychologists should adopt a comprehensive approach to integration that goes beyond language education to include vocational training, social services, legal advice, and cultural activities.
- **Gender-Based Violence Prevention:** Professionals can implement strategies like providing safe spaces, creating empowerment-focused programs, and offering support for migrant women to overcome autonomy restrictions imposed by partners.
- **Cultural Integration:** Facilitating cultural integration through language courses, city tours, and intercultural workshops can help migrant women better understand and adapt to their new environment.
- **Collaboration and Partnerships:** Professionals should form partnerships with adult education centers, government agencies, and community organizations to improve the support available to migrant populations.
- **Trauma-Informed Care:** Adopt a trauma-informed approach that recognizes the specific psychological and emotional needs of migrant women who have experienced gender-based violence or other traumatic events.
- **Safe Spaces for Healing:** Create safe environments where migrant women can heal from violence, empowering them through counseling, support groups, and practical resources for rebuilding their lives.
- **Empowerment Through Skills:** Offer skill development programs such as language courses, professional training, and financial literacy to foster economic independence and autonomy for migrant women.
- **Cultural Sensitivity:** Use cultural mediators to ensure that interventions are tailored to the unique needs of each migrant woman, fostering better communication and more effective support.
- **Psychological and Healthcare Support:** Collaborate with medical professionals, including gynecologists and cultural mediators, to provide

holistic care that addresses both the physical and psychological needs of migrant women.

By integrating these guidelines into everyday practice, professionals can offer more effective, compassionate, and culturally sensitive support to migrant women, ensuring they are empowered, informed, and able to access the services they need.

Below are practical indications and useful tools for psychologists, social workers and migrant operators.

### Psychologists

<b>Practice/ Methodology or Tool</b>	<b>Type of Violence Opposed</b>	<b>Area of Intervention</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Methods and Times of Application</b>
<b>Trauma-Informed Care</b>	Physical, Psychological	Mental Health	Providing care with an understanding of trauma's impact on migrant women's mental well-being	Implemented during counseling sessions, support groups, and crisis interventions
<b>Culturally Sensitive Therapy</b>	Psychological	Mental Health	Tailoring therapy approaches to align with the cultural backgrounds and values of migrant women	Utilized in individual therapy sessions, group therapy, and family counseling
<b>Empowerment Workshops</b>	Psychological, Economic	Empowerment	Equipping migrant women with skills and resources to assert their rights and autonomy	Conducted periodically in community settings, focusing on skill development and empowerment strategies

## Social Workers

Practice/ Methodology or Tool	Type of Violence Opposed	Area of Intervention	Description	Methods and Times of Application
<b>Case Management</b>	Various	Social Services	Providing personalized support and assistance to migrant women navigating complex systems	Implemented throughout the support process, including assessment, planning, and advocacy
<b>Support Groups</b>	Psychological, Emotional	Community Engagement	Offering a safe space for migrant women to share experiences, receive support, and build social networks	Conducted regularly, allowing for peer support and collective empowerment
<b>Advocacy Programs</b>	Various	Empowerment	Championing the rights and needs of migrant women at systemic levels through advocacy efforts	Ongoing engagement with policymakers, community leaders, and stakeholders to drive change

### Migrant operator and other

Practice/ Methodology or Tool	Type of Violence Opposed	Area of Intervention	Description	Methods and Times of Application
<b>Cultural Sensitivity Training</b>	Various	Empowerment	Enhancing understanding of diverse cultural backgrounds and needs to provide more effective support	Conducted through workshops, training sessions, and ongoing professional development
<b>Community Outreach Programs</b>	Various	Community Engagement	Engaging migrant communities through outreach activities to provide information, support, and resources	Conducted regularly in community settings, including cultural events, religious gatherings, and social gatherings
<b>Legal Assistance Referrals</b>	Legal	Empowerment	Facilitating access to legal support and resources for migrant women facing legal challenges or seeking protection	Offered as needed, connecting individuals with legal aid organizations and pro bono services

In general, professionals working with migrant women should focus on the following key areas:

1. **Understanding Vulnerabilities:** It is essential to recognize the intersecting vulnerabilities faced by migrant women, including their legal and economic dependence on spouses, precarious socio-economic conditions, and limited access to support networks. These factors make them more susceptible to gender-based violence and hinder their ability to seek help or escape abusive situations.

