# USVreact

UNIVERSITIES SUPPORTING VICTIMS OF
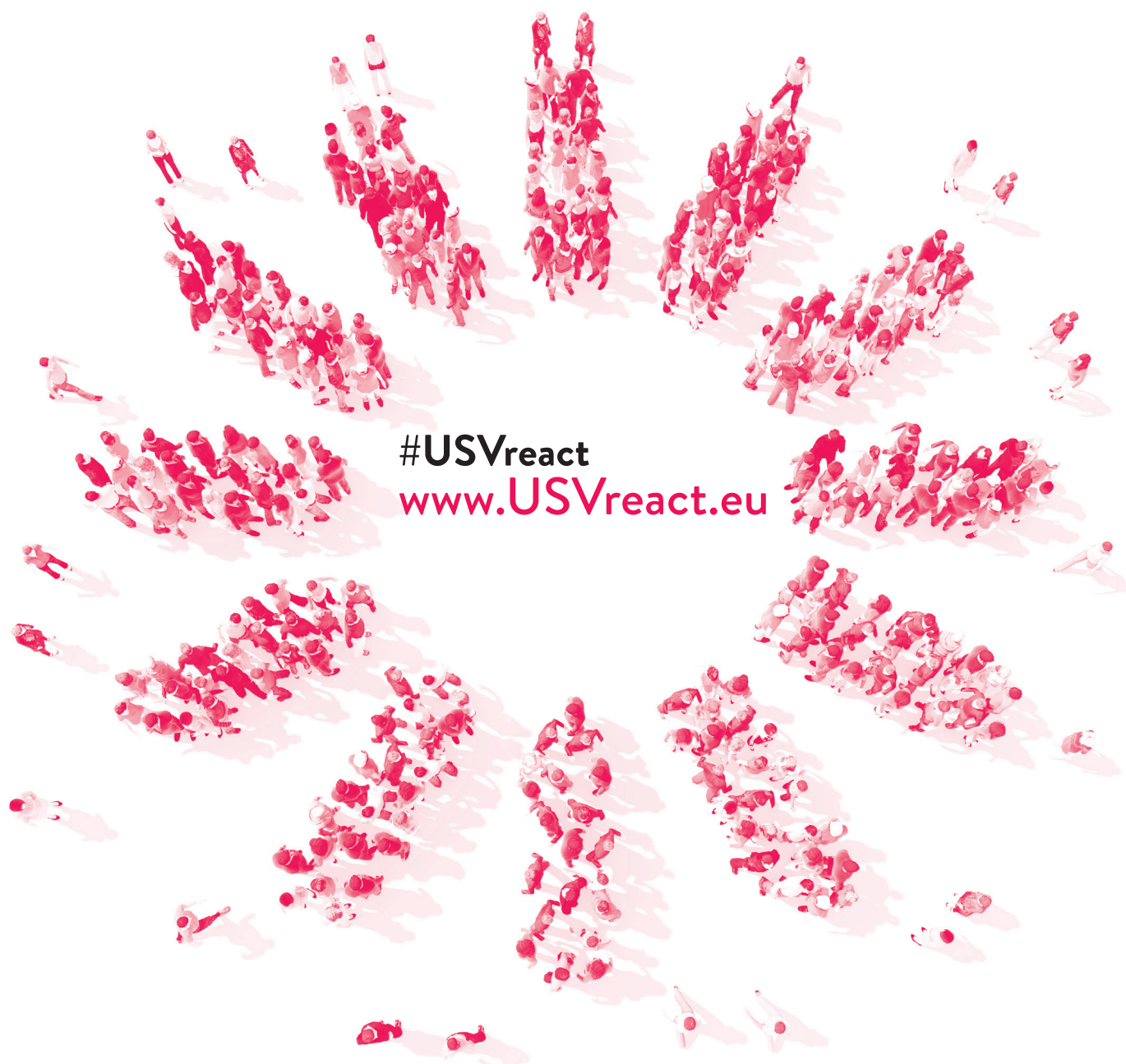**SEXUAL VIOLENCE**

## UNPACKING SEXUAL VIOLENCE

### ASSESSMENT OF THE USVREACT PROJECT TRAINING PROGRAMMES (UPV/EHU)

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# Introduction

"Universities Supporting Victims of Sexual Violence" ("Universidades que apoyan a víctimas de violencias sexuales" in Spanish, or USVreact) is a European project we have developed between March 2016 and the end of February 2018. The project's main goal was to develop tools – particularly training tools – that would help universities address the reality of sexual violence on campus, with the intention of preventing it and responding adequately to it where it occurs.

