



Intellectual Output 1	
National Report	
Country	Italy
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Introduction

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

Findings of Desk Research

Please shortly present the results of the collection of practices in your country.

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:

- Objective(s) behind the practice. Why this practice has been implemented?
- 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?
- Approaches or methods applied. This is to understand if any approach or method is more effective than others.
- 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.

A repertoire of practices from Italy is available on SIMPLE GD, under the following link:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1jGDjbJwoJ2elbVqJATew7z3LHKz0cGH4t5I0FyxdQvI/edit?usp=sharing>

Integration process is a **complex and multi-dimensional phenomenon**, which does not just happen in the access to work and to accommodation facilities (material help), but is based primarily on the **active participation** of newcomers and about their **dialogue** with the host societies. According to the definition of the integration considered as the meeting between individuals and different cultures, it is necessary to reflect on how to allow this encounter and which are the most effective ways to promote the confrontation and to facilitate the social integration and find **a holistic approach** to the theme of integration.

The overview of the collection of some of the many experiences, born inside and outside the network of the Italian Protection System for Asylum Seekers and Refugees (SPRAR), reveals the importance of **artistic activities** as a key instrument facilitating the reacquisition of individual's autonomy and in the processes of socio-economic integration.

The realization of cultural activities, especially theatre workshops increase **awareness-raising**, aimed at **strengthening the culture of acceptance** and on the other hand, enriched newcomers with additional tools for **strengthening their individual paths**.

Real needs of migrants, especially beneficiaries of international protection:

Inform the public about the real condition of those who flee from wars and persecution, on the motivations behind each story of exile is a need highlighted by all territorial projects of the SPRAR (network of local authorities and NGOs which, provides assistance and integration services for Asylum Seekers and Refugees). A strong willingness to create moments of encounter with the hosting community, to overcome the optics of the housing and work as the most important services

and to **pay major attention to the social and interpersonal needs of the people** involved in the projects.

Objectives:

- the active participation of beneficiaries;
- cultivation of a sense of belonging and development of relationships based on trust and dialogue, as elements that affect the psychological condition and contribute to make the refugee an active interlocutor in the host society;
- awareness-raising and informative activities addressed to the local native community;
- sensibilization of the local community about the newcomers life, difficulties, culture, needs;
- development of the network with the local community;
- facilitation of the socioeconomic integration.

Approaches:

THEATRE (music, prose, dance)

The activities born inside and outside the network of the Protection System for Asylum Seekers and Refugees (SPRAR) collected and edited in the publication "**Quaderni teatro rifugiati**" (SPRAR, Refugee Theatre Notebooks, 2010)" presenting examples of artistic experiences, which give the beneficiary of the international protection the role of the **protagonists**.¹

The collection highlights that the theatre performance contains the dimension of present, the dimensions of memory, temporality, probability and reciprocity; **theatre allows to explore the non-verbal ways of narration**, while the entertainment dimension of the performance helps to **strengthen self-esteem and lay the foundations for a (new) sense of sociality**. **The theatre foster the identification of an affective and useful social network** on the territory, **giving the possibility to cultivate a sense of belonging and to establish relationships based on trust and dialogue, as elements that affect the psychological condition and contribute to make the refugee an active interlocutor in the host society**.

Theatre performance and all the preparatory exercises have the power to stimulate the interpretation and **can foster processes of elaboration of past experiences and traumas**, especially because allow them to be **expressed in a non-canonical way** (without words), using the body, space and interpersonal relationships.

The study conferred by decree of the Minister of Culture, conducted by Riccardo Napolitano about *formal and informal networks in the entertainment sector*, allowed the identification of **124 theatre circuits of migrants or on migrants operating on the national territory** in the different sectors of the theatre (dance, prose, music).

Theatre give the opportunity to arrive when words don't!