2. **Comprehensive Approach:** Addressing violence against migrant women requires a holistic approach that encompasses awareness-raising, detection, coordination of services, and empowerment. By raising awareness among professionals and communities, these efforts aim to improve understanding of the unique challenges faced by migrant women and enhance responses to instances of violence.
3. **Empowerment Strategies:** Empowerment is a central component of these guidelines, aiming to strengthen the resilience and agency of migrant women. Through education, skills-building, and access to resources, these strategies enable women to assert their rights, break free from cycles of violence, and navigate pathways to safety and independence.
4. **Intersectoral Collaboration:** A collaborative approach is crucial to effectively addressing violence against migrant women. This involves coordination across sectors such as healthcare, law enforcement, social services, and immigration authorities. Promoting information-sharing among these stakeholders ensures a more cohesive and integrated response to the complex needs of survivors.
5. **Cultural Sensitivity:** Acknowledging the cultural nuances and barriers migrant women face when accessing support services is key. Culturally sensitive approaches that respect diversity and tailor interventions to the specific needs of different migrant communities are essential for providing effective assistance and empowerment.
6. **Legal Protections:** While legal frameworks exist to protect migrant women from violence, gaps in implementation and barriers to justice remain significant challenges. Strengthening legal protections, improving access to justice, and offering legal aid and support are crucial steps in ensuring the rights of migrant women are upheld and perpetrators are held accountable.
7. **Preventive Measures:** Prevention strategies are vital in addressing violence against migrant women. Investing in education, promoting gender equality, challenging harmful gender norms, and offering early intervention programs can help prevent violence and foster safer communities for all women, regardless of their migration status.
8. **Research and Data:** Continued research and data collection are essential to understand the scope and dynamics of violence against migrant women. By investing in research initiatives and data-driven approaches, professionals can inform evidence-based policies and practices that better meet the needs of migrant women and improve long-term outcomes.

To improve prevention efforts and support for migrant women, the following strategies are recommended:

1. **Enhance Cultural Competence:** Develop training programs for service providers, law enforcement agencies, and legal professionals to enhance their cultural competence and sensitivity when working with migrant women from diverse backgrounds.
2. **Accessible Support Services:** Ensure that support services, including shelters, hotlines, legal aid, and counseling, are accessible to migrant women, regardless of their immigration status, language proficiency, or cultural background.
3. **Community Outreach and Engagement:** Implement outreach initiatives within migrant communities to raise awareness about available support services, rights, and how to seek help in cases of violence.
4. **Language Access:** Provide interpretation and translation services in multiple languages to facilitate communication and access to support services for migrant women who face language barriers.
5. **Legal Empowerment:** Equip migrant women with knowledge about their legal rights and options, including how to seek protection orders, access legal aid, and navigate the legal system.
6. **Cross-Sector Collaboration:** Foster coordination among government agencies, non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, and migrant-led groups to offer comprehensive support to migrant women affected by violence.
7. **Trauma-Informed Care:** Ensure that support services take a trauma-informed approach, recognizing and addressing the complex trauma experienced by migrant women, particularly the intersectional impact of gender-based violence and migration-related stressors.
8. **Preventive Education Programs:** Implement educational initiatives in migrant communities to promote gender equality, challenge stereotypes, and teach healthy relationship skills as preventive measures against violence.
9. **Safe Reporting Mechanisms:** Establish confidential and safe reporting mechanisms for migrant women to report incidents of violence, including anonymous reporting options and protection from retaliation.
10. **Data Collection and Research:** Invest in research and data collection efforts to better understand the prevalence, dynamics, and root causes of violence against migrant women, guiding evidence-based policy and programming.
11. **Legal Reform and Policy Advocacy:** Advocate for legal reforms to strengthen protections for migrant women, including reforms to immigration, asylum, labor, and family laws to address gaps and barriers that perpetuate violence.



12. **Capacity Building:** Support the capacity of migrant-led organizations and community leaders to offer tailored support, advocacy, and empowerment initiatives for migrant women in their communities.
13. **Gender-Responsive Services:** Ensure that support services are gender-responsive and sensitive to the diverse needs of migrant women, including LGBTQ+ migrants, women with disabilities, and other marginalized groups.
14. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Establish mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of interventions and services for migrant women, incorporating feedback from the women themselves to improve service delivery and outcomes.

Consequently, professionals working in centers supporting migrant women should possess a blend of interpersonal skills, cultural sensitivity, and emotional competence to address the complex needs of this vulnerable group. These professionals should demonstrate empathy and respect for the unique experiences of each migrant woman while maintaining a non-judgmental attitude. The ability to communicate effectively in various languages and adapt to different cultures is essential for building trust and fostering an inclusive support environment. Additionally, professionals should have a strong knowledge of available legal and support systems to provide accurate guidance. Resilience and the ability to work compassionately in challenging environments are key to offering comprehensive and empowering support for migrant women on their path to safety and self-determination.