In the case of the Universidad del País Vasco/Euskal Herriko Unibertsitatea (UPV/EHU), the central element around which the entire project revolves has been the training model developed alongside Universidad Rovira I Virgili (URV) in Tarragona. However, we have also pursued a number of other elements in the project. These have included developing an early exploratory study of the perception and impact of sexual violence among our students; participating in the process of redeveloping the procedures for combatting gendered violence in UPV/EHU; and establishing networks for collaboration among feminist actors both internal and external to the university.

Alongside our fellow researchers at URV, we put together an early proposal for a training model based on shared visions and concerns; this first proposal has been constantly modified and adjusted to the circumstances and the contexts in which it has been implemented, which has contributed to its improvement. For instance: the URV training units were ten-hours long, while the UPV/EHU units were eight-hours long. This has affected the structure and duration of the exercises. Likewise, the practical application of the courses has led us to revise, modify and enrich the exercises, examples used, etc. Therefore, what initially was thought out as a shared educational proposal has brought about two distinct courses that, while sharing many common concerns, are each slightly different, both in terms of content and approach. Both proposals have been recently published as guides online and in print in Basque and Spanish languages. We believe that the process undergone by these materials set a good example of how to adapt training and awareness initiatives related to sexual violence and other forms of gender-related violence[1] to the specific environments in which they are to be implemented.

In the UPV/EHU's case, implementation led to the training programme being included within the body of training given to teachers and Administration and Service Staff (PAS) in 2017, as well as being delivered as pilot training programmes with experts and "focused" courses in specific departments. Altogether, 149 people have received our 8-hour training and another 20 have attended (as of the end of the project) shorter presentations of the model. Those 149 people also include 20 from the

[1]      We use the expression "gender-related violence" along the text, a concept we came up to when working in the Gap Work Project, also financed by the EC (JUST/2012/DAP/AG/3176). The concept aims to bring together two strands of activism- efforts to challenge violence against women and efforts to tackle LGBTI-phobia. It is argued that by problematizing gender norms, the values and norms underpinning both these forms of oppression might be undermined. More information and resources can be found here (http://sites.brunel.ac.uk/gap)

Universidad Pública de Navarra (UPNA) and HUHEZI (MU), both universities with which we have worked throughout the project. Both universities have expressed their interest in offering this training now that the model has been published as a guidebook.

As previously stated, team members expanded their activity to include aspects that were not part of the specific initial goals for USVreact. The openness to new elements and possible collaborations also had a positive effect on the project's impact, even beyond the point at which it officially ended. It is important to bear in mind that significant change in the university's fabric will be the result of mid- and long-term processes. In this report we have collected some of the conclusions drawn from USVreact, listed the problems that have arisen during these past 24 months, and proposed some recommendations that will allow us to continue to improve the prevention of and response to sexual violence in universities.

# Context

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Any project is developed within a specific context which determines, up to certain point, both the approach taken and the course of its development. Below we list some of the elements we consider important in order to contextualise the way in which we have approached this research-action, as well as its subsequent development.

## Interest around sexual violence and its visibility

This may well be the element we have seen shift the most over the two years of the project. Public opinion is changeable, media attention moves in short cycles, and the ability of some citizen sectors, via social media and other platforms, to push certain issues has also had an impact. As for us, we have seen how some of the elements we wanted to bring attention to when we started become increasingly visible during the last few months. Sexual violence (specifically sexual harassment) reached a peak of visibility with the explosion of the #metoo campaign on social media. This campaign was boosted by professionals in the film industry and performing arts, which made harassment against women (and in some cases harassment against men by other men) extremely visible. As a project, we felt the debate, and the questions it posed, was relevant to us: Is it possible to condemn sexual violence in a way that puts power relations at its core, rather than some specific individual's attitudes? What do we gain and what do we lose when this visibility is accomplished by highly regarded, powerful members of society, such as actresses?