¹ Vivere e lavorare in Italia:

<http://www.integrazionemigranti.gov.it/Areetematiche/AreaCultura/teatro/Pagine/default.aspx>



Examples from the desk research:

- The project: **IntegRARsi** - Reti locali per l'integrazione dei richiedenti asilo e rifugiati, in collaboration with theatre group Recremisi - during workshops, participants started to **elaborate their personal problems**, the travel, escape and arrival in a foreign country and the issues connected with the reception and integration. The aim of the activity was to discover together the real emotions and understand them. Only having them understood they can be interpreted and transmitted (communicated/narrated) making our story comprehensive for others (facilitating acceptance).
- The project of the Municipality of Bologna: **The Meeting: theatre and multiculturalism/** workshop/ objective: elaboration of each story and exchange of experiences between refugees and Italians including physical and choreographic expression.
- An Italian project, considered by the European Union the flagship initiative in the reception and treatment of people who have suffered torture. The experience of the theatre group in the rehabilitation process of refugees who survived torture: **Laboratori di riabilitazione psico-sociale del progetto Vi.To. del Cir.** Psycho-social assistance, including the use of theatre as a form to express experiences, where words are not enough.
- (Prose) **All life on one sheet - memories of asylum seekers** (IT: Tutta la vita in un foglio - memorie di richiedenti asilo). The book collects a selection of memories written by asylum seekers addressed to the Territorial Commissions that have to evaluate the recognition of international protection. These are real stories that help to understand the tragedies experienced by asylum seekers before they arrive to Europe and motivations that drove them to leave. Remembering ones' history has a very strong impact on the ability to perceive oneself, to understand one's identity, to redesign oneself. Some of the stories described in the book has been interpreted during a theatre performance.

ART, EXHIBITION - as a narration tool



Examples from the desk research:

- *ARTconnects - Empowering Communities, **Migration Blanket project - women's stories across the world** presented at Venice biennale in Italy* - the Art Exhibition is exploring the struggles, hopes and dreams of migrant women through art. This project gives **a way to express feelings when it's just too painful for to speak** about what I've been through.
- ***"Kiriku – A scuola di inclusione"** and the Photographic exhibition:*"Ritratti di accoglienza, relazione e cura nella Baranzate multiethnica".
- ***"Unpacked"**:* an emotional multi-media installation with voices of each family telling their experiences as viewers engage with an incredible scale model of the homes they've left behind. Developed by Ahmed Badr and Moahamad Hafez.
- ***Platforma – Art and Refugee Network***, which brings together groups and individuals developing refugee related arts: <https://www.platforma.org.uk/routes-to-peace/>



- **Community mural project** – the Syrian refugee art initiative, which is an ongoing arts-based programming in Syrian refugee communities, led by Joel Artist, with Artolution and the International Rescue Committee (IRC). Creative activities for youth to **focus on, trauma relief and mentorship programs. There is a lack of arts and culture that enrich the human experience and no platform for refugee voices to reach out to the world to tell their own stories.** In host communities in Jordan, Syrian and Jordanian young people work on collaborative arts-based projects that **focus on reducing tensions and promoting social cohesion between these two populations.**

*Thanks to the collaboration with the Artolution and their courtesy the SIMPLE project can use examples of their art for the dissemination of the projects (mainly on the project website).



USE OF IMAGES AND USE OF GRAPHIC NOVELS

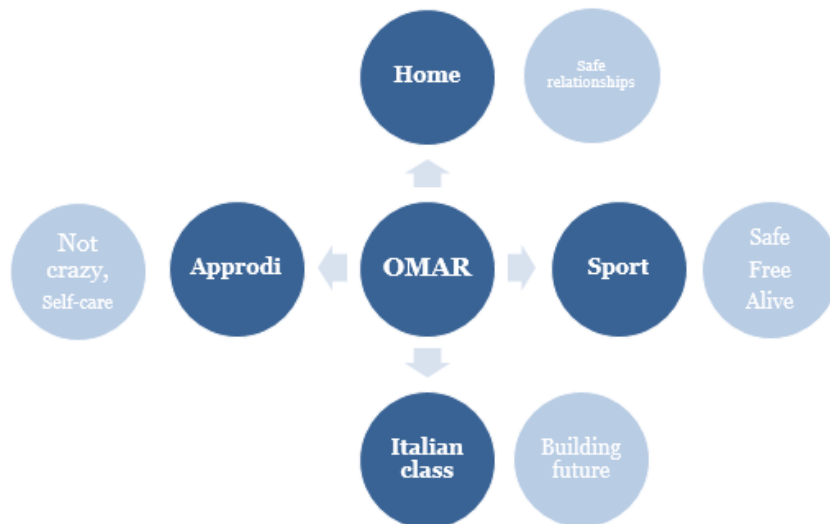
Approdi approach: Extreme (STRESS) trauma and images. Arrivals: migrants' stories through the use of images. Approdi is an association based in Bologna (Italy) and is gathering different professionals active in the social environment: psychologists, anthropologists, linguistic and cultural mediators, educators.