Some key dimensions to focus on include:

1. **Emotional Support and Trauma-Informed Care:** Provide specialized training for professionals in support centers to understand the emotional impact of migration and gender-based violence, while developing trauma-informed care approaches.
2. **Psychological Support and Grief Counseling:** Offer psychological support and grief counseling to address the complex emotional needs of migrant women, including coping with loss, trauma, and stress related to their migration experiences.
3. **Professional Development and Skills Training:** Facilitate professional development opportunities and vocational training for migrant women, helping them with job placement and entrepreneurship initiatives.
4. **Legal Advocacy and Guidance:** Provide specialized legal advocacy to help migrant women navigate complex legal systems, understand their rights, and access legal remedies against gender-based violence and discrimination.

5. **Social Integration Support:** Offer comprehensive support for social integration, including language acquisition, cultural orientation, community engagement, and building social networks.
6. **Empowerment and Self-Determination:** Foster a strengths-based approach to empowerment, promoting migrant women's autonomy, self-determination, and decision-making agency in their relationships, careers, and life goals.

## Conclusions

In conclusion, the comprehensive analysis of initiatives addressing the diverse challenges faced by migrant women highlights the need for multifaceted, systemic solutions. These programs, grounded in inclusivity, cultural sensitivity, and empowerment, aim not only to address immediate needs but also to foster long-term well-being and integration. The initiatives explored contribute valuable elements to the broader discourse on supporting migrant women, showcasing innovative practices that enhance their lives and promote their integration into society.

A key common thread among successful practices is the focus on **language accessibility**, which is vital for effective communication and access to essential services. Addressing language barriers through language courses, native-speaking professionals, and intercultural mediators ensures that migrant women can navigate healthcare and support systems effectively.

Additionally, the emphasis on **psychological support** stands out as a critical component across initiatives. By involving native-speaking psychologists, implementing trauma-informed care, and offering tailored counseling, these programs address the specific mental health needs of migrant women. The integration of cultural competence, feminist principles, and diverse professionals creates safe spaces that not only empower women but also challenge harmful stereotypes and discriminatory practices.

These initiatives also highlight the importance of **collaboration**—partnering with community institutions and engaging various stakeholders. Operating as women-led initiatives, advocating for economic empowerment, and fostering community through group sessions, these programs recognize the intersecting challenges migrant women face and actively work to dismantle the systemic barriers contributing to their marginalization.

While these practices reflect significant progress, it is essential to acknowledge the **constraints** that still exist. Issues such as safety concerns, the need for continuous cultural sensitivity training, and addressing evolving challenges like the COVID-19 pandemic emphasize the importance of adaptability in providing sustained, effective support.

Ultimately, these initiatives not only respond to the immediate needs of migrant women but also have the potential to inspire broader **systemic change**. By prioritizing inclusivity, fostering cultural understanding, and promoting

empowerment, these models offer valuable insights for policymakers, healthcare professionals, and community leaders globally. There is a collective call for continued efforts in creating supportive environments that champion the rights and well-being of migrant women.

Across the countries considered, significant efforts are being made to achieve tangible results in supporting migrant women. For example, **Portugal** has implemented numerous good practices aimed at promoting equal opportunities, social inclusion, and access to essential services for migrant women. Similarly, initiatives in **Italy** and **Spain** have been tailored to address the specific needs of migrant populations, each with its own unique approach.

However, despite these positive efforts, challenges remain, particularly in areas such as:

- **Discrimination in the Labor Market:** Migrant women often face discrimination and job insecurity, with limited access to well-paid jobs and social protection. Policies combating gender and nationality discrimination in employment must be strengthened, emphasizing equal opportunities and recognition of qualifications.
- **Recognition of Qualifications and Skills:** One of the main obstacles to integration is the recognition of foreign qualifications. Streamlining procedures to validate professional experience and foreign diplomas can open pathways to qualified jobs.
- **Access to Decent Housing:** Affordable, adequate housing remains a significant challenge. Discrimination in the housing sector and financial barriers impede access to housing, highlighting the need for public policies to address these issues.
- **Psychological Support and Mental Health:** Migrant women often lack sufficient mental health care tailored to their experiences. Expanding access to culturally sensitive psychological support is critical, addressing trauma, loneliness, and migration-related stressors.
- **Improved Access to Information:** Many migrant women remain unaware of their rights and available services. Information campaigns in multiple languages, particularly through social media and community centers, can improve access to necessary support.
- **Civic and Political Participation:** The limited involvement of migrant women in civic and political life hampers their full integration. Encouraging their participation in associations and political activities will amplify their voices and strengthen their presence in society.

