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Does decentralization impact women's access to justice? The implementation of the Spanish 2017 State Pact to combat gender violence: comparative case study of Castilla-La Mancha and Castilla y León

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Thesis

Does decentralization impact women's access to justice?

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1. Introduction

Access to justice is defined by the ability of people to access the judicial system and recognize it as an effective mechanism to resolve conflict and obtain retribution for damages suffered. As Rudman (2018) states, access to justice is multidimensional as it includes ‘justiciability, availability, accessibility, good quality and accountability of justice system, and provision of remedies for victims’(p.320). Even if access to justice is a fundamental right, scholars have investigated how the most vulnerable part of the population face significant barriers in that regard due to their socioeconomic situation (Corradi, 2011). Their inability to access judicial services creates the impression that the state is unable to supply to their demands and consequently hampers their trust in public institutions (Rothstein, 2009).

Women in particular represent a portion of the population that struggles accessing justice. First of all, gender roles that attribute to them the role of caregiver render them more dependent on their counterparts and thus more vulnerable socioeconomically (Hatipoğlu-Aydın & Aydın, 2016). Additionally, when they reach out to courtrooms women are often faced with gender stereotypes that work against them, especially in the context of gender violence (Badesch, 2018).

Cases of gender violence particularly exemplify the range of barriers women have to face to obtain justice. Gender violence can be divided in two more common contexts: domestic violence and sexual assault outside of the home context. Only in the last couple of decades domestic violence has moved from a private issue to being perceived as a public one (Maranlou, 2014). Nonetheless, incomprehension around this phenomenon and its psychological and economic ramification, as well as the traditional conception of it as a family issue, traps victims in a cycle of abuse. On the other hand, cases of sexual assault are often received with victim-blaming, accusing the women involved of having in some sort provoked the assault, which is still widespread in the way they are treated by the state (Mosher, 2015).

In order to combat gender violence, conventions and laws have been established at the international level to protect women. The two most influential ones are the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) of 1979 and the Convention of Istanbul of 2011 that have established a blueprint defining gender violence, its dynamics, and how it needs to be tackled. The countries that constitute their signatories commit

to adapting them at the national level, however are still important gaps present in their implementation (Chaney, 2016).

In fact, even if international laws are fundamental, they do not ensure that women will be able to benefit from those rights. In the context of gender violence women have to face socioeconomic barriers as well as gender biases present in the institutions that are reproduced by public officers. In situations of abuse and violence victims have to go through the police, the forensic teams and the lawyers for their case to be assessed and collect the necessary evidence. The ability of these three state services to collaborate and assist women with their need represents an important step to ensure that the women are subsequently able to obtain justice and retribution. The responsibility for administering and coordination these services is however often relegated to decentralized local services.

Decentralization should theoretically be beneficial to citizens as it is closer to them and to their needs. On the other hand, as institutions and state services become embedded in multilevel governance there is a less clear cut with responsibilities (León, 2010). In case of shortcomings on behalf of the local system, multilevel governance offers a fertile ground for blame-shifting, leaving citizens unable to access rights that should be guaranteed to them as well as unsure on who to hold accountable.

This thesis therefore explored whether there is a casual relationship between decentralization and women's access to justice. As the dependent variable is access to justice, in order for the units to be comparable they need to have the same legal system and thus belong to the same country. This thesis employs a most similar systems design where units share similar values except for the independent variable which is defined by decentralized tendencies. The research design therefore compares two units within one country and explores the extent to which they have followed central guidelines to combat gender violence and the potential impact on the victims' ability to access justice.

Spain is a country that fits both parameters as it has a centralized government but autonomous communities that have their own regional services and thus freedom in implementation. Additionally, Spain focused on combating gender violence through law of 2004 as well as the State Pact of 2017 that engages the whole country, regardless of political orientations, to work against gender violence. Within Spain the thesis compares two autonomous communities:

Castilla-La Mancha and Castilla y León. In order to ensure that the comparable difference is limited to the independent variable both regions have to be of similar sizes, population and overall development. The main variation in this context is therefore dictated by their level of decentralization. While both regions benefit from the status of autonomy, Castilla-La Mancha, presents more decentralized tendencies than Castilla y León. The level of centralization and decentralization is based on the extent to which the two regions adhere to national guidelines as opposed to preferring a more independent approach.

In order to compare the two units, this thesis analyses analyse the 10 objectives delineated in the State Pact to combat gender violence of 2017 as the variables of centralization and the reports of Castilla-La Mancha and Castilla y León for the years 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 will showcase the extent to which these two communities tried to reach these ten objectives as opposed to more independent(decentralized) interests. The results will then be compared to the judicial data on gender violence of the two regions regarding complaints received, number of prosecutions and final convictions between 2017, the establishment of the State Pact, and 2021. This comparison aims to investigate which community was able to provide a higher quality of justice for women victim of gender violence, the one that followed the central guideline or the one that preferred a more independent approach.

Academic Relevance

This thesis contributes to the scholarship of women's access to justice by investigating the potential impact of administrative structures. The current scholarship focuses predominantly on the role of gender biases and how they are reproduced by police officers, lawyers and judges, thus elements that are directly obstructing women's rights (Badesch, 2018). This thesis instead wanted to focus on administrative elements that could indirectly represent a barrier to women's access to justice, thus discriminate not based on ideological intentions but rather due to lack of efficiency. Decentralization was an interesting variable to include in the study due to the academic debate regarding its legitimacy and effectiveness (Bannink and Ossewaarde, 2012). This thesis wanted to investigate whether the assumptions of a bottom-up system closer to the citizens would also favour the implementation of women's rights or whether it would work against it, hampering internationally established laws. It therefore enriches the academic debate by applying a public administration perspective to a scholarship derived from law and gender studies with the aim to uncover indirect forms of discrimination.

Social Relevance

The judicial system is the pillar of fairness and accountability in the nation state and women's inability to access it to the same extent as men highlights a more hidden form of inequality that is however embedded with the others, notably socioeconomic dependency. It proves that while laws are necessary to ensure women's rights, formal equality does not correspond to effective equality as discrimination remains present in various aspects of society. This research contributes to the investigation of barriers as well as good practices that can foster a more effective response to women's access to justice while taking into consideration the strength and weaknesses offered by a centralized and decentralized approach.

Findings

This thesis concludes that decentralization does not hamper women's access to justice overall as the two regions present similar results, however it does influence their strengths and weaknesses in particular aspects. The decentralized region, Castilla-La Mancha, is more effective in providing awareness to the most vulnerable part of the population and consequently women in this region feel more confident directly reaching out to state services to obtain justice. On the other hand, the centralized region, Castilla y Leon, has made more efforts to increase institutional cooperation and training amongst officers, resulting in a higher percentage of prosecutions following complaints. Finally, while the decentralized region has obtained a higher percentage of convictions, this does not seem to be linked to its bottom-up approach but rather to its increased use of specialized courts for violence against women as opposed to the centralized region that favours criminal ones. This thesis thus disproved decentralization as an element hampering women's rights. The specialized courts of violence against women have not yet been discussed in the literature, opening the case for further investigation. The combination of civil and criminal proceedings they provide as well as trained professionals looks like a promising mechanism to ensure women's access to justice, even if limited to domestic violence.

Limitations

This study has three main limitations: the restricted number of regions analysed, the concept of decentralization used and the reliability of data on gender violence.

This study takes into consideration only two regions, Castilla-La Mancha and Castilla y Leon, as they were the ones that better fit the researched profile of similar size, quality of government and development index. The relationship between efforts represented by the projects for the

State Pact and the effectiveness of women's access to justice might therefore result differently in other Spanish regions.