Perhaps even more relevant on a qualitative level has been the "yo te creo" ("I believe you") campaign, which also took space on social media, pushed to a great extent by the social impact of the trial against the men who sexually assaulted a woman during the 2016 San Fermín celebrations. The trial against "la manada" ("the pack") clearly shows that public trials for sexual harassment or assault contribute to the renegotiation of the boundaries between public and private, often to the detriment of the victim. In these cases women generally lose their right to privacy (various details about their lives are made public and used as evidence against them), whereas men continue to be afforded this privilege (in this case, the demand was made not to reveal the aggressors' faces only days after images of the victim had become viral on social media). In this context, the "yo te creo" campaign is qualitative important, precisely because it transcends the legal framework of the presumption of innocence and values the testimony of women who have suffered assault. It is made patent that, all too often, women's lived experience of sexual violence is silenced or discredited behind the false demand to "prove what happened", a highly debatable element in an environment where a lot of what "happened" can't be officially proven, but is known full well.

On the other hand, sexual violence in the university, or at least in some universities, has obviously been made more visible as the project has developed. During the last two years, several universities have initiated the process of developing policies against harassment, some have worked on wider-reaching policies against gender-based violence and, in cases where policies and regulations were already in place, we have witnessed processes of redevelopment (such as in UPV/EHU), due, precisely, to the limitations identified when they have been put to use. Media has echoed some of these cases and the social debate around the subject has started to manifest itself.

In this context, one would think that all of these additions are, in principle, positive. However, given the debates we have had around these and other questions with our colleagues in Greece, the UK, and Italy, we feel compelled to be cautious when estimating the effects of this increased visibility. It is not our intention to call into question the goals behind these campaigns, but we do want to highlight that we must be conscious of the risks they entail: some forms of violence are brought to light while others remain in the shadows; often hard to move past victimisation standards are generated, and, rather dangerously, a climate of social alarm around it can arise. This involves, generally, a wish from the institutions (in our case, the universities) to deactivate said alarm via specific and direct measures, which, more often than not, remain strictly punitive (harshening the punishment) and point to certain people as the sole culprits of the violence (without stopping to consider the network of social, institutional, and cultural complicities).

We have therefore experienced this increase in visibility of sexual violence as an opportunity, but also as an element we must approach sensibly and with care. Hence, the observation diaries kept by our trainers show an increasing ease in observing and identifying different forms of sexual violence between participants, as well as a still significant resistance to identify them as the expression of a power structure. This translates into individuation and minimising analyses ("not all men are like that", "there are women who can be harassers, too", "it depends on the person").

## The framework of violence expands

The framework through which we understand sexual violence – like any form of violence derived from the heteropatriarchal order and its desire for self-perpetuation – is in constant dispute. This dispute develops in different directions and according to different pressures. On one hand, recognising violence as the form of expression and control of the gendered power evident in different spheres of society (economy, culture, politics, epistemology…) is, in itself, up for dispute in a context, such as that of the Spanish state, in which the structural conditions of violence are actively being masked. The first dispute takes place, therefore, in the space of common sense. However, there are also arguments to be had about how an understanding of these structural frameworks influences the way they are put into practice in the form of policies, initiatives, and proposals. During the development of USVreact we have watched this debate expand in different directions.

On one hand, and 12 years since the gendered violence constitutional law, we have observed that the framework for understanding gender-based violence is often lacking or insufficient. When we started this project, representative figures of the Basque feminist movement appeared in the Basque parliament to demand "a redefinition of the concept of gender-based violence and violence against women[2]". The impact of this law is still being felt today, and its limitations are particularly telling in its strict location of sexual violence within the heterosexual couple form.  Any amendments to the

2        https://www.naiz.eus/eu/actualidad/noticia/20160316/el-movimiento-feminista-insta-a-una-redefinicion-del-concepto-de-violencia-machista-ante-los-vacios-de-la-ley-actual

law would especially need to include a consideration of the structure of gender present in all aspects of social life and its ability to produce violence as well. In our context, for instance, one of the various goals of the process of rewriting the UPV/EHU protocol is to go beyond the framework defined by the law, which was the basis of the preceding rulebook.