- **Gender-Based Violence with a Migrant-Specific Approach:** Barriers such as language, fear of deportation, and lack of knowledge about rights hinder migrant women from reporting violence. Culturally sensitive support services are necessary to ensure these women feel safe and supported in seeking help.
- **Gender Equality in Integration Programs:** Many integration programs remain gender-neutral, overlooking the specific challenges faced by women, such as caregiving responsibilities and gender discrimination. Tailored programs that address these barriers will facilitate more effective integration.

Interviews with migrant women reveal that perceptions of migration and the violence they experience are shaped by cultural backgrounds, personal experiences, and the support structures available to them. These women encounter challenges such as gender-based discrimination, restrictive societal norms, and violence, all of which contribute to their vulnerability and marginalization. To effectively address these issues, interventions must be multi-dimensional, targeting systemic inequalities while promoting gender equity.

Various organizations and reception centers provide essential services such as housing, medical care, legal assistance, and community support, crucial for meeting the immediate needs of migrant women and aiding their integration. However, challenges like overcrowding, limited financial resources, and gender-based discrimination persist, necessitating greater efforts to improve accessibility, quality, and inclusivity in support systems.

**Legal assistance** plays a key role in safeguarding the rights of migrant women, yet issues such as bureaucratic delays and regional disparities remain. Simplifying legal processes, reducing administrative barriers, and improving information dissemination are vital steps in empowering migrant women and ensuring their rights are protected.

Several organizations implement **social initiatives** aimed at fostering inclusivity and community-building, offering programs such as staff support, vocational training, and integration services. Yet, resource limitations and cultural barriers may affect their effectiveness, underscoring the need for collaboration among stakeholders and active feedback from migrant women to improve services.

Professionals supporting migrant women must have a nuanced understanding of the multifaceted challenges this group faces. Their efforts underscore the importance of addressing practical, economic, social, and emotional dimensions to ensure successful integration and well-being. Despite their commitment, these professionals often encounter obstacles such as bureaucratic hurdles, cultural

differences, and systemic biases, which can impede their effectiveness in providing comprehensive support.

Effective **communication** between healthcare professionals and patients is essential for improving patient satisfaction, health outcomes, and treatment acceptance. Desirable communication practices include assisting patients in providing information, involving them in decision-making, and managing expectations realistically. **Cultural mediators** are particularly important within the healthcare system, as they bridge the gap caused by language and cultural barriers. However, the lack of national legislation regarding their role leads to inconsistencies in their use across regions.

**Healthcare professionals** also lack awareness of issues such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), and though resources are available, FGM is often overlooked in medical curricula. As migration patterns change, there is a pressing need for healthcare professionals to receive training on managing the healthcare needs of women affected by FGM and other migration-specific health issues.

Despite efforts to enhance intercultural competencies within healthcare, **discriminatory treatment practices** persist among healthcare providers, affecting the quality of care migrant women receive. Raising awareness, offering targeted training, and introducing intercultural mediators can help reduce such biases and improve care quality.

Migrant women often lack clear **information** about their healthcare rights, limiting their access to services. Socio-economic factors further exacerbate barriers to healthcare access. Therefore, addressing systemic barriers and empowering migrant women to navigate the healthcare system is critical to improving accessibility and outcomes.

Finally, **social networks** play a vital role in facilitating access to healthcare services. Lack of social support can make migrant women more vulnerable to reproductive and mental health issues. Collaborative efforts to build social support systems and engage the community are essential for addressing these needs.

To address these challenges effectively in Italy and beyond, it is essential to adopt systemic approaches that prioritize inclusivity, cultural sensitivity, and empowerment. Overcoming language barriers, providing psychological support, and enhancing cultural competence among professionals are crucial steps toward ensuring comprehensive, long-term support for migrant women. By fostering collaboration among stakeholders and advocating for policy reforms, we can create empowering environments where migrant women can thrive and contribute meaningfully to society.

This document aims to provide valuable insights for those wishing to contribute to this transformative process, supporting the ongoing effort to improve the lives of migrant women and achieve greater equality.

