



Intellectual Output 1	
National Report	
Country	Germany
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Table of Content

Introduction.....	3
Findings of Desk Research.....	3
Findings of Field Research.....	5
Overall conclusions, and recommendations for the design of the SIMPLE Model.....	13

Introduction

This document presents the results of the desk and field research implemented in the frame of the project IO1. It was implemented in the period November 2019-February 2020.

Findings of Desk Research

Please shortly present the results of the collection of practices in your country (max. 1 page).

The collection of practices in my country, Germany, has shown that there are plenty of projects dedicated to the welcoming of refugees and migrants in the country. Many of them specialised in supporting women. However, most of these practices are based on either one on one accompanying of the women, support by volunteers on a one on one basis, or group workshops to work on overcoming different aspects of the integration process in the German culture.

No project using art as a way of encouraging expression of a potential difficult migration background in order to empower women in their integration was found during this research. However some projects do use physical movement and sport as a way of reaching the community (for example, *Kicking Girls*, which supports the integration and empowerment of girls and young women through football training and playing, and *Carima*, which empowers women through the teaching of self-defence techniques).

Some of the projects have more specific target groups. These specific target groups can be geographically defined, such as *AGIC*, which works with African women, or specific to certain group with shared needs, such as *Stadtteilmütter*, which focuses on helping mothers. Other organisations such as I.Bera and Amnesty for women focus on helping victims of domestic violence with a migration background, while the former also supports victims of forced marriage. Both of these projects are developed by experts in working with women exposed to traumatic experiences.

Several organizations were found in Germany which focus on supporting victims of human trafficking. Some examples of these are *KOOFRA* in Hamburg or *Contra* in the land of Schleswig-Holstein, as well as *Koobra* in Niedersachsen. Most of these organization their work on supporting women who have been through this kind of situation, mainly victims of human trafficking for sexual exploitation, although some of them also work with victims of human trafficking for labour exploitation, which more commonly affects men. Due to security reasons these NGOs don't normally organize group events for their clients, but do one on one support and accompanying of the women by cultural mediators on a daily basis until they are stabilized in their new life situation (post trafficking).

According to your country findings summarise which are most effective (more common) practices used in order to facilitate the narration of difficult life events by newcomers? Consider the following elements:

It seems that in Germany there are various projects that work with alternative ways of letting people with a potentially complicated migration background work through their history in order to find better integration paths. However, most of these projects work with physical activities rather than with story-telling methods. Different projects were found where women were taught self-defence (*Carima*) techniques or where their empowerment and self-esteem was encouraged through the participation in team-sports (*Kicking girls*). Some projects also encourage the exchange with people with a similar background who have already integrated into German life (for instance "MUT", "MIMI" or

“Stadtteilmütter”). In such a context it is common to have situations in which the participants tell their supporter about their own migration history.

- Objective(s) behind the practice. Why this practice has been implemented?

Practices such as the ones mentioned above are being implemented in order to support migrant and refugee women in getting out of the private setting and integrating into German society and into the German labour market. The experience with immigration and with these kind of projects in Germany shows that through building contact with the society, newcomers learn German faster and learn more about the culture of the country where they live.

- Formats used (e.g. workshops, seminar, offline/online, etc.). This is to understand if any format is more effective than others. Can it be applied for the SIMPLE project?

Depending on the level of security and privacy required, some of the projects offer group workshops and all of the projects that have been analysed do it offline. In the cases of organizations and projects that work with, for instance, victims of human trafficking, the workshop format cannot be used for security and privacy reasons.

In the case of the SIMPLE project it would be more useful to share the histories in groups and workshops. The SIMPLE project has more in common with the analysed projects that used team building and sharing of common experiences in order to overcome them than with the projects that offer one on one counselling and accompanying.

- Approaches or methods applied. This is to understand if any approach or method is more effective than others.

Most of the researched projects use group workshops and teamwork as a way of getting the participants out of their comfort zone and into situations that would either resemble the situations in their real life in Germany, or would prepare them for different kind of real life situations.

Some of the practices also include some kind of German language course, and some of them work with people from the culture of origin of the participants as linguistic and cultural mediators. The lack of language skills is overall identified as one of the biggest challenges in the achievement of successful integration in the German labour market or general integration in society.