Secondly, as the two units needed to belong to the same legal system to be comparable, the definition of centralization was based on the centralized approach to implement national guidelines, using a similar logic to the implementation of EU directives that also tend to result in differences of prioritizes and effectiveness in different member states (Steunenberg, 2007). The difference of centralization defined as an approach rather than an administrative system needs to be accounted for when analysing this research.

Finally, while gender violence has increasingly been investigated in the last decades, especially in Spain, it remains a social issue difficult to document as there remains a number of women that do not come through afraid of facing society's judgement, especially in cases of sexual assault. The number of complaints reported do not therefore represent a full picture of the cases of gender violence per autonomous community. Moreover, due to the design of the Spanish framework for gender violence, the results account more for situations of domestic violence than sexual assault outside of the home context.

2. Theoretical Framework

Quality of government is an aspect of the scholarship on comparative public management that focuses on how state services operate and how effective they are perceived by the population (Rothstein & Teorell, 2008). The main indicators of quality of government are impartiality and government output, thus fairness and effectiveness of state services. Impartiality directly relates to women's access to justice as an impartial government should allow citizens to access state resources regardless of their demographic background (Suzuki & Demircioglu, 2021). On the other hand, the ability of the state to make its citizens feel supported, thus its effectiveness, importantly influences its legitimacy (Rothstein, 2009).

2.1 Access to justice

The literature focusing on access to justice often uses cases studies of developing countries in Africa as justice is considered a key aspect of state building (Jackson, 2011). Justice and the respect of the rule of law in fact represent a key indicator of a state's quality of government, showcasing how the population's unequal access to it is problematic (Rudman, 2018). Scholars have investigated at length how the most vulnerable part of the population struggles to access

that right based on two main socioeconomic barriers: lack of familiarity with the judicial system and absence of financial means to sustain legal proceedings (Jackson, 2011). This phenomenon represents an additional barrier for vulnerable communities as they face the shortcoming of state services, hampering their trust the government.

2.1.1. Women's Access to Justice

Women face socioeconomic barriers as well as specific biases. In fact, unequal gender relations tend to render women dependent on their male counterparts and thus more vulnerable socioeconomically. Additionally, women are often perceived through biases and stereotypes that are particularly evident in cases of gender violence (Badesch, 2018).

Socioeconomic barriers

First, social norms that expect women to stay at home with the children render them economically dependent on their male counterparts as well as socially isolated, therefore more vulnerable to abuse (Hatipoğlu-Aydın & Aydın, 2016). This division is exemplified by the gender gap, that illustrates how women globally earn less than their counterparts as they often also have to take the role of carers, either of children or of other dependent members of the family (Abendroth et al., 2017). This dependency makes it more difficult for them to decide to leave a violent situation, and when they do, they are faced with a series of barriers. First, they often do not know which services are available to them and lack the economic means to reach out for lawyers (Kamarudin, 2017). Additionally, if there are children involved they worry about them and thus leaving a situation of stability for a more precarious and unstable one (Vázquez- Portomeñe Seijas, 2017). This illustrates how gender inequality contributes on rendering the justice system less accessible for women. Moreover, as they decide to leave the abusive situation, they often find themselves in a context of precarity where state support becomes fundamental.

Gender biases

The attitudes that professional show towards women seeking justice importantly impacts women's trust in the institutions (Corradi, 2011). In cases of gender violence, before a case reaches the court it usually goes through the police, where a complaint is made, afterwards to the medical forensic, to provide proof of wounds and their origins, and finally to the judicial system where a case is built. However, professionals in the sector of the police, medical forensic

and judicial system often showcase biases that hinder women's trust in the state, doubting their claims will be heard and that they will be able to obtain justice (Caltekin, 2022).

Domestic Violence

Domestic violence has always been treated as a private matter and it is only in the last decades that the state has decided to intervene and recognise it as a public issue (Dawson, 2016). Consequently, a tendency has remained in society, in some contexts more than others, to seek reconciliation rather than divorce, therefore deciding to leave women in abusive situations (Corradi, 2011). This is done either for religious reasons that expect a family to stay united, or for practical ones, as without the support of their male counterparts, women would struggle to sustain the family.

Sexual Assault

In cases of sexual assault women face different sorts of stereotypes by the officers that are supposed to help them. In fact, there is still a tendency to victim-blame, thus judge the behaviour or clothes of the victim to seek to justify the event instead of accusing the aggressor (Jagannath, 2011). This behaviour is faced by victims at all of the stages of their quest for justice and has been called a 'revictimization' as it forces them to relive and describe their assault various times (in the police station, forensic control, court) while answering questions that try to put the blame on them (Amenstia Internacional, 2018). These exchanges give women the impression that the state is hostile towards them and unwilling to help them obtain justice.

Administrative barriers

Apart from socioeconomic vulnerabilities and gender biases, an important part of the scholarships reports how women that have started the proceedings are often discouraged by their length and complexity (Hatipoğlu-Aydın & Aydın, 2016). Even with the support of free legal aid, proceedings are taxing on women's the quality of life. This is further reinforced in cases of domestic violence where there is an overlap of criminal and civil proceedings linked to the violent crimes and the consequences such as divorce, division of property and care of the children involved (Mosher, 2015). Without guidance women feel overwhelmed by the intricacies of this unfamiliar system and tend to drop the charges (Boira et al., 2013). This showcases how the state instead of a facilitator becomes an additional barrier to women's access to justice.

Vicious Cycle – Importance of convictions

The combination of gender biases as well as socioeconomic and administrative barriers discourages women from seeking help as they do not believe the state is able to provide them with the necessary support. This strengthens the idea that it is useless to embark in the justice process in the first place as it is too complicated to lead to justice, emphasizing the perception that these crimes can be committed without consequences and thus creating a vicious cycle.. Chopra and Isser (2012) as well as Rudman (2018) highlight the importance of implementing court decisions since lack of enforcement alimnts the vicious cycle that favours the abusers. This showcases the importance of improving the state's effectiveness and thus trust in the institutions that otherwise contributes to the gap between the laws and their implementation. Therefore, the inability to pursue justice hampers the state's quality of governance, subsequently hindering its legitimacy.

Tools to ensure women's rights

In order to combat gender inequality and violence against women international movement have established standards and courses of action. The most relevant are explore in the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) of 1979 and the Istanbul Convention of 2011, establishing guidelines all the countries should follow to combat gender inequalities. While international agreements are important as they set benchmarks to follow and thus allow to evaluate the development of women's rights, Chaney (2016) observers how they fall short in implementation. In fact, while the countries agree to the targets, the anarchical nature of the international system makes it impossible to enforce these measures. They are nonetheless essential to international and local NGOs to be able to legitimately advance women's rights at the local level by educating on the matter, provide free legal aid and support centres.

2.2 Decentralization

An important index of quality of government is the ability of state services to provide citizens with the necessary resources (Kumlin, 2021). This element is fundamental in establishing a relationship of trust between government and citizens, and thus increase the formers legitimacy. Modes of administrative centralization and decentralization have long been part of the academic debate regarding their effectiveness. The traditional assumption, present as well through the

Weberian bureaucratic model, is that the top-down approach is the one necessary to achieve uniform results (Rothstein & Teorell, 2008). It is performed through a centralized system of strict rules.