The aim of the project is to provide psychological support to migrants and to asylum seekers with multidisciplinary team. The methodology developed by Approdi based on three pillars: I reduction of symptoms and stabilization; II narration/elaboration (enable) through the image, the access to the memories and give narration to what before could not be narrated but only experienced in its terrible emotional, cognitive and somatic representation); III integration and rehabilitation of the individual personality, return to life. (restoring continuity to one's history).

The Approdi created a **narrative-tool**, using Shuan Tan's graphic novel "The Arrival": the highly suggestive images are viewed, chosen and narrated by migrants.



The Methodology developed by the Approdi corresponds to *the Guidelines introducing the Decree of the Italian Ministry of Health of 3 April 2017* for the planning of care and rehabilitation of interventions and treatment of mental disorders of persons with refugee status and subsidiary protection status who have been subjected to torture, rape or other serious forms of psychological, physical or sexual violence.



Approdi approach brings magnificent results: symptom reduction, reduction of fear, increased ability to actively participate in other activities, work, and improvement of interpersonal skills.

**Project partner Antoniano Onlus is collaborating with Approdi association since a long time and will bring an essential feedback into the SIMPLE project thanks to their experience.*

The project “Integration : stories in pictures” (IRIS) takes a new look at social integration. It enables those exiled to re-gain their voice. Shelter residents created short films about their integration journey in Geneva.

Education resources of POSITIVE&NEGATIVE: “Maths of migration” – this is part of a series of cross curricular lessons looking at stories of migration. The series is freely available – with more subjects being added in due course: <https://positivenegatives.org/about/education/maths-of-migration-educational-resources/>



Other graphic novels

Graphic novels visualise scenes impossible to capture on a picture. Simple techniques, such as thought bubbles, can illustrating how a **personal story in the present is haunted by traumatic memories from the past. Frame by frame, their sequential images reconstruct difficult experiences and harrowing journeys for readers to witness.**

- The Arrival by Shuan Tan;
- Welcome to the New World by Jake Halpern and Michael Sloan;
- Graphic novel of the refugee drama, Threads From the Refugee Crisis by Kate Evans;
- L'immigrazione spiegata ai bambini - Il viaggio di Amal (Amal's journey);
- La Zattera by Lucia Salemi;
- Fu'ad e Jamila - Fu'ad and Jamilia by Cosetta Zanotti and Desideria Guicciardini;
- Leyla nel mezzo by Sarah Garland;
- Books on Boats, Library IBBY of Lampedusa.

POSSIBLE SINERGIES WITH OTHER ERASMUS+ PROJECTS

The EXULI project - promotes an integrated approach born from the synergy between the non-formal education practices of youth work and the Lacanian psychoanalytical field. Both approaches support resilience, intended as the ability to effectively deal with the contradictions of the exile condition of young migrants, to give new impetus to their existence and even to reach important goals: www.exuli.eu.

Benefits of the non-verbal techniques and its impact on beneficiaries

- asylum seekers and refugees become protagonists of their stories and interpreters of themselves, revealing what really happened to them, overcoming the prejudices and stereotypes of common thinking;
- entertainment dimension of the performance helps to strengthen self-esteem and lays the basis for the development of network.

Findings of Field Research

1. *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).*

According to the data provided by **ISTAT (Istituto Nazionale di Statistica)**², in 1 January 2018 there were 5,144,440 foreigner residents in Italy (Non-EU citizens: 3.717.406), equal to 8.5% of the population. The proportion of the foreign population to the total Italian population is constantly growing: in 1990 foreigners made 0.8% of the population, and only in 2006 they exceeded 5%. The growth rate, however, has slowed down in recent years, and between 1 January 2015 and 1 January 2018 it increased by only 0.4%. **Women make up 52% of foreigners resident in Italy.** This balance