Some of the projects have also identified family and work conciliation as a big challenge for the labour integration of migrant or refugee women with children. Therefore, some of them have implemented approached in which they assist the participants with counselling on the matter. Some of them offer child care services while the women are taking part in the workshops as a way of allowing them to disconnect and fully engage in the practice. This would be a good idea for the SIMPLE project in the cases where the participants have children and no possibilities of organizing child care.

- Benefits of the addition of the non-verbal techniques for the process of social integration, experienced by learners, facilitators and/or the institutions? This is to underline the advantages of the use of non-verbal techniques and its impact on beneficiaries.

Not many projects using non-verbal techniques were found in Germany. Even the practices where alternative methods are implemented, such as participation in team sports, self-defence classes or theatre workshops, use verbal techniques. On the one hand, most of the analysed projects give very high importance to the empowerment of participants' language skills. On the other hand, the ones where that is not relevant, normally work in the native language of the participants. Most refugees in Germany have

already acquired a conversational level of German due to the free language courses that they attended since their arrival. This is not the case for migrants, who normally have to pay for their own language courses and give priority to working and earning a living over attending language classes.

However, the use of non-verbal techniques might facilitate integration of women with basic German language skills in a group activity, where they otherwise would not have taken part of.

A repertoire of existent practices from Germany is available on SIMPLE GD, under the following link:
<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1bg35HuBBcR2TmKZdz0QOc4-1J6CnfTT8>

Findings of Field Research

- I. Please include a **brief introduction** about the national context regarding recent migratory situation in your country. In the presentation consider the total number of newcomers, percentage of women, and level of education and employment percentage; which institution is in charge of migratory concerns and social inclusion of newcomers? (national or regional regulations).

In recent years Germany has received a large amount of petitions of asylum and has continued to be a destination for labour migrants from within and from outside the European Union.

If we take a look at the numbers of asylum applications since 2016, when the number of applications reached its peak in Germany with over 720.000 first-time applications, the number of applications has receded considerably. In 2017 there were around 198.000 first-time applications, in 2018 around 161.000, in 2019 around 142.000 and in January 2020 12.212, 16% less than the same month of 2019. It is assumed that this reduction in the number of first-applications has been caused by the changed in European policy and the difficulties asylum-seekers face nowadays in order to arrive to Germany and apply for asylum, in comparison with 2015-2016. Many of these applications are derived to other EU member states where following the Dublin Agreement their application for asylum should have been made in the first place. The most common countries of precedence for asylum seekers in Germany are Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan.¹ In the year 2020 42,1% of asylum applicants were women.² More than half of the refugees who are working in Germany work as specialists. 44% work in low qualified jobs. 60% of refugees in Germany were already working, studying, and taking part in professional formation

¹ Data from the German Ministry for Migration and Refugees (BAMF, Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge). "Aktuelle Zahlen" January 2020. URL: https://www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/DE/Statistik/AsylinZahlen/aktuelle-zahlen-januar-2020.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=3, accessed online on the 24th February 2020.

² Data from Statista. "Verteilung der Asylbewerber in Deutschland nach Geschlecht innerhalb verschiedener Altersgruppen im Jahr 2020". URL: <https://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/452165/umfrage/asylbewerber-in-deutschland-nach-geschlecht-innerhalb-altersgruppen/>, accessed online on the 24th February 2020.

courses or in integration programs in the second half of 2018. The majority of the other 40% were actively looking for a job, in parental leave or in maternity leave.³

A big part of the migrants working in Germany come from other EU member states. In 2018 635,537 EU nationals immigrated to Germany. This number has been rising since 2011 and by the end of the year 2018 there were more than 4,700,000 EU nationals living in Germany, most of them are originally from Romania, Poland and Bulgaria. If we take a look at the age of EU migrants arriving in Germany, 90% of them are in working age (16 to 64 years old). The age group comprising 25 to 35 year-olds makes up the largest share of the overall group (28.4%). If we take a look at the gender distribution, the share of women among immigrating EU nationals stands at 36.2%. However, this figure varies strongly between the respective countries of origin. In September 2018, 2,160,607 EU nationals (excluding German nationals) were employed and subject to social insurance contributions in Germany. This number does not include self-employed people or marginally employed persons and civil servants, but it includes cross-border commuters. This represents a rise of 7.9% in comparison to the same month in the previous year. The share of women stood at 38.0%.⁴