However centralization does not necessarily mean uniformity, as proved by the work of Charron et al. (2014). The more centralized states have less consistency in their quality of government as opposed to more decentralized states that managed to score more similar and higher results. This research seems to back the opposing assumption, therefore that a bottom-up approach is more efficient as it is able to adapt policy goals to the local circumstances. As León (2012) states, local services are closer to the citizens, therefore favouring a decentralized approach as the one able to provide a better quality of government.

Bannink and Ossewaarde (2012) however argue that with decentralization comes another issue: responsibility. The creation of various layers of governance that decentralization automatically entails blurs the lines of roles and responsibilities. This hampers the efficiency of the system and creates a phenomenon of blame shifting. In fact, when there is not a clear division of labour it is difficult to hold each component accountable, especially for voters. León (2012) illustrates how citizens struggle to adequately recognize which institutions they have to hold accountable for different services, especially in times of reform.

This leads to decentralization creating situations of 'territorial inequalities' (Arlotti & Aguilar-Hendrickson, 2018, p.652). While the central government can pass a law or a policy, in a decentralize system it is up to the single units to implement it based on how they see fit. As they are independent in the implementation department, the centralized authority struggles to hold them accountable for their shortcomings (Arlotti & Aguilar-Hendrickson, 2018). This creates situations where across a regional system there can be inconsistencies in the quality of services and the central government cannot intervene. The citizens can therefore be victim of territorial inequalities, as even if formally at the national level a certain right should be protected, in the practical sense they are dependent on their regions that will shift the blame to the policy itself (Bannink & Ossewaarde, 2012). This leaves citizens in a vulnerable situation as the layers of Multilevel Governance make it difficult to understand who to hold accountable. The nature of a decentralized system allows it to be closer to the citizens thus more responsive to their demands while at the same time, the lack of an enforcing central authority can leave them more exposed to regional inefficiencies that hamper their national rights.

2.3 Link between women's access to justice and decentralization

As argued by the literature, decentralization can lead to differences in local coordination and thus territorial inequality regarding access to state services, including access to justice. In the context of women's access to justice, another layer is added linked to the different approaches to women's rights and methods to tackle gender-based violence. Therefore, women's access to justice is doubly impacted by decentralization, on one hand has a state service and on the other as a gender-specific issue. While the effect of decentralization of administrative resources on women's access to justice has not yet been studied, there have been reports on women's access to justice in pluralistic legal systems that showcase an interaction between decentralization and women's rights.

Pluralistic Legal Systems

Pluralistic systems are mostly present in countries of the Global South where formal institutions are complemented by informal justice practices, present either as older forms of community solutions or to fill a justice gap, as the state might not have the capacity to intervene in these regions (Chopra & Isser, 2012). The evaluation of the impacts of these unofficial, and often unsupervised, systems on women is ambivalent. On one hand, they are considered inconsistent and often opposed to women's rights as they tend to advance patriarchal ideas and do not engage with international human rights standards (Chopra & Isser, 2012). They are criticised by international observers as they lack the standards of impartiality and balance of power considered the pillars of the rule of law, essential to administer justice. On the other hand, they have helped women emancipate through 'forum shop', therefore providing the option to choose which justice system will be more favourable to their cause (Chopra & Isser, 2012, p.350) . Therefore, even if lacking the imprint of international human standards, in certain instances women have favoured informal justice institutions as they were able to better respond to their needs.

These findings oppose two different visions of implementing rights, one from the top-down through international and national agreements, while the other is bottom-up through community practices. The role pluralistic legal systems play in women's access to justice bring about an interesting question regarding the administration of legal proceedings. In fact, while international agreements are considered the guiding principle to ensure human rights are

respected in the global stage, bottom-up approaches can be considered closer to the people and thus more legitimate, but could they be considered more effective in ensuring rights.

Applying this scholarship to a decentralized administrative system, if women's equality is ensured by top-down law, the decentralized implementation can be considered a risk. In fact, while laws ensure formal equality, difference in implementation does not ensure that the structural challenges will be equally tackled in different governments. It can also depend on the resources of the community as well as the willingness to solve the issue and listen to local concerns (León, 2012). In fact, decentralized governments are supposed to be closer to the people's concerns and thus more attentive to their needs, however their independent nature tends to lack the systematic approach that a centralized structure provides, potentially leading them to further discriminate vulnerable parts of the populations such as women, youth and immigrants. A decentralized systems could therefore hamper the rights that women are entitled to at the national level due to poor implementation or interest.

Rudman (2018), while not discarding decentralized implementation, agrees on the need of a centralized and specialized entity to ensure the protection of women's rights. In fact, she argues that the lack of a specialized African committee on women's rights hampers gender equality. While a Women's Right Protocol has been agreed by the African Union in 2003, the lack of a specialized committee to assist with the implementation and enforcement of it render the efforts null, minimized by the other issues that the African Court prioritizes. The same logic could be applied to decentralized units, that while they have the tools to ensure women's rights, they are free to prioritize other goals.

2.4 Puzzle

These discussions describe a contrasting portrait of top-down compared to bottom-up approaches, especially regarding women's access to justice. In fact, while legal pluralism has at times proved an advantage to women due to its ability to forum shop, it has at the same time been considered inconsistent, in line with the scholarship on decentralization. While decentralization can bring advantages, such as closeness to the people's needs, it also creates a devolution of responsibility and an unclear system that ultimately hurts the local citizens, victim of territorial inequalities.

This thesis will therefore analyse two hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Decentralization increases women's access to justice as it offers public services more tailored to the population's needs.

Hypothesis 2: Decentralization hampers women's access to justice as it hinders the top-down implementation of national laws and policies.

3. Methodology

3.1 Design and method

Within-Case Study

The research method will consist of a comparative within-case study. In order to assess whether there is a casual relationship between decentralization and women's access to justice the study needs to compare two units, one following centralized tendency while the other has a more independent approach. The element of justice implies that in order for the units to be comparable they need to belong to the same legal system thus country.

MSSD I

The design used will therefore be a Most Similar System Design I that implies the units have to be comparable in general aspects and only differ on one (Toshkov, 2016). To be able to compare the impact of the projects implemented to combat gender violence, the units need to reflect similar levels in size, population, quality of government and social development index.

	Castilla y León	Castilla-La Mancha
Size	<i>Similar</i>	<i>Similar</i>
Population	<i>Similar</i>	<i>Similar</i>
Quality of government Index	<i>Similar</i>	<i>Similar</i>
Social Progress Index	<i>Similar</i>	<i>Similar</i>
Approach to combat gender violence	Centralized	Decentralized

Table 1

3.2 Operationalization

Decentralization

Since the units need to belong to the same legal system, the study has to compare different regions of the same country. Consequently, decentralization is not defined by the structure of the administrative system of each region but rather by their tendency to follow central guidelines based on the conceptual example of the implementation of EU directives.

As Steunenbergh (2007) illustrates, in order for the EU directives to be implemented they first need to be transposed into the national legal system of each member states which is done either in a literal or non-literal way. The first means that the member state transposes the directive as closely as possible to the original document, thus maintaining a similar meaning and modes of operationalization. On the other hand, in cases of non-literal transposition the wording and meaning of the directive is modified to fit other policy goals. After the transposition, the goals and operationalization of the directive can shift further based on the desires of the authorities in charge of implementation.

This thesis uses a similar framework to establish centralized versus decentralized tendencies. The centralized tendencies are defined by the unit that follows more closely national guidelines to combat gender violence. On the other hand, the decentralized unit puts less effort on centralized guidelines and prefers to pursue a more independent approach.

Centralized	Follows closely and systematically national guidelines to combat gender violence.
Decentralized	Demonstrates less effort in implementing national guidelines and prioritizes a more independent approach.