Likewise, we have found a need not only to improve criminal justice responses to violence against women, but also to decentre the role of criminal justice both at the moment of detecting violence and when taking action against it. This need can be elaborated in relation to a range of issues: we still understand sexual violence as a momentary, specific event which has a discrete beginning and end, happens in a specific time and place, and can therefore be attributed to an individual and proven in a court of law. The contradiction between this standpoint and the reality is obvious: there are many cases of harassment that are impossible to prove (for instance, cases of sexual violence taking place in particularly opaque spaces such as police stations, prisons, mental institutions, etc.). Does this mean they do not happen? Most importantly of all, are we not prevented from acting by the idea that the events must be proven first? The urgent need to provide support to victims of sexual violence, regardless of their having made an official claim or proven the facts, has been made clear in the creation of differentiated measures of support and reporting, such as the procedures newly implemented by UPNA in 2017.

Lastly, the need to expand our understanding of what constitutes violence has also been emphasised by sections of the LGBTQI movement, who have pointed to the need to not entirely separate out policies concerning the LGBTQI community from those concerned with gender. The concerns around non-normative gender identities, which have also hit unexpected visibility levels in these last two to three years in the Spanish state, have put this subject on the table with particular urgency: can we talk about gendered violence without bringing in questions about the gender binary and compulsory heterosexuality? Our project has made an effort to complement the feminist line of thought and action with LGBTI and queer politics. However, it is not easy to apply these frameworks in specific policy. These past two years we have engaged in debates about whether sexual and affective diversity must be dealt with in the same space, with the same resources and approaches as those brought to bear on the issue of equality between men and women. The debate remains open and we expect that it will continue as universities start implementing new regulations and awareness strategies.

## Our university and its context

We can't ignore the fact that, in addition to the current debates, there are also certain determining factors stemming from the formal structures of our universities. UPV/EHU is a relatively large university. It is the only public university in the Basque Autonomous Community (CAV) and it lacks representation in the rest of the Basque territory (Navarre, under its own statute, has UPNA, and the provinces under French administration have other universities). Around 50,000 people study in the different UPV/EHU campuses, and another 5,000 work there. Measuring the university allows us to understand the complexity of its politics and, probably, the potential need to work on sexual violence from more fragmented viewpoints (divided by schools or departments).

Since 2006 the university has had an Equality Office, which has already drafted two equality plans and is currently working on the third. The limited resources of the structure devoted to equality is evident (a part-time head officer and two managers for 55,000 people) and these limitations are therefore contextually significant. Relying on a structure that can centralise information and data

from the institution and offer a home to different initiatives arising from associations, research groups, projects, and departments is of critical importance and can make a real difference. We understand that the existence (or absence) of this sort of structure is a key element when it comes to addressing sexual violence in universities.

On a different note, we do not have specific data on the incidence of sexual violence in our university. Nor is this solely the case for UPV/EHU: the systematic gathering of sexual violence data is also lacking on a national-level (most of the data available until very recently was based on how many reports were made, and we did not even have information about outcomes). The studies performed in universities all around the state, in general, are focused on attitudes on and appraisal of the issue, and nearly always involve female students from a victimising standpoint. There are hardly any studies analysing the attitudes of male students.

Given such a lack of data, we implemented an exploratory survey, in the form of a questionnaire, which was spread both online and in print, and from which we received 715 valid responses. Whilst we will not get into a thorough analysis, we would like to point out that through this superficial and limited questionnaire we have been able to draw a number of conclusions. Firstly, we can assert that some forms of violence are easily identified and condemned ("forcing someone to have undesired sexual relations") but other forms are more often minimised ("sending someone images with sexual content without having previously discussed it"), probably as a consequence of an individualising framework in constant development in our societies. Secondly, we observed that most of the surveyed students (94%) ignores the existence of the UPV/EHU protocol and only 3% knew how to initiate it. Finally, we have learned that if we want to measure the impact of violence in our environment, we need to rethink the questions being asked. In our questionnaire we listed a series of behaviours linked to harassment or assault and we asked our sample whether "something like that had ever happened to them". In responding to this question more male than female students gave a positive answer. This indicates that either UPV/EHU is an exception to the general trend in society, or that the framing of the question – asking whether one has "ever" experienced a given situation – skews the answers given. We believe that the answers would be very different if we asked about the impact of these events in their lives. Indeed, asking whether "someone has ever touched you without your consent" is not the same as asking whether "you have ever considered avoiding going to a certain space in order not to be touched without your consent". The first may have happened to many people independent of their gender, the second, however, is not such a universal experience.