## Final Recommendations

To improve prevention efforts and support for migrant women, several key strategies have emerged from the findings:

1. **Holistic Support Approach:** A comprehensive approach is crucial, addressing the practical, economic, social, and emotional needs of migrant women. This strategy goes beyond material assistance, aiming to empower women in all aspects of their lives—economically, socially, and emotionally—to facilitate their successful integration into Italian society.
2. **Collaboration and Networking:** Strong partnerships with government agencies, NGOs, community groups, and other stakeholders are essential for maximizing resources, sharing best practices, and coordinating efforts. Networking with policymakers, community leaders, and service providers helps advocate for policy changes and mobilize support for initiatives aimed at improving migrant women's lives.
3. **Continuous Learning and Professional Development:** Professionals should engage in ongoing training, workshops, and peer exchanges to stay updated on emerging trends, best practices, and the evolving needs of migrant communities. This continuous learning allows practitioners to adapt their approaches and interventions to be more effective.
4. **Creating Safe and Supportive Environments:** Building trust, offering emotional support, and fostering cultural sensitivity are critical to creating environments where migrant women feel safe and valued. Professionals should demonstrate empathy, respect, and genuine concern for the well-being of migrant women, providing counseling to help them cope with their experiences.
5. **Institutional Recognition and Support:** Institutions and policymakers must prioritize adequate compensation, resources, and institutional recognition for the professionals working with migrant women. This includes offering competitive salaries, access to training, career development opportunities, and fostering a supportive work culture that values staff contributions and promotes work-life balance.
6. **Effective Communication with Patients:** Establishing national guidelines for communication between healthcare professionals and migrant patients



is essential, with a strong emphasis on cultural sensitivity and language accessibility. Developing specialized training programs for healthcare workers will enhance their communication skills and cultural understanding, ensuring effective patient care.

7. **Role of the Cultural Mediator:** Enacting national legislation to regulate the role of cultural mediators in healthcare settings is vital for ensuring consistency across regions. This includes the recruitment and training of culturally competent mediators proficient in relevant languages, as well as creating multilingual materials to bridge communication gaps.
8. **Healthcare Professional Training:** Integrating topics such as **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)** into medical curricula for healthcare professionals, including gynecologists, obstetricians, and midwives, is essential. Additionally, developing guidelines and tools to support healthcare providers in managing the healthcare needs of women affected by FGM will enhance patient care. Continuous education and specialized training for professionals working with migrant populations should be prioritized.
9. **Addressing Language Barriers and Interpreting:** National regulations should be established to ensure the availability of reliable interpreting services in sexual and reproductive health. Increasing access to interpreters, especially for languages spoken by migrant communities, will reduce communication barriers. Healthcare providers must receive training to work effectively with interpreters and navigate language challenges.
10. **Enhancing Intercultural Competencies:** Training programs for healthcare professionals should focus on developing intercultural competencies, particularly in understanding cultural backgrounds and practices relevant to sexual and reproductive health. This will foster empathy and improve the quality of care provided to migrant women.
11. **Tackling Discriminatory Practices:** Awareness campaigns and training should address discriminatory treatment practices within healthcare settings, aiming to reduce ethnic stereotypes, prejudices, and biases. Developing treatment protocols tailored to the cultural needs of migrant women, with input from intercultural mediators, is crucial to mitigating discriminatory practices and ensuring equitable care.
12. **Empowering Migrant Women with Knowledge of Healthcare Rights:** Developing and distributing informational materials in multiple languages about healthcare rights and services is essential for empowering migrant women. Addressing socio-economic barriers to healthcare access through support programs and advocating for policies that ensure equitable access for all migrant women, regardless of their background, is critical.

13. **Supporting Social Networks and Reproductive Health:** Social support networks play a key role in improving migrant women's access to healthcare and enhancing their reproductive health. Collaborative efforts with community institutions and organizations will provide comprehensive support, including counseling, advocacy, and cultural activities. Empowering migrant women to build and maintain social ties will improve both their reproductive health and overall well-being.
14. **Systemic Solutions for Migrant Issues:** Systemic solutions must be implemented that prioritize inclusivity, cultural sensitivity, and empowerment. This includes providing language courses, psychological support, and cultural competence training for healthcare professionals and community leaders. Advocacy for policies that challenge systemic barriers and promote the rights and well-being of migrant women on a national level is essential for long-term change.

By adopting these strategies, professionals supporting migrant women in Italy can significantly enhance prevention efforts and overall support. Ultimately, these initiatives will contribute to the creation of a more inclusive and equitable society, where all individuals, regardless of their background, can thrive and realize their full potential.

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