Table 2

Evaluating Women’s Access to Justice

In order to evaluate women’s access to justice this study formalized the three main barriers present in the literature and to each assigned the appropriate effort and effectiveness indicators. The effort indicators are based on the extent to which the autonomous communities worked towards fixing these barriers as they implemented the projects for the State Pact in 2018 and 2019. On the other hand, the efficiency indicators are based on data on gender violence regarding complaints received, how many led to prosecutions and finally convictions. The next section illustrates the connection between each barrier, effort and effectiveness indicator.

	A	B	C
Barriers to women's access to justice	<i>Knowledge of system and services available</i>	<i>Lack of clear and efficient procedures</i>	<i>Lack of socioeconomic means</i>
Effort Indicators	<i>Awareness and Prevention</i>	<i>Improvement of institutional response</i>	<i>Social Support</i>
Effectiveness Indicators	<i>Complaints</i>	<i>Percentage of people prosecuted</i>	<i>Percentage of convictions</i>

Table 3

A. *Knowledge of the system and services available*

The first barrier is women’s lack of familiarity with the system and services in place as it hinders their capacity to seek help (Corradi, 2011). The first step necessary to ensure women’s access to justice is thus ensure they are able to contact the relevant institutions and trust their ability to support them in situations of abuse.

In order to assess efforts to combat this barrier the thesis focuses on the awareness and prevention campaigns implemented by each autonomous communities as part of the State Pact in 2018 and 2019. As the research of Postigo Gómez et al. (2016) reports, they are useful tools to inform the population not only on the dynamics of gender violence, but also on the available resources to seek help and justice.

The effectiveness indicator will instead be based on the data regarding the complaints of gender violence received per autonomous community. However, as gender violence remains an invisible issue in the eyes of society as it is still tolerated in certain contexts and some women remain afraid to come forwards, the raw numbers of complaints do not represent a valid indicator (Menéndez Álvarez-Dardet et al., 2013). As the focus of the research is women’s access to justice, the indicator used is therefore the number of women that directly reached out to the police to file a complaint (Consejo General del Poder Judicial, 2021a). These percentages allow to assess in which region women have the available resources and feel more confident asking directly for the state’s help.

B. Lack of clear and efficient procedures

The second barrier to women's access to justice is the lack of clear and efficient procedures that leads to the inadequate handling of cases of gender violence. Within this category is included the lack of training of professional in the police, hospitals and judicial system that without clear guidance are unable to handle these cases with the necessary delicacy (Badesch, 2018). This represents the intermediate step of women's access to justice that is however fundamental to ensure that their claims are taken into consideration and the state is acting as an enabler of justice and not as a barrier.

The effort indicator is based on the extent to which autonomous communities focused on projects promoting interinstitutional cooperation as well as training of professionals to detect and appropriately intervene in cases of domestic violence. Based on the findings of Cruzat and Costa (2008) and Garcia Minguito et al. (2012) it is important that agents are instructed on the nature of gender violence to better understand the perspective of the women and provide the necessary help.

The effectiveness indicator is therefore based on the percentage of complaints that become legal prosecutions. Women are often discouraged to go through with their claims either by the system that appears complicated and intricate or by pressures received from the accused (Boira et al., 2013). The percentage of prosecutions represents therefore the concretisation of complaints and the extent to which the system and agents have made the women feel protected and confident in the justice system.

C. Lack of socioeconomic means

Finally, the third barrier to women's access to justice is the lack of socioeconomic means to persevere through the lengthy and demanding judicial proceedings. The scholarship on access to justice showcases how women are discouraged to go through with legal action due to the significant economic and social investment it represents (Corradi, 2011). Moreover, even as Spain provides free legal aid, Vázquez-Portomeñe Seijas (2017) argues that it is the fear of losing their current stability that influences women, even more if they have children. In those cases victims tend to appeal to the right to not testify, that however often leads to acquittals (Vázquez- Portomeñe Seijas, 2017).

The effort indicator is therefore based on the projects implemented by the autonomous communities to support women and their children's independence. These projects are focused on immediate social and economic support as well as return to autonomy by providing women with the skills and ability to find work.

Considering that the national survey on gender violence conducted in 2019 reported that most of the women that decided to pursue justice did it based on the need of longer-term state support that one can only obtain with a conviction, the efficiency indicator is based on the percentage of convictions (Ministerio de Igualdad, 2019). It establishes whether women are able to obtain justice as well as the subsequent compensation and assistance for the damage sustained.

3.3 Case Selection

This thesis focuses on the case study of Spain and more specifically compares two of its autonomous communities: Castilla-La Mancha and Castilla y León. Spain fits the profile of a decentralized country that has implemented efforts to combat gender violence and has available a rich set of data for violence against women per autonomous communities.

3.3.1. Spain

Spain- Decentralization

Spain is an interesting country in this regard due to its system of autonomous regions. In fact, while the country has a central government, the Statute of Autonomous Communities of 1978 recognised 17 Autonomous Communities and 2 Independent Cities (León, 2012). The statute guarantees them significant flexibility in the disposition of state services and therefore on the implementation of national laws and policies. The independent rights of the communities expanded over the years, especially in regions such as Catalonia and Basque Country where their strongly felt regional identities had been suppressed for decades by the centralized state (León, 2010). The decentralization of Spain is therefore tightly connected to its history and distinct political identities.

At the levels of political authority, the central government establishes laws and policies, however a large margin is left to the autonomous communities regarding their implementation due to structural differences. In fact, each community has established its own institutions and networks responsible for various services, meaning that top-down laws and policies must allow a degree of flexibility to render them transposable, similar to the EU directives.

Spain – Gender Violence

The Spanish State has recognised Gender Violence as a problem since 2003, when it started reporting the numbers of femicide, therefore women whose killing are motivated by their gender. Since 2003 the Spanish states has reported 1125 cases of femicide and in 2021 received 162.848 complaints of gender violence (Observatorio contra la violencia doméstica y de género, 2021).

The State is therefore a signatory of various international treaties and conventions, such as CEDAW and Istanbul. Moreover, it has established its own national laws such as the Organic Law 1/2004 on Integral Protection Measured against Gender Violence as well as additional laws tackling broader issue that incorporate gender violence, such as the Law 4/2015 on the Statute of Victims of Crime (Ministerio de la Presidencia, 2019a).

In 2017 the Spanish Parliament unanimously voted to establish the State Pact against gender violence, which declares that notwithstanding changes of the political parties in power, the state is engaged in combating gender violence. The pact delineated ten objectives that all autonomous communities must thrive to and yearly report on their progress (Ministerio de la Presidencia, 2019b). However, since the autonomous communities are the ones in charge of providing state support through the police, healthcare and social services, it is up to them to decide how to work towards these objectives, leading to different degrees of effort and implementation across the country.

Spain – Women's Access to Justice

Two large investigations conducted in Spain, one operated by Amnesty International in 2018 and the other by the Spanish Ministry of Equality in 2019, illustrate how Spanish women face the same barriers to justice presented in the literature. At the sociocultural level women report facing antagonising police officers, doctors and lawyers while reporting on cases of gender violence (Amenstia Internacional, 2018). The feeling of not being believed or adequately assisted created a sense of distrust in the institutions as well as a 'revictimization' (Amenstia Internacional, 2018, p.37). This led the majority of women to state that even if they won the judicial proceedings, the process was so traumatizing that they would not go through it again.