A final reflection we have made in the development of this project: the need for greater clarification of the extent of the problem is felt very keenly within the university. During training programmes, discussion sessions, and presentations (both within the context of the project and the new UPV/EHU protocol), we have registered this concern among many of our attendees. We are worried, however, that the desire to access data on sexual violence is motivated by a need to confirm that sexual violence does indeed take place before proposing measures to prevent it. For all the reasons above, we believe that the reality and prevalence of different forms of sexual violence must be a starting point in any attempt to address this problem, and not treated as a hypothesis to be proven. There are enough studies indicating the difficulty faced by victims when attempting to prove and to report assault or harassment; we therefore cannot afford to wait until we have relevant data before we begin to initiate preventative measures.

# The training and its assessment

As we have already pointed out, the training programme consisted of 8 hours divided into two 4-hour sessions. The programme's intention is to increase awareness, help to identify and understand the different expressions of sexual violence in our contexts, as well as providing practical tools to reflect and act responsibly both when reacting to sexual violence and trying to prevent it. We divided the training into four main subjects and provided content for each of them:

-The goal of the first part is getting to know how sexual violence is perceived and identified in the university environment. Fictitious case studies are used as a starting point for group discussion and reflection. A guided debate subsequently takes place in which special attention is given to the power elements present in the cases analysed.

-The second part deals with understanding, contextualising, and defining sexual violence. After the discussions held during the first part, we analyse the structural elements involved in sexual violence in greater depth, exploring how they interact with one another. Concepts such as intersectionality, gender, sexual identity, and gender expression are presented, using a language that is easy to understand and developing from the case studies and discussions in the first part of the training.

-During the third part we address responses to cases of sexual violence in the university. The goal is to encourage a response which will not only involve perception but also listening, caring, accompanying and evaluating. Forum theatre and active listening are some of the techniques used.

-The fourth part offers tools, services and strategies for the initial response to and the appropriate care of people who have suffered any kind of sexual violence in the university.

The training is focused on answering some of the contextual questions addressed above. Since it is not an extensively worked-on subject in the university, we envisioned a kind of training that, rather than offering automatically applicable tools to "manage" instances of sexual violence, would offer a space to question the environment and ourselves. To this end, it was indispensable to use participation methodologies whose potential went beyond transmitting knowledge (for instance group discussions, forum theatre, and situation solving). We made an effort to transmit a main idea which greatly differs from the management models in place at universities: with every situation, it is necessary to think and analyse in depth, suggest measures that could provoke a change in these communities and establish processes that will avoid victimisation and favour empowerment.

The materials used as a foundation for these training programmes were subjected to verification and revision by experts and/or activists, in Catalunya as well as in Euskal Herria. In terms of our territory, we held three open work sessions and several individual interviews in order to verify whether our focus was in tune with the approach of feminist and other movements. In fact, we consider that cooperation between this university space and other spaces as key in the implementation of initiatives around sexual violence and other kinds of gender-related violence.

## Changes in the training model

These materials, as well as the structure of the course, changed over time as we offered new versions of the training programme. For instance, we initially began with an introduction to theories and terminology around sexual violence, and the first course unit (in which fictional case studies were used in order to analyse the characteristics of gendered violence) were originally part of unit two. However, we soon realised that using specific situations as a starting point helped attendees to connect more easily with the subject, and allowed us to work in groups from the beginning of the training. The exercise started with fictional situations that were nonetheless familiar, and recognisably plausible in the university context. Meanwhile, the structural issues embedded in the case studies were slowly revealed during groupwork and were elicited through the questions asked by both participants and trainers, such as: "Would it have happened to her if she had been a man?", "How is her being in a precarious employment situation linked to the way in which she reacts towards harassment?", "Had it been a straight relationship, would speaking about it have been easier or harder?", etc.