However, there are other migrants living and working in Germany that are neither refugees nor citizens from an EU member state. At the end of 2018 there were over 265,000 labour related migrants from third countries with a residency permit in Germany. The biggest group amongst them is the qualified workers, which made up 36,2%. Over 54.500 people (20,5%) had a residency permit for an unqualified job, and 51.130 (19,2%) had a EU Blue Card. The countries with the most labour migrants in Germany are China and India. 35,1 % of non-EU migrants in Germany are over 35 years old, which might have to do with people changing status after a longer stay in Germany, and 68,2% of non-EU migrants are men and 31,7 % are women.⁵

In March 2020 a new law will enter into force in Germany, allowing specialist from outside of the EU to move to Germany and work there in their field of expertise. This law is called the Skilled Labour Immigration Act (Fachkräfteeinwanderungsgesetz) and will try to fill the 1.2 million specialist positions that are unfilled in the German labour market. According to the Federal Government, around 25,000 skilled migrant workers from third countries will be allowed to work in Germany each year.⁶

³ Data from the Institut für Arbeitsmarkt- und Berufsforschung. "Fünf Jahre seit der Fluchtmigration 2015: Integration in Arbeitsmarkt und Bildungssystem macht weitere Fortschritte". URL: <https://www.iab.de/194/section.aspx/Publikation/k200129301>, accessed online on the 7th February 2020.

⁴ Data from the German Ministry for Migration and Refugees (BAMF, Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge). Graf, J. "Reports on Migration and Integration –Series2. Freedom of Movement Monitoring: Migration of EU Nationals to Germany. Annual Report 2018.URL: https://www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/EN/Forschung/BerichtsreihenMigrationIntegration/Freizuegigkeitsmonitoring/freizuegigkeitsmonitoring-jahresbericht-2018.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=12, accessed online on the 24th February 2020.

⁵ Data from the German Ministry for Migration and Refugees (BAMF, Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge). "Berichtsreihen zu Migration und Integration – Reihe 1. Wanderungsmonitoring: Bildungs- und Erwerbsmigration nach Deutschland". URL: https://www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/DE/Forschung/BerichtsreihenMigrationIntegration/Wanderungsmonitoring/wanderungsmonitoring-jahresbericht-2018.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=16, accessed online on the 19th February 2020.

⁶ Data from the web page "Make it in Germany" from the Federal Government. "Current information on the Skilled Immigration Act". URL: <https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/en/visa/kinds-of-visa/work/skilled-immigration-act/>, accessed online on the 20th February 2020.

Germany is since some years ago a migration country that has had to adapt to new circumstances, such as the arrival of a considerable number of asylum seekers. This country has a need for specialist labour migrants and it is trying to change and adapt their migration legislation to ease the arrival of these needed migrants and is as well investing in several projects and organizations that support refugees as well as migrants in their path to social and labour integration in German society.

II. Please **summarise finding of the field research** carried out in your country.

For the development of this research 22 organizations or projects were contacted from December 2019 to February 2020, either per email or telephone. Most of them were contacted more than once. Fourteen agreed to answer to the questionnaire and showed interest in the project. However, until the 28.02.2020 only 9 have actually sent their answers.

1. Description of interviewee's profile. According to the second part of the questionnaire. Question 1 and 2.

Profession	Role	Tasks (official contract statements)
Counsellor for the recognition of qualifications	Counselling women from Africa.	Assisting women from Africa seeking to recognise their qualifications in Germany.
Social worker	Counselling of migrant women victims of domestic violence.	Accompanying, supporting and counselling of victims of domestic violence in different aspects of their life. The clients usually have questions about the violence they have suffered, but also about job search, divorce, health insurance, looking for housing, looking for a doctor, or questions about the education system in Germany.
Certified social pedagogue	Counselling of migrants living in Germany	Counselling (social counselling for migrants) during open office hours, crisis intervention and counselling about integration courses and further formation.
Chairwoman	Support of migrants from Latin America.	Support of people without formal legal residency permit, people studying in Germany and other migrants in a variety of problems associated with the migration process.
Philologist working as a teacher, translator and social worker	Migrant supporter and counsellor, cultural and linguistic mediator.	Teaching German in "Integrationskurse" (integration courses), introducing participants to general information about life in Germany, organizing events

