‘WORLD CAFE’. Who are the professionals working with migrants?
The **World Café activity** is a collaborative discussion methodology aimed at analyzing and improving the skills and roles of professionals working with migrants. Its main objectives include exchanging ideas and experiences, assessing tools and procedures, improving support services, and defining essential competencies for each professional role. Understanding the roles and competencies of professionals working with migrants is essential for ensuring effective and coordinated support services. Migrants often face complex challenges, including legal, cultural, linguistic, psychological, and health-related issues, which require specialized and interdisciplinary assistance. By clearly defining the responsibilities and skills of each professional, such as cultural mediators, legal operators, healthcare workers, and language teachers, it becomes easier to create a structured and efficient support system. This clarity helps avoid gaps or overlaps in services, enhances collaboration among professionals, and ensures that migrants receive the most appropriate guidance and assistance. Moreover, a well-defined framework allows for continuous improvement, enabling professionals to develop new skills and adapt to evolving needs. Understanding these roles also fosters mutual recognition and respect among team members, creating a more inclusive and effective working environment. Ultimately, strengthening the expertise and coordination of professionals working with migrants leads to better integration processes, improved well-being for migrants, and a more cohesive society.
Action objective and results
• The discussion tables pursue the objective of carrying out interdisciplinary research and in-depth analysis of the figures useful for the service offered to immigrant people with the aim of guaranteeing a coherent service and improving the support project. • From the group discussion, the expected result would be to agree if there were any changes to be made with respect to the work, check whether the tools were suitable, evaluate one's expectations and finally coordinate the best working procedure together. • *A division into general and specific objectives can be used:* - comparing ideas - check tools used - evaluation of personal expectations - procedural hypothesis
Brief description / scope of activity / tools / practices
• The activity consists of meeting at 3 tables of 5 people each and thinking about what skills each professional who works with immigrants should have. It can be used to improve the reception process with the tools available. People give their opinions or ideas regarding the tasks of professionals. Participants will take turns sitting at each table so as to allow a rotation and elaboration of each profession. With the exception of one participant who will have to remain at the same table because he will have the task of taking note of what is said at each table to give back to the new participants what has already been said and allow the latter to give their own idea. • This allows you to analyze the skills of professionals and improve them so you know which direction you are going. The comparison is an excellent practice to bring out the simplest elements that could be hidden.
Information about the authors

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Resources

- 1 hour, 6 professionals' descriptions, 15/20 participants approx, one big room or separate small rooms to host the tables, chairs and tables, flipcharts, markers. If you wish, it would be nice to add some coffee, tea, refreshments and biscuits or similar.

Plan and timetable (if applicable)

1. prepare the 3 or 4 tables with 1 flipchart (or white paper tablecloth) and some coloured markers
2. divide participants into 3 or 4 small groups of 4/5 people each
3. choose a Host for each table: a person who will remain at the table when others leave and welcome travellers from other tables for the next round of conversation. He/she will also have the task to briefly share key insights from the prior conversation so others can link and build using ideas from their respective tables.
4. each table will have a discussion topic: in our case, it was 2 professionals working with migrants to be discovered (cultural mediator, reception worker, integration worker, healthcare/sanitary worker, legal operator, language teachers)
5. explain the rules of the World Cafè methodology: you have time (10 minutes for each table/conversation) to be respected; when the time is over you need to change the table; every opinion, idea and contribution is the right one!
6. People start the discussions at each table, writing the hints/keywords in the flipchart/tablecloths. After 10 minutes the facilitator rings a bell and the groups change the table. The round ends when all the groups attended to all the tables.
7. in plenary each host presents what was the discussion about and the results in his/her table
8. the facilitator could add comments and, in our case, give a definition of the professionals working with migrants

Methodology and references (background)

- The **World Café methodology** is a structured conversational process designed to facilitate open and creative dialogue in small, rotating groups. It was developed in **1995** by **Juanita Brown and David Isaacs** in the United States. The method emerged organically when they hosted a gathering at their home and, due to unexpected rain, set up small discussion tables with paper tablecloths where guests could jot down ideas. This spontaneous format inspired the structured approach that became the World Café.