² <https://www.istat.it/it/archivio/234457>

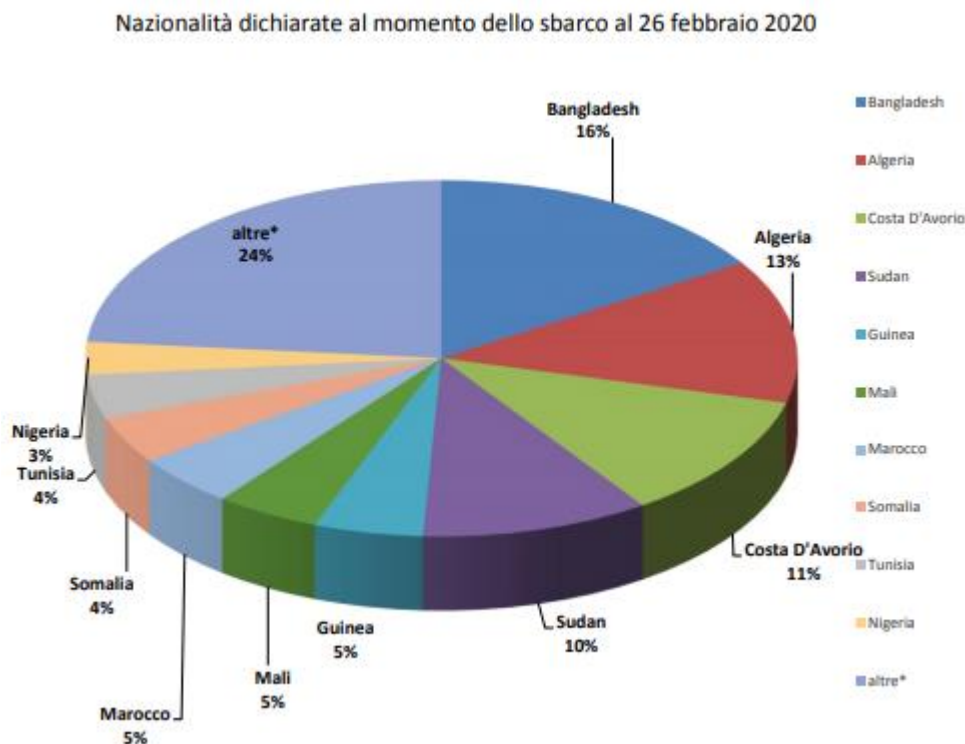
actually hides very different situations between the different citizenships. In fact, that some communities, such as the Ukrainian one, are unbalanced to the female, while for the originating in Bangladesh, for example, there is a male prevalence. The foreign population is concentrated in the Centre-North part of Italy.

The foreign population, as mentioned is very young demonstrating **the average age under 34 years**.

Italy is a country that registers the presence of many different nationalities: almost 50 different nationalities with at least 10,000 residents each. According to the data from the 31 December 2018, the five most numerous communities are: Romanian (1 million 207 thousand), Albanian (441 thousand), Moroccan (423 thousand), Chinese (300,000) and Ukrainian (239,000), with almost 50% of the total number of foreign residents.

Situation of Refugees and asylum seekers in Italy:

The Department of Civil Liberties and Immigration of the Ministry of Interior declares the following nationalities as the main to arrive in Italy via sea.



According to Italian law, there is no formal timeframe for making an asylum application. The intention to make an asylum application may be expressed also orally by the applicant in his or her language with the assistance of a linguistic-cultural mediator. However, asylum seekers should make their application as soon as possible. Immigration legislation prescribes, as a general rule, a deadline of 8 days from arrival in Italy for migrants to present themselves to the authorities.

The asylum application can be made either at the border police office or within the territory at the provincial Immigration Office of the Police (Questura). In 2018 the rejection number of the asylum application reached **41.9%** from almost 88,500 in 2017 to less than 52,500 in 2018³.

According to the Italian Procedure Decree, upon submission of an asylum application, police authorities have to inform applicants through a written brochure about their rights and obligations and the relevant timeframes applicable during asylum procedures. However, in practice the distribution of these leaflets, written in 10 languages, is actually quite rare at the Questura. Although it is not foreseen by law, the information is orally provided by police officers but not in a systematic way mainly due to the shortage of professional interpreters and linguistic mediators.

The gaps in providing information is of concerns to NGOs as it is considered necessary that asylum seekers receive information orally, taking into consideration their habits, cultural backgrounds and level of education which may constitute obstacles in effectively understanding the contents of the leaflets. Upon arrival in the reception centres, asylum seekers are informed on the benefits and level of material reception conditions. Asylum seekers who are granted international protection can later access second-line reception.