		and talks and accompanying of participants to social or medical appointments.
Lawyer	Support for victims of forced prostitution.	The support and counselling of women, for instance: Counselling in their native language in situations of crises or distress. Organization of a safe accommodation, information about the legal status in Germany and the access to social support, accompanying to official appointments, among others.
Project coordinator	Support for victims of human trafficking and forced labour	Coordinating the work of the NGO and the group of cultural mediators who work in direct contact with the victims of human trafficking.
Certified social pedagogue and systemic family therapist.		Counsellor in cases of domestic violence and forced marriage as well as supporting undocumented migrants to regularize their situation in Germany.
Social worker working with refugees with a background of social and cultural anthropology	Social support for refugee women.	Support of refugee women in their integration in the German labour market.
Migration counsellor for adult migrants (Sociologist)	Support for refugees	Accompanying and counselling in everyday life problems, providing language courses, sewing and bike repairing workshops, support in the writing of job applications and professional formation applications, development of projects, etc.

1. Additional activities your interviewees are doing for newcomers, which are not included on the list of official services provided by the organisation?

Some of the organizations also help their clients in tasks similar to what a social worker would offer. Many of the clients have different problems in their everyday life that come up during the counselling sessions. Sometimes these problems might be a difficulty in the development of the main activity that the project carries out (for instance, problems with housing or family problems can come up during a counselling session about recognition of qualifications). Some of the projects work together with other organizations or even other projects within the same organization that help their participants in almost every aspect of their life as newcomers in Germany: looking for housing, questions about forms and documents from the job centre, family problems, etc.

Some of the projects also accompany their clients to important appointments at different German institutions such as the authority for foreigners, the jobcentre, appointment with their lawyer or their

doctor, and help them fill in forms in order to receive economic support. They also offer talks about health issues and offer psychological assistance for women in situations of crisis in order to stabilize them.

Some projects also support migrant organizations in Germany. Others organize activities that help their participants to feel involved, for instance, cooking together, drinking coffee and talking, and emotional support or workshops for the empowerment of women and to reflect on health issues affecting women. The organizations that work with volunteers from the area where the participants work, often organize activities encourage friendly connections with the neighbours and volunteers to make the integration in their communities easier.

There are also some organizations that don't carry out any activity not described in their official tasks.

2. Possible differences in needs of the psychological support between men and women.

Most of the interviewees say that there are differences in the need of psychological support between men and women. Some of them have experienced that women have a bigger need for support and counselling due to their past experiences or due to their need for empowerment while others express that women might make use of psychological support more often than men, because they tend to speak about their problems in a more open way. Some of the interviewees reported that although there are differences between the needs of men and women, not only based on potentially traumatising past experiences, but also based on the expectations that society has of them, and on role changes and power dynamic changes within the family once there are in Germany.

A couple of the interviewees also noted that men might need a longer time to open up and share potential psychological problems. Moreover, some of the interviewees express that the influence of traditional representations of masculinity hinders many men from reaching out and getting the psychological support that they need. More often than in women, men show signs of somatic consequences of trauma.

Some of them declared that as they only work with women, they cannot talk about the potential need for psychological support in men. Some find also that the age group and the place of origin can have a significant impact in the need for psychological support of a person.

3. Cases of distress/discomfort/difficulty or even incapacity in expressing and describing past events faced by newcomers.

All of the interviewees have noted cases of trauma in newcomers, some of them report seeing them regularly or frequently, others say approximately a third of the people they work with show some signs of trauma. The organizations working with victims of human trafficking report a bigger percentage, even say that all of their clients suffer some kind of trauma, but not all of them show signs of PTSD. Some of the participants in these projects talk about their past experiences while others reject the idea of talking about them. This might have to do with a potential trauma but also with their relation of trust to the person they are talking to.

Some of them report of seeing trauma as a consequence of negative experiences during their forced migration, cultural shock, fear for one's existence, having had to abandon their families to earn a living in another country, domestic violence/gender violence, violence during the migration journey, negative relations with the police or the military, psychological violence, PTSD, rape, human trafficking, forced prostitution, threats, etc. Other organizations report having seen cases of insomnia and people complaining about thinking too much, sadness, etc. However, the organizations also report that these don't necessarily need to be symptoms of trauma, they might be consequences of the distress of leaving their lives and part of their families behind, etc. The people who decide voluntarily to take part in projects of, for instance,

labour market integration, already show signs of wanting to overcome their current situation and take control over their lives, which is already a good start in the path to overcoming potential difficult past situations.