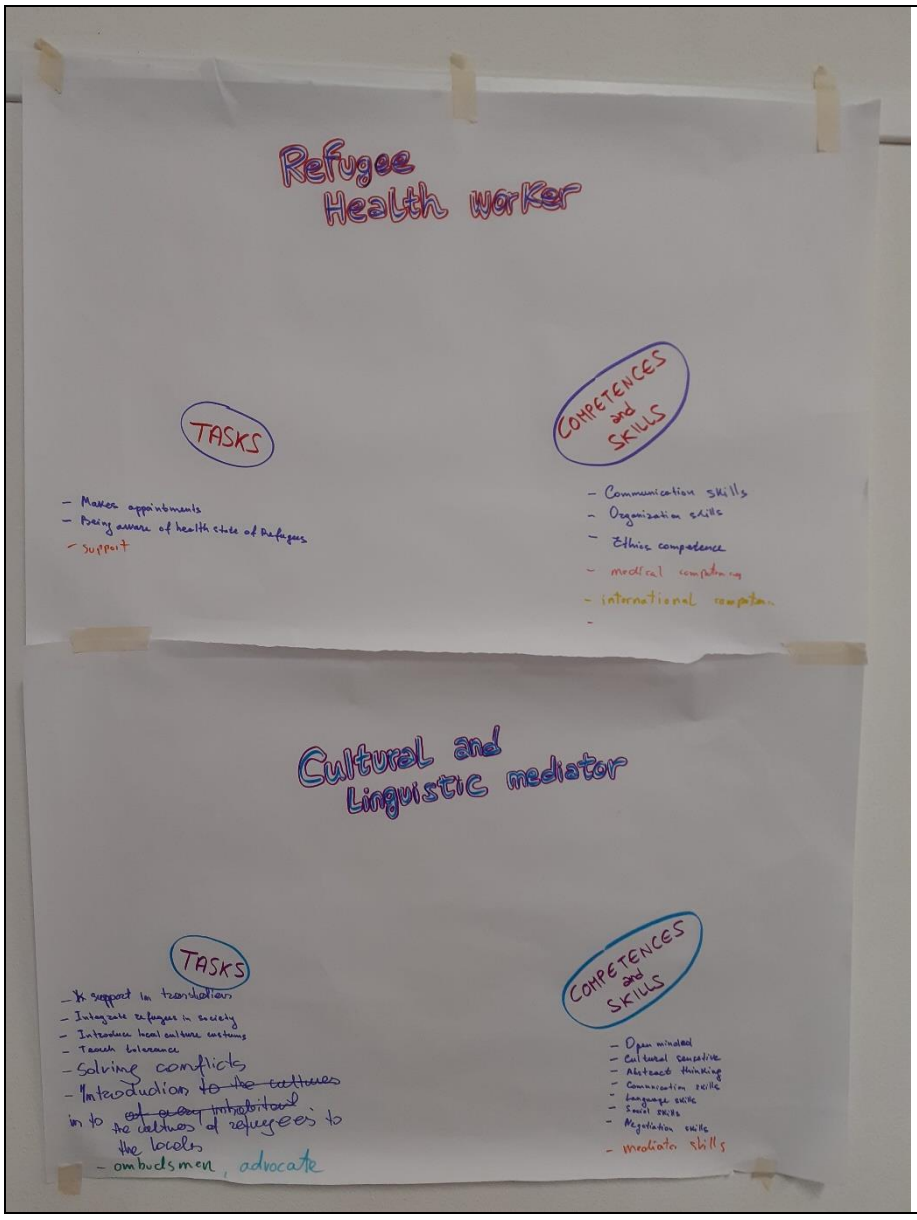
- The methodology is based on principles of **collaborative dialogue, active listening, and knowledge sharing**. Participants engage in conversations at small tables, discussing a set topic for a limited time before rotating to different tables. A "table host" remains to summarize key points for new participants, ensuring continuity. At the end of the rotations, the insights from all discussions are synthesized in a plenary session.
- The World Café has since been widely adopted in various fields, including business, education, community development, and policy-making, as a tool to **encourage collective intelligence, innovation, and inclusive decision-making**.