Second-line reception is provided through **the System for the Protection of Refugees and Unaccompanied Minors** (Sistema di protezione per titolari di protezione internazionale e minori stranieri non accompagnati, SIPROIMI), the former SPRAR established by L 189/2002. **SIPROIMI is a publicly funded network of local authorities and NGOs** which accommodates unaccompanied children and beneficiaries of international protection. It is formed by small reception structures **where assistance and integration services are provided**. In contrast to the large-scale buildings, SIPROIMI comprised of over 875 **smaller-scale decentralised projects** as of January 2019.

Article 27 of the Qualification Decree specifies that **beneficiaries of international protection are entitled to equal treatment with Italian citizens in the area of health care and social security**.

Like asylum seekers, beneficiaries of international protection have to register with the national health service. Registration is valid for the duration of the residence permit. The renewal of the health card depends on the renewal of the permit of stay and many health services are connected with the place of domicile given for the renewal of the residence permit.

According to *the Contry Report: Italy, elaborated by the Association for Legal Studies on Immigration and edited by the European Council on Refugees and Exiles* (available on www.asylumineurope.org), **there is no procedure defined in law for the identification of vulnerable persons**. However, the Ministry of Health published guidelines for assistance, rehabilitation and treatment of psychological disorders of beneficiaries of international protection victims of torture, rape or other serious forms of psychological, physical or sexual violence. **The guidelines highlight the importance of multidisciplinary teams and synergies between local health services and all actors coming into contact with asylum seekers**. The identification of victims of torture or extreme violence **may occur at any stage of the asylum procedure** by lawyers, competent authorities, professional staff working in reception centres and specialised NGOs.

³ https://www.interno.gov.it/sites/default/files/cruscotto_statistico_giornaliero_26-02-2020.pdf

Article 17(1) of the Reception Decree provides that reception is provided taking into account the **special needs of the asylum seekers, in particular those of vulnerable persons** such as children, unaccompanied children, disabled persons, elderly people, pregnant women, single parents with minor children, **persons who have been subjected to torture, rape or other forms of psychological, physical or sexual violence, victims of trafficking** and genital mutilation, as well as persons affected by serious illness or mental disorders.

There are no legal provisions on how, when and by whom this assessment should be carried out. The Reception Decree provides that asylum applicants undergo a health check since they enter the first reception centres and in temporary reception structures to assess their health condition and special reception needs. **The Decree provides, in theory, that special services addressed to vulnerable people with special needs shall be ensured in first reception centres.** However, the reduction of funding and services provided in first reception centres under the 20 November 2018 tender specifications scheme of the Ministry of Interior and the **exclusion of psychologists' services from eligible costs** will render the effective identification and protection of these categories of people even more precarious.

Decree Law 113/2018, implemented by L 132/2018, has repealed the provision that envisaged the activation of **special reception services in the SPRAR facilities for vulnerable people**.

The law clarifies the need to set up specific spaces within governmental first reception centres where services related to the information, legal counseling, psychological support, and receiving visitors are ensured. Where possible, adult vulnerable people are placed together with other adult family members already present in the reception centres. The manager of reception centres shall inform the Prefecture on the presence of vulnerable applicants for the possible activation of procedural safeguards allowing the presence of supporting personnel during the personal interview.

2. Please **summarise finding of the field research** carried out in your country. Provide an overview of the following:

How did you go about recruiting of interviewees?

The interviewees represented the staff of Antoniano Onlus and associated organisations collaborating with the organisation e.g. Approdi. Antoniano is an important local player in the field of social inclusion of migrants and makes part of the local network of organisation involved in the reception process: SPRAR – SIPROIMI (Protection System for Beneficiaries of International Protection and for Unaccompanied Foreign Minors).

How many individuals applied to take part?

- 11 professionals participated in the interview.