Some of them report having seen more cases of trauma in women, but others say it rather depends on the circumstances of a person's journey and personal history more than on their gender. Some of them have no way of comparing, because they only work with women.

Most of the interviewees expressed that people with traumatic experiences need professional support in order to overcome the consequences. However, some people might overcome the consequences of negative experiences on their own. This would depend on a person's resilience and their resources to deal with negative past experiences more than on their gender. Sometimes the need for professional assistance only comes up in the counselling session during discussion of other problems. One project reports having experienced a general rejection of potential offers for therapy because of the stigma associated to needing therapy and psychological help in certain cultures. Many of the participants associate needing this kind of support with being crazy.

4. Available instruments, tools, approaches that you know/use to help migrants to over pass the distress caused by the transition to regain the psychological stability.

Most of the interviewed projects don't offer psychological support themselves, however, they provide their participants with support in finding a therapist, send them to a specialized project or even accompany them to their appointments.

Some of the projects who work with migrants who are victims of domestic violence offer regular appointments to talk about what has happened in order to help them stabilize themselves. In the appointments they talk about methods to calm down, to analyse what has happened to them and to empower them in order to better assume what has happened to them. Some of these projects work with tools of the systemic therapy, also focusing on their family relations. They also offer information.

Some of the projects working with victims of human trafficking count with the help of a colleague who has formation in how to carry out stabilization measures. However, they would also involve a psychologist or a psychiatrist if needed. All the people working for these project offer psychosocial counselling, but not psychological treatment. Most of the women participating in these projects need a safe space where they can live as well as security before they can participate in therapy. However, this is not always possible because of their ongoing asylum process, among other problems.

5. Are these tools sufficient for existing needs? Which are the weaknesses of the available tools?

Most interviewees express that the available tools and measures are not sufficient. There is a need for counsellors with better formation and better psychosocial skills, who would be better able to identify the psychological problems of the clients and better understand their situation in life. Some of them complain that there are not enough specialized projects on treating this kind of problem. Most of them say that there are not enough native speakers of foreign languages working in these positions and that there are not enough psychologist and therapist who can work in other languages.

It is already difficult to find a therapist in German who can work with traumatised people, however finding them in other languages is extremely complicated. It might be easier to find a therapy in a language from a community that has been established in Germany for a longer time, than for certain languages whose speakers have only recently arrived to Germany. The availability of psychological support in other

languages also varies within different areas in Germany. It is easier to find therapists in big cities than in rural areas, and the same happens with therapists who work in other languages.

Another problem in finding appropriate psychological care is that many of the participants in these projects receive social support from the government and in order to receive therapy they would need permission from the social services. This permission is only provided after a necessity test (*Notwendigkeitsprüfung* in German) and this can make the process even slower.

Other deficiencies in the potential access to psychological support and therapy are the lack of trauma therapy where the patient is hospitalized at the clinic, not enough housing possibilities for people with trauma (individual rooms, protected housing, etc.). The asylum application process hampers the possibilities of stabilization (mainly due to housing in camps, the threat of being sent to another country because of a Dublin process, the lack of permit to work, the isolation, the lack of access to information, restricted access to medical care, etc.).

6. Regarding the access to the professional psychological help, how much do national/regional existing policies focus on the aspect of psychological wellbeing of migrant women? Are they easily accessible?

Having access to professional psychological help can take a long time, in some cities in Germany the waiting time might reach 6 months. This waiting time can be even longer if the patient needs assistance in a foreign language. For women without a residency permit it is impossible to access these therapies because of the lack of health insurance. They cannot pay for the medical expenses themselves. However, there are some non-governmental initiatives that are trying to care for the psychological well-being of refugees. In the Hamburg Hospital UKE, there is an out-patience department in which children and young refugees (under 18) can receive treatment for the consequences of trauma. In the same hospital, since a couple of months ago, there are also possibilities for the treatment of victims of torture and trauma for refugees. In general there is more interest in Germany in providing refugees with access to the job market than with access to therapy.

Most of the interviewees express concern about the waiting time, the lack of resources in other languages different than German and the inability of their participants to pay for therapy on their own, in the cases where they do not have access (or have restricted access) to a health insurance coverage.

7. How important is it from your point of view to overcome the situation of distressed caused by past events on the way toward the successful inclusion in the new society?