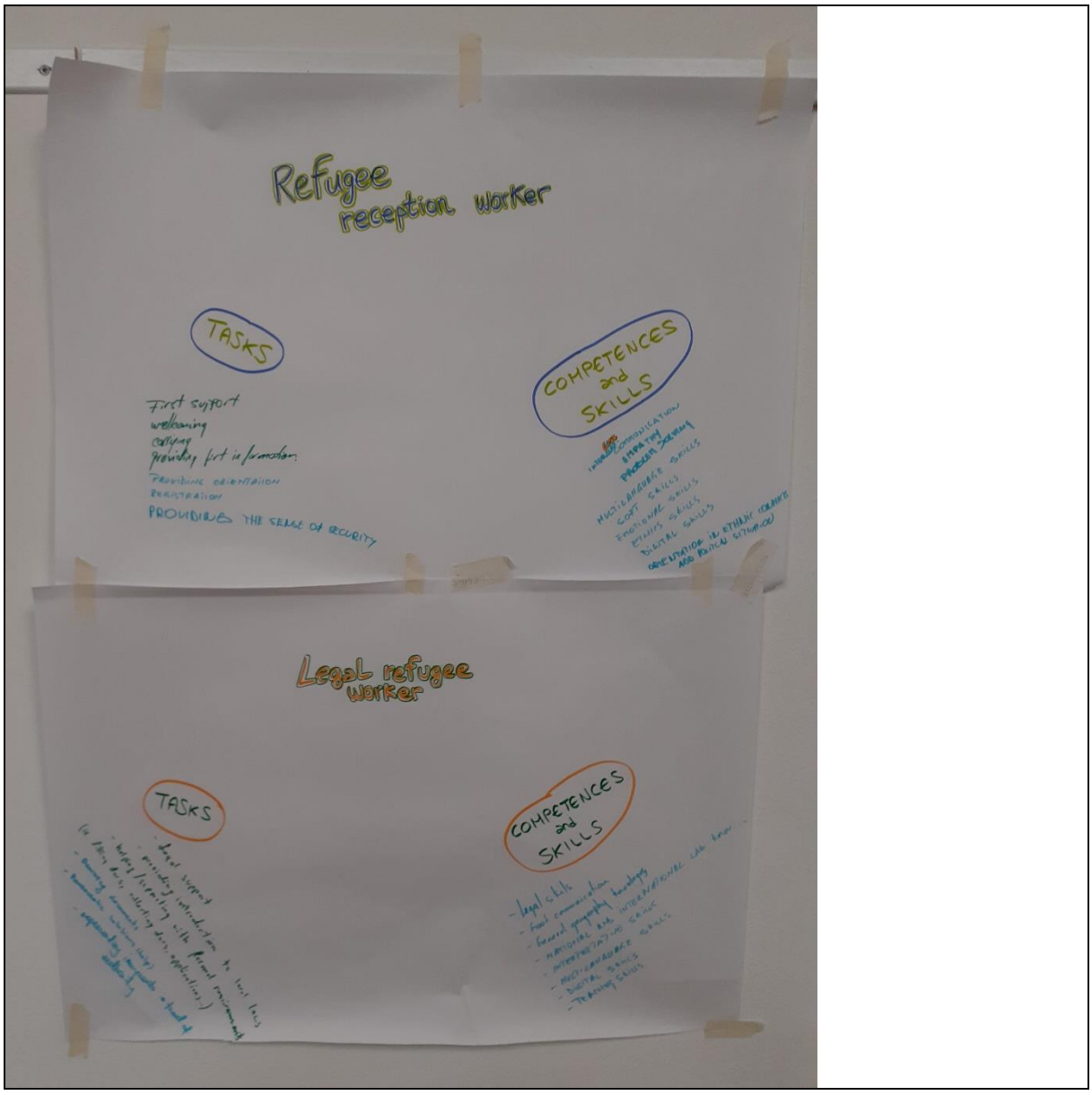
Budget (if applicable)

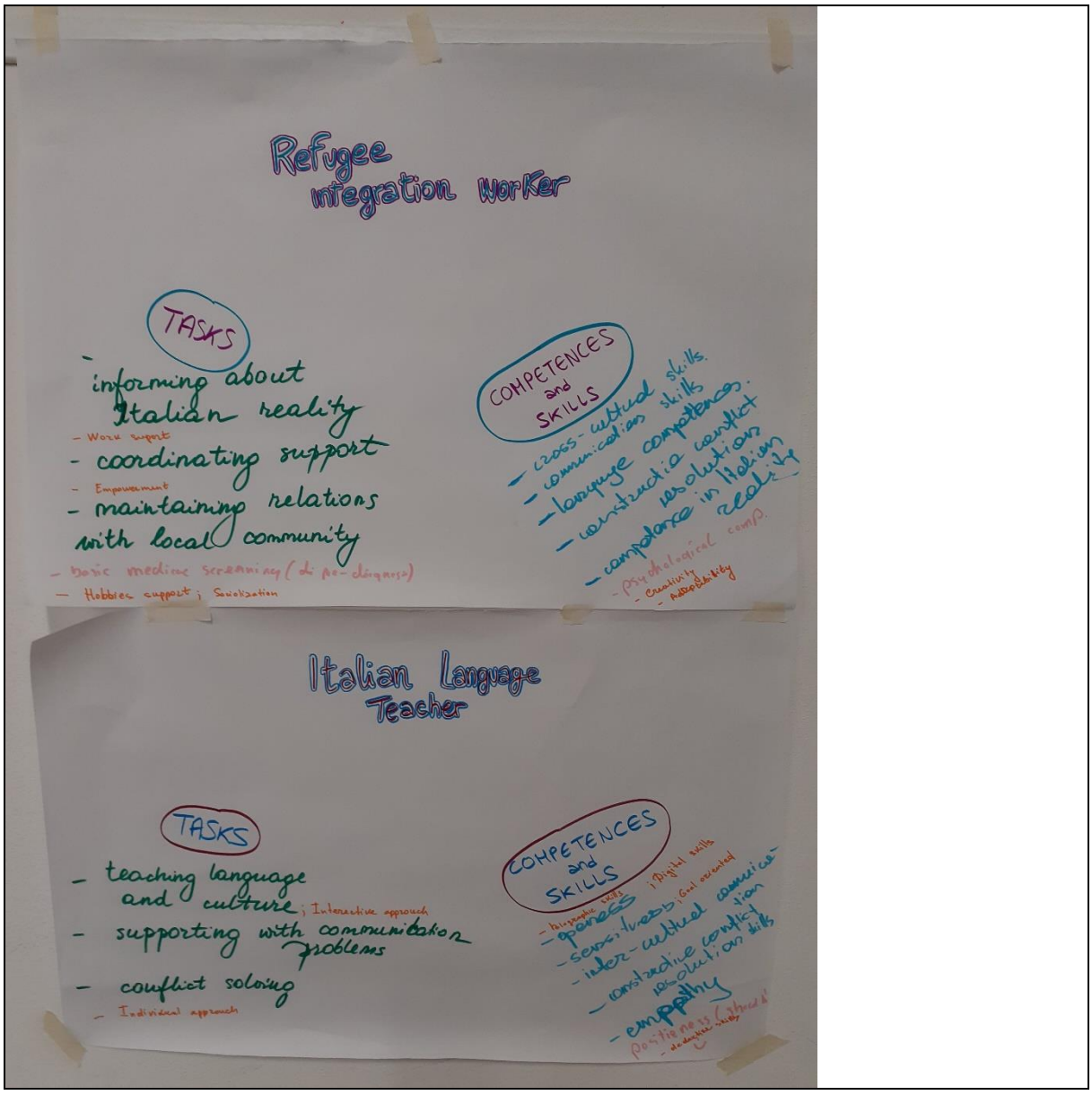
- Stationary: flipchart or tablecloths, markers (approx. 15 euros)