In the second unit we offered a more extended interpretation of sexual violence and its social context: addressing social structures, power, intersectionality, sexism, gender norms, racism. If at any point participants showed resistance towards an issue we posited, this part of the training was it. The participants' notes reveal different issues. On one hand, they found it difficult to separate social conditioning from individual responsibility and intention. In some cases, this was manifest among some men who were unwilling to identify themselves as being in positions of power and, in others, women who resisted identifying as victims. We must take into account that, in an environment so defined by an ideology of meritocracy such as the university, this kind of resistance is commonplace. Furthermore, the frequent recourse to minimisation ("us women could do that as well") indicates both discomfort around the politics of victimhood for women and LGBTQI people, as well as resistance to the structural analysis of gendered violence. Often, facts and perceptions are opposed to abstract theoretical claims. Hence, despite the fact that most attendees identified sexual violence as especially directed at women or non-normative subjects, at the level of theory there was a tendency towards minimising in their analyses.

On a different note, language matters. Even though we witnessed significant progress in the acceptance of words such as "feminism", there is still some resistance to them, for perceiving them as "too radical" or "harsh". In these situations, the trainers chose to let the discussion flow. This debate is current in other social spaces, and it goes to show that feminism is still a secondary issue in university spaces. All of this brought us to think that it would be more appropriate to make this debate the second unit in the training. We came to the conclusion that if we were going to manage resistance towards a feminist and queer framework of understanding, we should do it at least after we have already begun working together for a while and developed a minimum bond so that participants will be more willing to listen to one another.

The fact that some ideas were met with resistance does not mean that these were either widespread or unproductive. In this sense, it is worth pointing out that offering training programmes based on discussion favours the airing of doubts and disagreements to a greater extent than other models based on a straightforward transmission of knowledge, where dissent often remains hidden under the appearance of consensus. We think it is important to overcome the idea of easy consensus on sexual violence if we are going to successfully facilitate deeper discussions about its relation to power dynamics, and we understand that resistance and disagreement are part of this process.

## Participant feedback

Through a descriptive analysis of the online surveys filled out anonymously by participants, we concluded that the general opinion of the training has been very positive. On a scale from 1 to 5 (where 1 represents "deficient" and 5 "excellent"), the average rating by participants was 4,3. "Excellent" was chosen by 47% of the sample and 95,2% rated the course 3 or above. We included gender and the professional group they belong to (lecturers or staff) as variables, but the results did not vary significantly. We think that this last aspect is relevant because it is difficult to offer simultaneous training to different sections of the workforce, with their different interests and needs. 94% of participants felt that the course should continue to be offered to other people in the university, and 89% stated that they would take part in a hypothetical follow-up course.

We included a series of questions in order to evaluate the participants' expectations, indicating that they should rate the extent to which their expectations had been met by the course (on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is not at all and 5 is completely). Apparently, gender did have an influence in this case: among those identifying as women, there were no cases of ratings under 3. Among them, the lecturers were the most satisfied, with 45% of the sample indicating that all their expectations had been met. In the case of male identifying lecturers, the rating was lower (23%) and answers close to 1 appeared.

Different aspects of the course ("involvement of the trainers", "the trainers' level of preparation", "atmosphere during the course", "space where it has taken place", "course materials") were given ratings over 4. The first three were the best rated (4.7, 4.5, 4.5). The least appreciated aspect was "duration of the course", at 3.4. We should highlight that, overall, female participants demanded a longer duration of the training.

The course units we have described before were also subject to evaluation. The first three received almost no negative feedback (2%, 4%, 7%), although it is interesting to observe the increase in the percentages, probably due to the question of whether expectations had been met or not. As for unit four, 26% of its feedback was negative. There are several explanations for this. On one hand, it was the unit in which meeting some of the expectations was the most difficult: a unit that intended to provide prevention and response resources in a university lacking a functional protocol at the time. In fact, in addition to the subsequent survey, we explored the participants' motivations during an initial conversation in which we asked all present "what has brought you here and what are you particularly concerned about". We observed a great number of participants stating that they needed specific information about what to do if they witnessed or were made aware of a case of sexual violence. The need for specific measures and action protocols is, to a great extent, the product of an institutional tendency to respond to sexual violence according to the prerogatives of risk management. This was an approach that we did not want to unduly promote both because we felt that it was not the most important aspect of the project, and because the range of options for action we could transmit at the time was limited.