All of the interviewees express the importance of psychological wellbeing in order to achieve a better integration process in society or in the labour market, for instance. In cases in which the past experiences of a person are restricting or damaging this psychological wellbeing, they all agree that receiving psychological support would be decisive for a healthy integration.

Some of the experts also speak about the importance of this psychological wellbeing from the very beginning of the integration process. One of the named examples is the difficulties that a trauma can entail for the language learning process at the arrival in Germany. Some experts declare that integration is only possible when a person is stable.

8. What are the gaps between existing needs and available instruments to help restore their psychological and emotional wellbeing?

The available instruments are often not sustainable in time and are therefore not completely adequate for the treatment of potential psychological problems. Moreover, there are not enough available resources and instruments to cover the need for psychological and emotional wellbeing. Some of the available therapy options only superficially treat the symptoms of trauma without working on their root.

There should be more information about all the available resources for migrant women, and the available resources should be adapted to international patients, not only language wise, but also adapted to other non-Eurocentric perspectives and realities. There should also be changes in national policies that hinder the proper reception and arrival of migrants and more possibilities to achieve economic stability for these women.

There is a need for people in responsibility positions with intercultural and multilingual skills. Most of the therapists and doctors in Germany are white and do not have any kind of migration background. Most of the therapy practices in Germany come from an American or Euro-centric perspective, it would be useful to open to possible kinds of treatments from the global south. It would also be meaningful to have therapists who better understand the consequences of violence together with the consequences of other experiences of social discrimination (such as racism, antisemitism, poverty, and discrimination against women, and the LGBTQ+ community).

9. According to your experience, what would be the migrant women's most preferable way to express and describe difficulties?

Some of the experts suggest intensive individual support as the most preferable way to express their difficulties. Others talk about other solutions, apart from psychological therapy. Some of these solutions might be listening to their problems in counselling, because some of them have never experienced someone taking the time to listen to them. Another suggested method would be the use of group workshops or meetings in order to work on their problems and discuss them. It is very helpful to many women to see and hear that they are not alone in having suffered a traumatic experience. Working in this kind of groups is usually also helpful in building a social network and improving their self-esteem.

Either individually or in a group format, they normally prefer talking about these emotional experiences in their native language and with other women.

Some of these projects have experience in creating safe spaces for women to feel trust and welcomed, and open about their problems. This takes responsiveness to their needs as well as time. Many participants in these projects prefer the participation in short time therapies such as coaching or general support and empowerment. Not many of them are ready to face long term painful processes.

The projects that work with German women as well as with migrants have not noted a difference in their basic needs based on their nationality, but different individual needs on a case to case basis.

10. Do you think that non verbal technics can be helpful for migrant women to narrate their stories (for example through the use of images)?

Non-verbal techniques can be useful in the cases in which the participants are ready to talk about their painful past experiences in front of other people. It would be necessary to build an atmosphere of trust and openness. Even in a context in which non-verbal techniques are used, it would be useful to have a common

language with the participants. When someone is not completely sure of having understood what is happening around them they are less likely to participate in a discussion.

Overall conclusions, and recommendations for the design of the SIMPLE Model

Even though the use of alternative techniques, such as the use of images in order to tell one's history, can be a very useful tool in the handling of potential difficult experiences in one's past, one should always consider that this is no substitution for a professional therapy. In cases of severe trauma, and PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) this techniques should not be attempted because of the risk of re-traumatization. This would be relevant, for instance, when dealing with survivors of human trafficking of sexual violence.

One of the main conclusions of this report is that language is a very important factor. Most experts complain about the limited access to support in the native language of the participants in their projects and there might be a lesson to learn here and to apply to the SIMPLE project. On the one hand, it might be a good idea to form language groups for the workshops, for instance work with women from Latin America, or women from Arabic speaking languages, etc. This way we can work in their language, which is better for their processing of potential difficult situations and will ease the creation of a safe space and a space of trust where they can be open about their histories. On the other hand, for their integration in the labour market and in society it might be more useful if they have a working knowledge of the German language. So working with them in German might also have some advantages in the longer term but can reduce our access to women who have arrived very recently.

Another recommendation if we are working with women with a potential past of violence or discrimination, is to work with female coordinators in the workshops. This might be useful as well for the creation of a trusting atmosphere and to help them open about themselves.

Most interviewees have found the idea of the project very interesting and would like to have more information about it and how it develops. It would be interesting to keep in touch with them for the dissemination as well as for potential participants in the workshops.