Success criteria
• **Oral feedback from participants and group reflection**: At the end of the session, a brief plenary discussion can be held where participants share their main takeaways and thoughts on the experience. Facilitator can ask guiding questions like *What did you find most valuable?*, *What could be improved?*, or *How do you see this impacting your work?* • **Evaluation questionnaire** at the end of the activity, available in both written format or through an online tool (e.g., Google Forms), featuring multiple-choice questions to assess overall satisfaction, clarity of discussions, relevance of topics, and the perceived impact of the session.
Team
• A facilitator and, if possible, the professionals working with migrants who can better explain their tasks and roles: The cultural mediator is a figure who has excellent linguistic skills and understanding of the person's cultural background and knows the best way to approach them. The role of the cultural mediator is to know how to communicate fluidly through socio-cultural linguistic mediation and to promote the integration and relational processes of the person, bringing together the culture of belonging and that of the host country. Reception and integration operators have practical, bureaucratic and sometimes psychological support skills to restore the values of autonomy. They have the role of creating opportunities in which the person can access tools to become autonomous and have a practical support role. The legal operator must have the skills to be able to benefit from the rights linked to the status recognized to the person and capable of supporting immigrant people on a legal level. He/She follows the entire reception process of the immigrant person and being able to give correct indications. The healthcare worker has therapeutic support skills and is able to observe to detect needs. It would be useful for this figure to have an anthropological background so as to be able to interface with empathy. The treatment of some health situations have a strong cultural component. Teachers have educational and motivational skills, they must know how to explain and create a serene climate. They have group management skills and know how to be involved.
Communications and Reporting
• Flipcharts with description of tasks and competencies of the professionals working with migrants
Attachments

VIETATO FUMARE


Refugee Health worker
TASKS
- Makes appointments
- Being aware of health state of Refugees
- Support
COMPETENCES and SKILLS
- Communication skills
- Organization skills
- Ethics competence
- medical competencing
- international competen...
Cultural and Linguistic mediator
TASKS
- to support in translations
- Integrate refugees in society
- Introduce local culture customs
- Teach tolerance
- Solving conflicts
- Introduction to ~~the cultures~~ in to ~~of other~~ the cultures of refugees to the locals
- ombudsmen, advocate
COMPETENCES and SKILLS
- Open minded
- Cultural sensitive
- Abstract thinking
- Communication skills
- language skills
- Social skills
- Negotiation skills
- mediator skills


Refugee reception worker
TASKS
First support
welcoming
carrying
providing first information
PROVIDING THE SENSE OF SECURITY
COMPETENCES and SKILLS
Legal refugee worker
TASKS
COMPETENCES and SKILLS


Refugee integration worker
TASKS
- informing about Italian reality
- coordinating support
- maintaining relations with local community
COMPETENCES and SKILLS
Italian Language Teacher
TASKS
- teaching language and culture
- supporting with communication problems
- conflict solving
COMPETENCES and SKILLS