From the administrative point of view, women reported a lack of clear protocols and coordination amongst the police, medical and legal services which led to a 'lottery of the

autonomous community’ (Amenstia Internacional, 2018, p.27). The efficiency of the services and thus the satisfaction of the survivors varies across provinces and autonomous communities. Moreover, women reported overwhelming legal procedures that overlapped civil and criminal proceedings that were handled by different lawyers. All these elements combined led many women to withdraw their accusations and abandon the quest for justice. The Survey of the Ministry of Equality (2019) revealed that the ones most likely to hold on were those in need of a judicial conviction to be able to receive extended state support. Therefore, the majority of women that were able to get out of their abusive situation without external help decided to not bring the case to court, leaving their abusers unaccountable (Ministerio de Igualdad, 2019).

The gender biases and complicacies of the Spanish administration therefore make women desist from going through with the judicial proceedings. Moreover, a criticism addressed to the Spanish government is that while they have made progress on laws and protocols regarding cases of domestic violence, they are still behind in contexts of sexual assault outside of the home environment (Muñoz & Echeburúa, 2016).

Spain – Decentralization and Gender Violence

In the context of gender violence, the state is responsible for developing national public policy and regulation, specialist services of assistance such as the 016 helpline, crime victims support offices and comprehensive forensic assessments Units. Moreover, Spain has established specific courts dealing with violence against women and a public prosecutor specialising on the matter.

On their end, autonomous communities are responsible for establishing regional public policies and regulations as well as creating instruments of awareness, detection and prevention. Most importantly however is their responsibility or regulating support services for women, thus establishing the different institutional bodies responsible for their integrated support. Moreover, even if the Spanish State has declared the need for crime victims support offices and comprehensive forensic assessment units, they also state that it is only present in the ‘Autonomous Communities who have assumed this responsibility’ (Ministerio de la Presidencia, 2019b, 8).

Decentralization is also present below the authority of autonomous communities, where local bodies also have the responsibility of implementing measure of awareness, detection and prevention, provide support services to women victims of gender-based violence as well as local police forces.

Spain – Decentralization and Women’s Access to Justice

Due to the decentralized structure of the State, the network of support service in cases of gender violence changes across autonomous communities. The Spanish State declares five main categories: social assistance, security, justice, prevention and inter-institutional coordination. The extent to which the autonomous communities engage with them however differs, which in turn affects their ability to provide access to justice.

Following the Organic Law 1/2004 courts for violence against women were created with the aim of easing women’s access to justice. The courts reduce the legal burden by combining the civil and criminal procedures, which also offers clearer guidance to the people involved (Muñoz & Echeburúa, 2016). In fact, previously, the overlapping of the different procedures led to contradictory results, especially regarding the care of the minors involved, where the civil ruling would contradict the criminal one (Ministerio de la Presidencia, 2019a). While they have tried to evenly distribute them across the Spanish territory, they remain limited in number.

3.3.2. Castilla y León and Castilla-La Mancha

The two autonomous communities that are being compared are Castilla y León and Castilla-La Mancha. They are the two biggest autonomous communities in Spain and are comparable in population size, quality of government and social development index.

	Castilla y León	Castilla-La Mancha
Size	<i>94.220 km²</i>	<i>79.409 km²</i>
Population	<i>2.383.139</i>	<i>2.049.562</i>
Quality of government Index	<i>-0.22</i>	<i>0.27</i>
Social Progress Index	<i>68.84</i>	<i>63.36</i>
Approach to combat gender violence	Centralized	Decentralized

Table 4

In the European Index of Quality of Government Castilla-La Mancha scores 0.27 while Castilla y León -0.22, however in the previous version of 2017 Castilla-La Mancha had -0.21 and Castilla y León -0.24 and in the earlier one of 2013 Castilla y León was the one scoring higher than Castilla-La Mancha with a 0.28 opposing a -0.17 (European Commission, 2021). While the levels of quality of government varied during the course of the last decade, they remained within a close range allowing them to be comparable. On the European Social Progress Index, based on indicators of basic human needs, foundation of wellbeing an opportunity, Castilla-La Mancha scores 63.36 while Castilla y León 68.84 (European Commission, 2020).

Gender Violence

Additionally, both autonomous communities are engaged in tackling gender violence. Castilla y León has established four additional laws to reach gender equality: the Ley 1/2003, for equality of opportunity, the Ley 13/2010 against gender violence, the Ley 1/2011 evaluating the impact of gender in the community and finally Ley 10/2019 that promotes equal distribution of labour and remuneration. It has moreover published a strategic plan for gender equality for the period going of 2022-2025 (Junta de Castilla y León, 2022). Castilla-La Mancha has two laws that address specifically gender violence: the Ley 5/2001 for the prevention of abuses and protection of abused women and the Ley4/2018 for a society free of gender violence. It has also developed a Strategic Plan for equality of opportunities for 2019-2024 (Instituto de la Mujer Castilla-La Mancha & Castilla-La Mancha, 2018).

Available services to women victim of gender violence

In 2017, while the State Pact on gender violence was being redacted, the autonomous communities produced documents stating the degree to which they had advanced in providing support to women victims of gender violence (Ministerio de la Presidencia, 2017). These documents are necessary to establish a baseline isolating the impacts of the projects implement after 2017 through the State Pact from the autonomous communities' individual achievements.

The services are divides based on five main categories: social assistance, security, justice, prevention and inter-institutional coordination (Ministerio de la Presidencia, 2017). These can also be regrouped in three categories based on their contribution to women's access to justice: awareness and prevention (A), institutional response (B) and socioeconomic support (C).

		Castilla y León	Castilla-La Mancha
A	Prevention	<i>Similar</i>	<i>Similar</i>
B	Inter-Institutional cooperation	<i>Not reported</i>	<i>Present</i>
	Security	<i>None</i>	<i>None</i>
	Justice	<i>Limited</i>	<i>Limited</i>
C	Social Assistance	<i>Similar</i>	<i>Similar</i>

Table 5

A. Awareness and Prevention

In the context of prevention, which encompasses information, awareness and training, both communities are engaged (Ministerio de la Presidencia, 2017). They offer information by telephone, which includes legal and psychological advice, as well as awareness projects during relevant international days such as the 25th of November. Moreover, they practice trainings on gender violence for all the professionals that are likely to enter in contact with victims, such as social workers, doctors, lawyers and pharmacists. The most relevant difference is the additional target group. In Castilla-La Mancha additional projects focused on intersectionality with immigration status or disability while in Castilla y León they are more focused on the rural populations.

B. Institutional response

Regarding inter-institutional cooperation Castilla-La Mancha is able to offer coordinated services through its women's centres that cooperate with the social services and the police while Castilla y León did not report them (Ministerio de la Presidencia, 2017). In the context of security both autonomous communities were lacking resources as well as in justice, except for protection order coordination centres (Ministerio de la Presidencia, 2017). In both cases the centres were distributed across provinces, but Castilla y León provided a more specific follow up protocol.

C. Socioeconomic support

In the context of social assistance, both regions offer support both for the women victims of violence as well as the minors involved (Ministerio de la Presidencia, 2017). The services include housing, economic and psychological assistance with a focus on employability to promote a return to independent means. While similar, Castilla y León had more protocols specific to cases of gender violence instead of general ones and relied on the European Social Fund to support its employability projects, showing a propensity to engage in Multilevel governance. On the other hand, Castilla-La Mancha had developed its own women's centres and an independent plan for employment called 'Plan extraordinario por el empleo de Castilla-La Mancha', showcasing a more independent approach (Ministerio de la Presidencia, 2017, p.2).

As the comparative analyses showcases, the two regions offered very similar services to women victims of gender violence in 2017, with the slight difference of Castilla-La Mancha having an established inter-institutional coordination network through its Women's Institute while Castilla y León did not report having one.