We did observe, however, other distinct motivations for involvement from participants during the initial round of the project. The wish to "bring to light problems that hidden or underreported" was recurrent, and, interestingly, it coexisted with some voices declaring that the problem worried them, but they thought that "nothing like that happened here". Overall, the lecturers were more worried about sexual violence lived by female students, while the staff showed a greater interest in forms of violence (harassment, particularly) perpetrated against university staff. A concern about forms of violence against students by lecturers was also present from the beginning, if less strongly so. Obviously, this range of interests varied across the different groups.

## Some considerations about the training

Our model, developed alongside our fellow USVreact members at URV, proposes a safe but monitored space in which to open a debate over what specific forms of sexual violence take place in our university. Therefore, the advice on how to react initially to a specific case of violence or what resources to use where required was of secondary importance. We did of course pay attention to these elements, but only after pursuing the comprehensive labour of reflection over other elements such as the multiple forms of gendered violence, a critique of the structural systems that make it possible, and an in-depth analysis aimed at displacing tendencies towards victimisation and the pathologisation of perpetrators. The focus was therefore on establishing the need for change as the responsibility of the entire university community. Our efforts have focused, therefore, on raising awareness regarding power structures supported by patriarchy, racism, and classism, among others, in order to locate and comprehend the violence happening in universities at the core of this structural framework.

However, the increasingly bureaucratised environment of the university, with its focus on individualised attention to victims, promotes a culture in which policy is more often directed at models of conflict management that hardly ever stop to question in depth the reasons behind that conflict. A mid- and long-term assessment indicates that conflict management is almost never the effective solution it is expected to be. We believe this is the reason why – despite the fact that our project was generally well-received, with many participants thankful for the existence of an open, radical space for reflection – we also received suggestions and requests to further develop specific responses, guidelines and processes for responding to gendered and sexual violence. In fact, the highest-rated unit in the survey was the one devoted to active listening and first attention. Many of the female course participants claimed to feel uncomfortable or even scared because they "did not know what to do" in a case of sexual violence, and they hoped for the training to meet that need. The search for formulas, while understandable, is likewise an indication of the fact that sexual violence is still understood as something that can be individualised and "managed". We consider that this tendency has at its root the institutional failure of the to question its own foundations.

Additionally, among the participants in the training course we noticed some elements of resistance to our proposals. This resistance could be related to the tendency to individualise and pathologise violence. During the exercises we devoted to identifying different forms of violence, we detected a positive tendency towards identifying diverse forms of violence beyond physical sexual violence exerted with coercion (rape). Most of the participants chose a model for understanding that could include different forms of violence, and not only the most visible or evident. However, most of the resistance was expressed in the theoretical terrain, at the time of establishing an intersectional feminist viewpoint as a method to analyse the power relations facilitating violence. A large section of this resistance was expressed as minimisation ("a woman can also abuse a man") or individualisation ("It's different depending on the person"). We also met difficulties when trying to understand the intersectional framework, in which the links between different axes of power were often understood as mutually exclusive ("at that moment you are not a woman, you are an intern") or put into hierarchies ("her sexual orientation matters more than her gender").

# Contributions, conclusions, and recommendations

Our goal with USVreact project was always to identify good practice, learn, and try to improve the situation in terms of sexual violence, at our university and others. In that sense, by means of a compromise with forms of research and intervention seeking social transformation and the change of certain values, we have contributed to the project in different ways. On one hand, we have met an educational goal, offering a space for reflection and critique to a significant number of people of different backgrounds. The nature of the project has not allowed us to include many students, and this is without a doubt one of the issues we would like to address in the future. Indeed, we think it is essential to resist the urge to divide between students and staff so that the former are always potential victims, and the latter always potential supporters. The reality of sexual violence is far more complex; as demonstrated by the results of our survey, the evidence gathered during training sessions, and the various cases that have recently come to light. For all this, we think it is crucial to identify students as agents of change, as well as individuals with the potential to offer a first response to instances of sexual violence.

Furthermore, our commitment to training does not end with the sessions offered. As we have already pointed out, we have worked with URV on the production of a training guidebook, in which we offer the materials discussed and list the exercises designed and developed at the two universities. Both the guidebook and the materials are available —under a Creative Commons licence — on the project's website. We have published the guidebook in Basque as well, though this guide focuses solely on the training model at UPV/EHU. Both publications will be published in print as a co-edition by the publishing houses at both universities.