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

Profession	Role	Tasks (official contract statements)
Social worker	Front line activities and social reintegration of people	reception of people in social housing distress; listening to their problems/requests; orientation on the territory; activation of educational/training projects; social secretariat; networking with other social services of the territory; social and educational assistance of people included in housing transition project.
Social worker	Reception and social inclusion	Idem
Reception shelter operator for asylum seekers and refugees SPRAR/SIPROIMI	Reception and social inclusion	Management of reception facilities; mediation between people's needs and the services available in the territory; orientation and assistance to services; activation of Italian language courses; co-designing of personalized paths of inclusion; collaboration with the local community and the territorial services for the psycho-physical well-being of the beneficiaries; legal support.
Coordinator of the listening centre and head of the project Housing LED	Reception	Interviews in case of emergency (situation of an extraordinary distress). Activation of psychological support based on the preliminary analysis of the individual journey.
Operator at the reception shelter SIPROIMI centre	Protection System for Beneficiaries of International Protection and for Unaccompanied Foreign Minors	Assistance and orientation into the territory; school and health education; material support.
Social Worker	Social inclusion	Reintegration activities, orientation into the territory.
Social Worker	Reception	Reception activities; listening to needs; social secretariat.
Social Worker	Reception	Reception activities.
Educator/tutor	Social inclusion	Support and assistance aimed at the psycho-physical well-being of the newcomers.
Social Worker in the project Housing LED	Social inclusion	Assistance during the housing transition; listening centre; social support.
Social Worker	Reception and social inclusion	First face-to-face interview; assistance to standard services; guidance regarding available services on the territory; reception of families with minors.

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

Antoniano Onlus, in addition to the "standard", basic services, such canteen services, distribution of clothes and hygiene products, offers the possibility to support and cover (evaluated by the team of professionals) health and legal services in favor of those who need them, e.g. activating psychological support pathways addressed, in particular, to migrants who have suffered extreme traumas.

Organisation of additional activities e.g. IT workshops, musical and artistic laboratories with the involvement of voluntaries which play a very important role as mentors in the new community.

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

Yes, there are differences as the individual life experiences are different. Possible differences vary more because of different personality, different cultural background and capacity to face and overcome distress than just considered a gender characteristics. The capacity for resilience leads each beneficiary to react to difficulties in an individual manner.

The interviewees admitted that in the majority of cases, women demonstrate major need of a psychological support than men. They need to create/restore a "comfort zone" where they can face traumas and insecurities. Emotions play an important role. Women demonstrate a more frequent need to be reassured and to rediscover their skills, competences and opportunities in the new place – to be empowered. Men tend to neglect the psychological support and see education and work as a way for wellbeing. Due to cultural aspects that require them to be useful and productive men tend to find a concrete solution, like work.

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

Yes, very often.

Difficulty in expressing and describing past events emerged more frequent in the case of women, they verbalize less and have more emotional reactions. The expression of discomfort is more common in men as they have less "limits" in narrating certain situations. (both genders women and men suffer discomfort, but those is manifested in different ways).

They mainly concern: traumas suffered during the trip; traumatic situations experienced in the country of origin; painful past situations (loss of loved ones, alcohol or other addictions). Difficulty to describe personal history and any violence suffered, insecurity and personal fear. The repercussions of the mistreatment suffered by migrants have negative effect on their perception of the world, they remain in a state of agitation despite being out of danger. The anxiety of remembering that drives them to forget what happened. Generally speaking, the path of re-elaboration of women's past is certainly more complex than men's (as very often women are victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation).

The way newcomers deal with the uncomfortable situation needs to be analysed case by case it depends on personal resources available and characteristics. There are those who initially react with anger, shyness, anxiety, closure, sadness until they implode or explode. General observations bring

us to summarize that, women deal with situations of discomfort in an emotional way: hysterical behaviour or depression and isolation (silent or neglecting). Men in general show more aggressive psycho-behavioural attitudes. Through constant dialogue with people, the operators try to establish a trustful relationship and safe environment for those who need support based on acceptance and empathy.

Regarding the ability to overcome difficulties, the interviewees are oriented towards the need of an external, professional help. Even where a person apparently shows the capacity to overcome difficulties on their own, the perception is that is just hiding it or "putting it aside" without really dealing with the problem (tend to avoid the problem, not face the difficulty). The figure of a professional psychologist is hardly acceptable by potential beneficiaries (especially those with a low level of education), associated with the declaration of being mad.

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

Apart from the modalities and reasons for migration, the cultural shock causes disorientation and anxiety.

The interviewees admit to use a practical approach, supporting general orientation in the territory with the aim to minimize the confusion (e.g. informational and counselling services to respond to primary needs and material support concerning accommodation and occupation).