3.4 Data Collection

This study relies on data provided by the Spanish government, released annually and collected by the Observatorio de la Mujer (The Woman's Observatory) that belongs to the Ministry of Equality, as well as by the autonomous communities and provinces. This allows to obtain information about the national approach to combatting gender violence as well as its efficiency and compare it within the two selected autonomous communities.

Moreover, in the years 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 each autonomous community produced a document stating the number of projects that were implemented to adhere to the State Pact and which objective they were working towards (Delegación del Gobierno contra la Violencia de Género, 2019a;). This thesis uses it to establish their decentralization tendencies as well as the areas they decided to focus on to combat gender violence.

Finally, the Observatorio de la Mujer provides extensive data on the complaints of gender violence, the percentage of people prosecuted, and the ones convicted (Observatorio contra la violencia doméstica y de género & CONSEJO GENERAL DEL PODER JUDICIAL, 2021). This information is used to assess the effectiveness of each region to provide women's access to justice.

4. Analysis

The analysis section is divided in two parts. The first analyses the projects that each autonomous community has implemented over the course of two years, 2018-2019 and 2019-2020, showcasing the effect of decentralization on women's access to justice. In fact, while the national agreement demands efforts to combat gender violence, the regionalized state resources led to discrepancies in projects implemented and the objectives they focused on. As the first section delineates decentralization and its influence on policy objectives, the second will establish which autonomous community provides a more effective access to justice to women victim of gender violence. The comparison assesses the data of each region over the course of the five years since the implementation of the State Pact, thus from 2017 to 2021, analysing the origins of gender violence complaints, the percentage of people prosecuted and convicted.

The results of this analysis showcase that Castilla y León has implemented over the course of two years double the number of projects than Castilla-La Mancha. Thus, in line with the framework established in the research design, Castilla y León is considered the centralized region as it follows more closely central guidelines whereas Castilla-La Mancha is the decentralized one. The second part of the analysis illustrates the effectiveness of each autonomous communities in dealing with cases of gender violence, focusing however on women's access to justice. The comparative data on complaints, prosecution and convictions showcases that while Castilla-La Mancha has had a decreasing percentage of prosecutions per

complaints, it scores higher on convictions as well as amount of victims that feel comfortable reaching directly to the police or the judicial courts (Consejo General del Poder Judicial, 2021a).

4.1. Efforts on Women’s Access to Justice

The first part of the analysis illustrates the extent to which the two autonomous regions fit the profile of centralized versus decentralized approach as well as the discrepancies in implementation resulted from the regionalized system. The first is established by the number of projects they carried out in 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 while they were complying with the State Pact of 2017. The second is calculated by documenting from each project the objective or objectives they declared they were working towards. This allows to create a general trend illustrating for each year and region which goals received the most attention as well as those that were overlooked.

2.1.1. Centralized versus Decentralized

According to the higher number of projects implemented across both years as well as the systematic approach of repeating and expanding a third of the projects of 2018 to 2019, Castilla y León is categorized as the autonomous communities with centralized tendencies in implementing the State Pact while Castilla-La Mancha has a more decentralized approach.

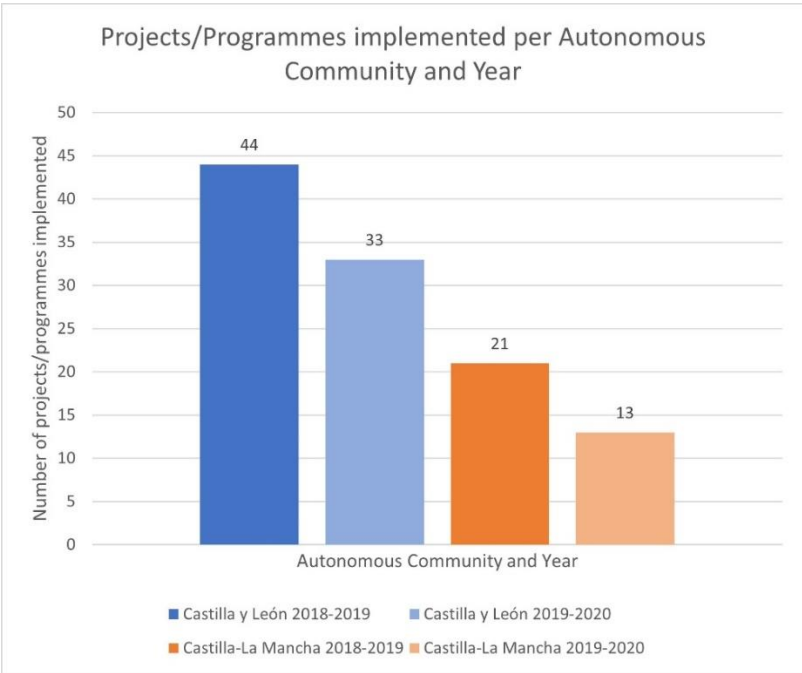


Table 6

The table clearly illustrate that Castilla y León has produced double the number of programmes/projects than Castilla-La Mancha. For the year 2018-2019 Castilla y León has advanced forty-four projects as opposed to the twenty-one of Castilla-La Mancha, whereas in the period of 2019-2020 both autonomous communities advanced less projects, but still Castilla y León had thirty-three, almost three times as many as Castilla-La Mancha who only had thirteen (Delegación del Gobierno contra la Violencia de Género, 2019a). Additionally, while Castilla-La Mancha predominantly advanced individual projects, Castilla y León repeated almost a third of the 2018 projects in 2019, expanding on the previous work to reach a broader audience(Delegación del Gobierno contra la Violencia de Género, 2019a). The larger number of projects implemented as well as the systematic approach of extending them to the next year establishes Castilla y León as the centralized autonomous community, thus more in line with the national guidelines to combat gender violence. On the other hand, the smaller number of projects as well as the lack of a systematic approach to expand on the previous work confirms Castilla-La Mancha as the decentralized community.

4.1.2. Objectives and Discrepancies

The State Pact has delineated ten objectives that the autonomous communities must work towards to combat gender violence (Ministerio de la Presidencia, 2019b). However, the decentralized nature of the Spanish State provides them with considerable freedom in efforts and implementation. In line with the literature on decentralization and access to justice, this creates situations of territorial inequality where fundamental rights that are guaranteed at the national level are not systematically implemented at the regional one.

The following tables illustrate the ten objectives of the State Pact as well as the number of projects that have been dedicated to them from the two autonomous communities during the years 2018-2019 and 2019-2020.

Objective 1	Breaking silence through encouraging actions for awareness in society and for the prevention of gender violence
Objective 2	Improving the institutional response through coordination and connected work between responsible authorities and organs.
Objective 3	Perfecting the help, support and protection offered to women victims of gender violence and their children.
Objective 4	Enhancing support and protection for minors.
Objective 5	Improved training of the agents to ensure better care services.
Objective 6	Improvement of knowledge as an essential ingredient in ensuring that the fight against all forms of violence is effective.
Objective 7	Recommendation for Autonomous Communities, Local Entities and other institutions.
Objective 8	Observation and attention on forms of gender violence that take place outside the context of the partner or ex-partner, with special focus on sexual violence, trafficking of women and girls for the purpose of sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation and forced marriages.
Objective 9	Financial commitment towards policies for the eradication of violence against women.
Objective 10	The monitoring of the State Pact and the submission of the information requires by the Pact Monitoring Committee.