Lastly, the project has allowed us to collaborate with other agents from within and outside the university. We have established these links in two different ways: on one hand, via the meetings we organised to present the project and evaluate the first version of our proposal; on the other, via participating in the process of remaking the UPV/EHU protocol in cases of violence against women, which is currently ongoing. Since June 2017, at the initiative of the university's Equality Office, we have been taking part in a working group which includes university lecturers and staff, union representatives and groups and initiatives working from a feminist standpoint, both from inside and outside the university. The group has already carried out a study and listened to around 300 people (students, lecturers, and staff); and, following evidence gathering, is currently working on the text for strategies that will extend the protocol.

## Recommendations:

• It is essential to modify the institutional view on sexual violence in universities. The current paradigm, one in which students have a problem and the institution manages it (via specific structures or staff workers), is no longer adequate. We must therefore institute a paradigm based on a broader perspective; this means paying attention to diverse forms of violence and bearing in mind the structural elements at work in them: gender, sexual orientation, class, race, and finally the institution of the university itself, with its particular structure and hierarchy.

• We must also shift from an assistance-based focus to one based on open and participatory processes, which will get different sectors of the universities involved in dynamics of questioning and empowerment. This kind of approach will most likely put into question the institution and structure of the university itself; far from avoiding these discussions, we must meet them head on and come to terms with their possible contradictions.

• There is an obvious need for non-hierarchical points of contact between the different sectors that make up the university community, and we must start encouraging their creation. However, it is important to establish listening processes and entry points for complaints of sexual violence that are responsive to the different backgrounds of individuals and groups in the university. We need safe spaces in which to talk about our experiences, and it is of great importance that we understand that what this varies from one person to another: we will need safe spaces for women, for LGBTQI people, etc., as well as spaces for convergence. Likewise, we cannot ignore established hierarchies, and we must be aware of their potential impact on how instances of sexual violence are communicated, received, and acted on.

• The listening spaces in which to relay instances of sexual violence safely and at ease necessarily require deconstructing the university's bureaucratic spaces, and creating new spaces which feel less distant, ineffective, or foreign to students and staff (common complaints, according to both our survey and other forms of feedback). However, these listening and information entry points must be part of a comprehensive, recognisable, and coordinated set of care service procedures, and they must enable the gathering of data in a way that has not yet been attempted.

• The care procedures in cases of sexual violence should not focus on formal complaints. It is precisely this obsession over formal complaints and their verification process, inherited from the criminal justice approach to sexual violence, what prevents care services from being effective and avoiding secondary victimisation. To clearly separate complaints from formal reports could be a working formula to ensure that all people receive care from the moment they seek out support from a listening point. Formal reports could instead be suggested as one among a range of options, not a prerequisite for the provision of care.

• Resources should receive adequate funding, not just be the case of care resources, but also those focused on prevention. Additionally, it is essential for people staffing these resources to have appropriate training and to be correctly supervised and monitored. Likewise, with regards to responsible referrals, it is imperative to establish coordination between the university and outside agents and groups, at both the institutional and grassroots level. This would mean including women's social centres, care centres, feminist collectives, empowerment and self-defence groups.

• It is important to encourage structural changes that will support these processes. The university's Equality Office and the Equality Commissions at each UPV/EHU school are an example of this. Furthermore, these commissions need both sufficient funding and the capacity for decision-making and intervention.

• Concerning action protocols and other regulatory measures, it is indispensable to move on from a management model of sexual violence to one that combines the need to attend to the specific needs of individuals with an impulse towards participatory processes pushing for social transformation. Any proposals must therefore include detailed, well-funded preventative and awareness-raising measures, and move beyond a purely criminal justice and punitive approach. Producing protocols in a participatory and inclusive manner is the best way to ensure that the proposed measures make sense and are applicable to the different sectors of the university community (students, lecturers, staff, subcontracted workers, etc.). Finally, these protocols must arise from a motivation towards change, and not be imposed simply due to the legal requirements and dicates governing the management of the university; they should be, in themselves, tools for change.

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