An essential element, which emerged during the interviews is the weight of **listening to people** in difficulty who have a great need to create relationships of trust and to feel free to talk about their past without embarrassment or risk of consequences. Professionals working with newcomers at the reception shelters admitted that during first interviews they try to understand the person's real needs, beyond the one he or she explicitly ask for. During the interviews, they try to identify people's resources and skills to talk about their habits, social and food culture of the country of origin, share things in common with the aim to make people feel more welcome and accepted in the new community. **Psychological support pathways are designed for the newcomers (respecting ones needs), group activities (mindfulness, psychomotricity for children, working groups on a range of topics) and individual pathways. Art and entertainment (dance, sing laboratories), theatre performance are useful and common tools which facilitate narration.**

Workshops are listed as another useful tool: these activities require a commitment of both parties: newcomers and Italian citizens offering the opportunity to meet other people and to carry out educational activities (Italian language school, computer course).

Example: Antoniano Onlus in collaboration with Arte Migrante, offers the opportunity to participate, free of charge, in some workshops to learn the Italian language. The workshops, which include recreational and educational activities create social spaces to facilitate migrants build their own network in the territory.

Adequate space is missing for those, who suffered violence and mistreatments or had a particularly dramatic migration journey and feel exposed to uncomfortable situations (discomfort in being

among many people, in open spaces, lack of privacy, etc.). In case of identified state of psychological and emotional discomfort, professionals need to collaborate with specialists in the field.

Antonianno social workers introduce **Approdi approach** in they work – these methodology have proved to be extremely effective, particularly in the reworking of traumas. A serious pathway that takes into account people's cultural background.

Other instruments/methodologies mentioned by operators during interviews are: **Start-er project, ethno-psychiatry.**

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

Time and collaboration – factors which are missing.

Unfortunately, existing tool are insufficient, do not guarantee support for all who need it. Very often the most vulnerable people are more reluctant to change, less disposed to inclusion and do not want to undertake any psychological path. For a person with a completely different culture it is difficult to understand the figure of the psychologist. For this reason, the intervention of **an ethno-psychiatrist** who can better contextualize the figure of the psychologist is needed but sometimes it is not enough.

Psychological support pathways with an intercultural and not psychiatric/western approach are needed (without judgments in front of practices that seem out of this world e.g.: voodoo rituals).

The rejection of the support is triggered because one has more desire to forget a painful past experience.

Moreover, existing approaches focus on problems that are too sectoralized (trafficking, violence) instead of providing complex support regardless of the type of path taken by the migrant (anyway traumatic).

Social workers cooperate with regional/national public services like: SERT (service for addictions) and CSM (Mental health centre).

A missing element: insufficient tools for the management of dependence-related problems.

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?

There is not enough attention paid to the psychological wellbeing of migrant women.

Policies provides forms of protection regarding the psychological well-being of migrant women, the real problem is the bureaucratisation and therefore the accessibility to these services. There are regulations addressed to women who have suffered certain forms of violence, both physical and psychological, forms of exploitation and torture which unfortunately are not always easy to prove (unless they obtained the status of international protection).

Such type of public psychological support provides conditions that are often unfeasible, as they require from the person to be able to explain the reasons of her distress in order to receive

support while sharing of her personal traumatic experience is often a challenging objective to achieve.

Organisations operating on the territory, providing support to migrants, use their own funds for the activation of psychological support paths, otherwise the resources on the territory would be insufficient. The public structures are not able to activate individualised support for all because of the large number of requests they receive every day (appointments are distant; there is a high turnover of the staff which lead to further disorientation).

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?

Essential, it is very important, both to facilitate social inclusion and to give the opportunity to live a better life. Any inclusion project won't work if addressed people does not work on their personal well-being first.

To start again in a completely new environment it is necessary to have high equilibrium and great force and the mind liberated from the experienced events.

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

First of all, the accessibility of free services, both in terms of available places, and in terms of the various linguistic and cultural barriers that often hinder effective treatment. Often a short-term stay in a reception centre hinders successful psychological assistance.

Moreover, the struggle to integrate into the new community, the precariousness of the local work context increases the psychological distress furthermore.

Increased collaboration with anti-trafficking agencies has been indicated by operators.

All operators involved in the reception process feel a need to acquire new skills and tool to approach newcomers (the ethno-cultural preparation/training) especially those suffering trauma to provide better assistance.