Table 7

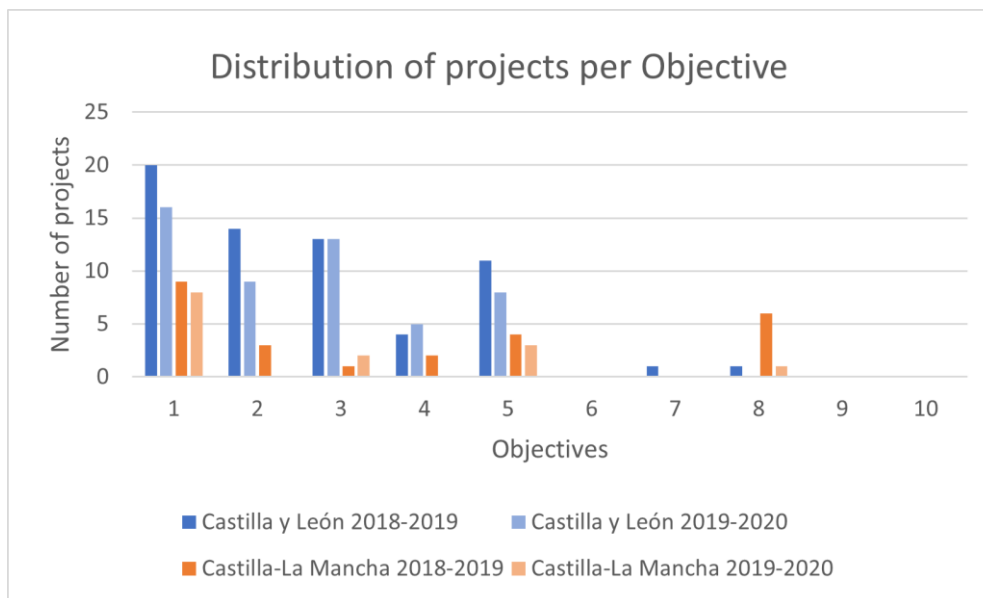


Table 8

As the table illustrates the objective that received the most attention by both autonomous communities is number 1 that focuses on breaking the silence on gender violence through awareness and prevention (Ministerio de la Presidencia, 2019b). Additionally, Castilla y León significantly focused on objectives 2, 3 and 5, paid moderate attention to 4 and little to none to the rest (Delegación del Gobierno contra la Violencia de Género, 2019a). On the other hand, Castilla-La Mancha prioritized objective 8, that was severely overlooked by Castilla y León, and committed few resources to objectives 2, 3, 4 and 5 (Delegación del Gobierno contra la Violencia de Género, 2019b). It did not make any efforts towards objectives 6, 7, 9. On the

other hand, objective 10 is proven by the existence of the documents released in 2019 and 2020 that have been analysed in this thesis but is an effort that can therefore not be quantified as the others.

This section showcases how decentralization led to discrepancies in the objectives pursued, investing on certain aspects of the issue while overlooking others. The next part of the analysis illustrates more specifically these divergences in the context of women’s access to justice.

4.1.3. Women’s Access to Justice

In order to analyse how the ten objectives of the State Pact to combat gender violence contribute to improving women’s access to justice, they have been regrouped in three categories: awareness and prevention, improvement of institutional response and social support.

A) Awareness and Prevention	1) Breaking silence through encouraging actions for awareness in society and for the prevention of gender violence
	6) Improvement of knowledge as an essential ingredient in ensuring that the fight against all forms of violence is effective.
	8) Observation and attention on forms of gender violence that take place outside the context of the partner or ex-partner, with special focus on sexual violence, trafficking of women and girls for the purpose of sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation and forced marriages.
B) Improve Institutional Response	2) Improving the institutional response through coordination and connected work between responsible authorities and organs.
	5) Improved training of the agents to ensure better care services.
	7) Recommendation for Autonomous Communities, Local Entities and other institutions.
	9) Financial commitment towards policies for the eradication of violence against women.
C) Social Support	3) Perfecting the help, support and protection offered to women victims of gender violence and their children.
	4) Enhancing support and protection for minors.

Table 9

Each category contributes to overcome the three main barriers to women’s access to justice reported in the literature: awareness of resources, institutional responsiveness and socioeconomic means (Corradi, 2011). The first ‘Awareness and Prevention’ combats the lack of familiarity with the system. Awareness campaigns inform the population on the available resources as well as help them detect situations of abuse. The second, ‘Improve Institutional Response’ tackles the barrier of antagonistic public officials and inefficient procedures that hinder women from progressing with their judicial proceedings. Through increased cooperation

amongst institutions and training of the public officials they aim to provide a faster and more efficient service. Finally, ‘Social Support’ provides victims and their children with the economic and social means to leave the abusive situation or overcome the traumatic event and regain their autonomy. This importantly contributes to women’s access to justice as it provides them with the economic means and stability to be able to pursue justice.

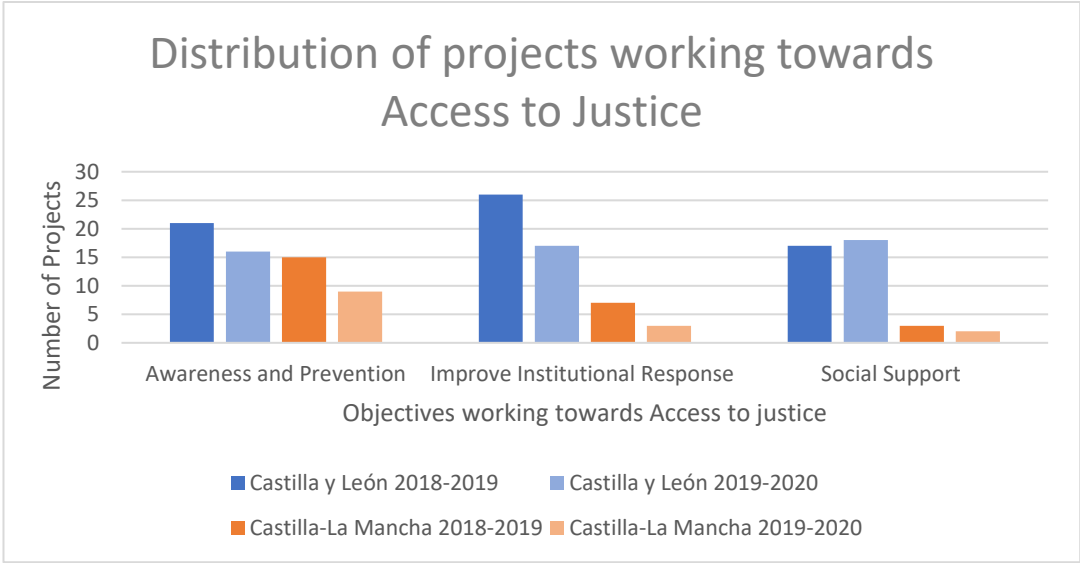


Table 10

This table illustrates the extent to which each autonomous community contributed to these three goals across the two years the projects were implemented. Castilla y León has been rather active across the three sectors, slightly decreasing its engagement for the two first goals while increasing it for social support (Delegación del Gobierno contra la Violencia de Género, 2019a). Nonetheless, it has remained higher than Castilla-La Mancha’s. The latter has in fact dedicate most projects towards fostering awareness and prevention, especially for more vulnerable women such as those involved in sexual exploitation and drugs (Delegación del Gobierno contra la Violencia de Género, 2019b). It showed to a more limited extent attention towards improving institutional response and social support, all of which however decreased along the years.