On the other hand, there is a missing flexibility and understanding from the side of beneficiaries, regarding Italian social, professional, administrative and bureaucratic structures and schemes different from their context of origin (e.g. not being able to keep timetable of scheduled meetings).

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

Professionals suggested that a possible way to approach women suffering distress can be work within a group of women who have experienced similar situations (they feel less lonely and alone with their sufferings) led by a professional female figure to talk to (point of reference).

According to the results of the interviews, verbal techniques are perhaps among the most difficult to achieve. The people with traumatic experiences tends to remove or refuse them (as a natural defence system) and are not able to narrate and explain their suffering.

Tools and methodologies should be tailored to each one needs. Theatre, dance and psychomotricity could be useful instruments for a recovery of consciousness of each one body and mind. Even cooking can become a moment to return to the past, to one's own stories.

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

Techniques based on art and writing (descriptive narration) are appreciated to facilitate expression. According to operators' experiences, also projects based on **entertainment activities** addressed to women victims of trafficking and torture (migrants via Libyan routes) brought good results regarding elaboration of trauma.

Case study example: a boy who had suffered torture mainly on his feet, this experience led him to keep his feet covered in any situation, which made him feel particularly vulnerable. He overcame his discomfort the first time thanks to the participation to the theatre performance.

SIPROIMI centre operators from Bologna appreciated the methodology developed by Approdi as a useful tool, which facilitates narration of persons' story and events and which could be a starting point for a more in-depth elaboration of trauma.

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

The desk (collection of practices) and field research results (interviews with professionals) brought us to the following conclusions about the useful tools and approaches applied in the reception process of migrants in Italy, focusing on the psychological support of traumas and mistreatments:

- During the research in Italy almost 30 practices and **non-verbal tools**, which help to **narrate a story**, describe past difficult events has been identified and analysed.
- Migration seen as a transition process is considered a complex and multi-dimensional phenomenon, which need to approach with a **holistic model**.
- Integration does not just happen in the access to work and to accommodation facilities (material help), but is based primarily on the **active participation of newcomers** and about their **dialogue with the host societies**.
- More attention to the **social and interpersonal needs** of the newcomers is needed.
- The overview of the collection of some of the many experiences, born inside and outside the network of the Italian Protection System for Asylum Seekers and Refugees (SPRAR), reveals the importance of **artistic activities as a key instrument** facilitating the reacquisition of individual's autonomy and in the processes of socio-economic integration as well as traumas relief. **Art gives a way to express feelings when it is just too painful for to speak about the past events.**

- There is a need of cultivation of a [sense of belonging](#) and development of relationships based on [trust and dialogue](#), as elements that affect the psychological condition and contribute to make the newcomer an active interlocutor in the host society.
- The realization of [cultural activities](#), especially theatre workshops can increase awareness-raising of the host community, aimed at strengthening the culture of acceptance and on the other hand, enriched newcomers with additional tools for strengthening their individual paths in the country of arrival.
- Theatre performances have the power to stimulate the interpretation and foster the processes of [elaboration of past life experiences and traumas](#), especially because allow them to be expressed in [a non-canonical way](#) (without words), using the body, space and interpersonal relationships. Theatre give the opportunity to arrive when words don't!
- Approdi association has been mentioned as an example of a good practice – their approach based on the [narration of migrants' stories with images](#). The association provides psychological support to newcomers with multidisciplinary team.
- All professionals who participated in the interviews have [confirmed the situation of distress](#)/discomfort/difficulty or even incapacity in expressing and describing past events faced by newcomers.
- The way newcomers deal with the uncomfortable situation needs to be analyse case by case it depends on personal characteristics and resources available.
- Existing tool are [insufficient](#), do not guarantee support for all who need it. Moreover, bureaucracy requirements make the assistance often unfeasible, as it requires from the person to be able to explain the reasons of her distress in order to receive support, while sharing of her personal traumatic experience is often a challenging objective to achieve.
- Traditional verbal techniques are perhaps among the most difficult to achieve. The people with traumatic experiences tend to remove or refuse painful memories (as a natural defence) and are not able to narrate and explain their suffering in words.
- Techniques based on art are appreciated to [facilitate expression](#). According to operators' experiences, projects based on entertainment activities addressed to women victims of trafficking and torture brought good results regarding [elaboration of trauma](#).