4.2. Effectiveness of efforts on Women’s Access to Justice

This second part of the analysis evaluates which autonomous community provides a better service to women victim of gender violence as they try to obtain justice. It establishes it by

evaluating the data on gender violence in the two autonomous communities, Castilla-La Mancha and Castilla y León from 2017 to 2021 (Consejo General del Poder Judicial, 2021b).

	A	B	C
Barriers to women's access to justice	<i>Knowledge of system and services available</i>	<i>Lack of clear and efficient procedures</i>	<i>Lack of socioeconomic means</i>
Effort Indicators	<i>Awareness and Prevention</i>	<i>Improvement of institutional response</i>	<i>Social Support</i>
Efficiency Indicators	<i>Complaints</i>	<i>Percentage of people prosecuted</i>	<i>Percentage of convictions</i>

Table 11

The analysis concludes that while Castilla y León has been prosecuting a higher percentage of accused, Castilla-La Mancha has been able to obtain a higher percentage of convictions as well as a larger number of women feeling confident to reach out to the police or the courts to ask for help and justice.

A. Lack of familiarity with the system

As previously mentioned, awareness and prevention contribute to overcoming women’s lack of familiarity with the system and ensuring that if needed, they would know which services to reach out to. It therefore includes objective 1, 6 and 8:

A) Awareness and Prevention	1) Breaking silence through encouraging actions for awareness in society and for the prevention of gender violence
	6) Improvement of knowledge as an essential ingredient in ensuring that the fight against all forms of violence is effective.
	8) Observation and attention on forms of gender violence that take place outside the context of the partner or ex-partner, with special focus on sexual violence, trafficking of women and girls for the purpose of sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation and forced marriages.

Table 12

The following table showcases specifically which objectives each autonomous community has been focusing on across the years.

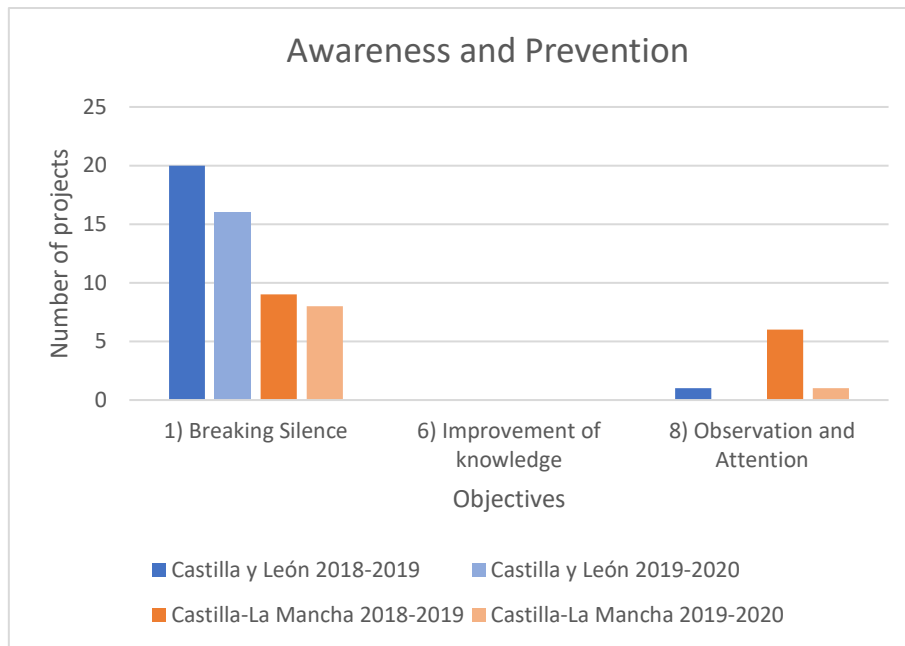


Table 13

The indicator to establish the effectiveness of the projects of awareness and prevention indicates that Castilla-La Mancha, the decentralized region, has constantly received a higher percentage of complaints directly from the women victims of violence through the police.

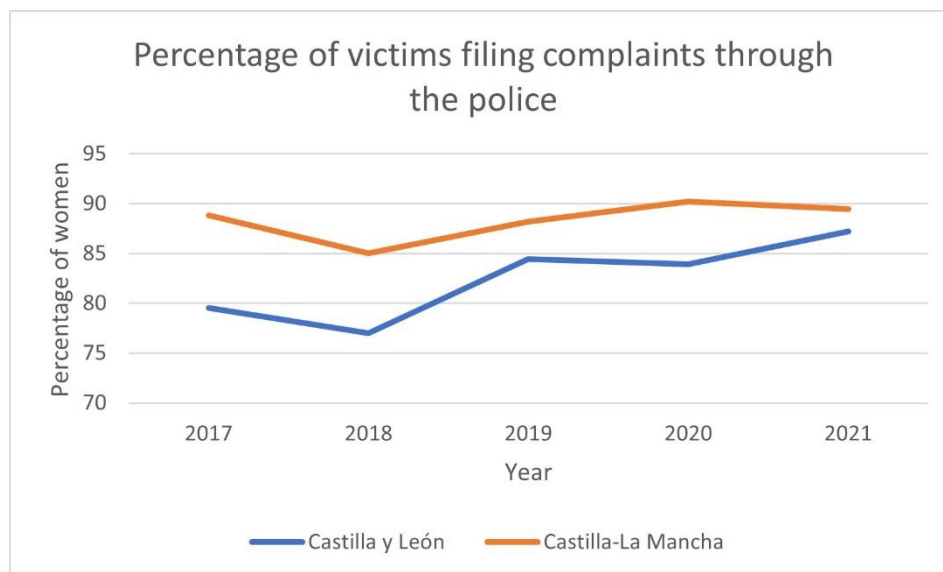


Table 14

Among the police complaints on gender violence, the majority derive from the victims, representing 89% in Castilla-La Mancha and 87% of cases in Castilla y León (Consejo General del Poder Judicial, 2021a). While in Castilla-La Mancha the number have remained higher across the years with an average of 88%, the ones in Castilla y León have been increasing since 2017 where they used to be 80% (Consejo General del Poder Judicial, 2018). Nonetheless, it remains more dependent on the direct intervention of state resources such as the police. In

Castilla y Leon 12% of police reports are the result of direct police intervention as opposed to 9% in Castilla-La Mancha (Consejo General del Poder Judicial, 2021a). Menéndez Álvarez-Dardet et al. (2013) argues that police interventions are important to showcase that the state does not tolerate these crimes. However, from the point of view of accessibility, it demonstrates that in Castilla y Leon women are more dependent on the ability of the state to intervene rather than their capacity to reach out.

The decentralized region is therefore more apt to obtain the trust of women and encourage them to seek help. This can be attributed to its engagement in Objective 8, thus focus on women more vulnerable to gender violence in society that have however been excluded from the main narrative, such as victims of sex trafficking (Delegación del Gobierno contra la Violencia de Género, 2019b). In fact, table 13 showcases that while Castilla-La Mancha focused on this objective over the course of two years, Castilla y Leon, the centralized region, paid very little attention to it.

On the other hand, they both dedicated many projects to awareness and prevention, thus in line with objective 1 (Ministerio de la Presidencia, 2019b). They however had different areas of focus and strategies, and while overall Castilla-La Mancha received more victims directly complaining to the police or courts, Castilla y Leon significantly improved over the course of five years, proving that its strategy has also been effective. In fact, it decided to focus on youth and professionals by intervening in schools and workplaces, thus bringing up the issue of sexual harassment while also implementing specific protocols (Delegación del Gobierno contra la Violencia de Género, 2018a). On the other hand, Castilla-La Mancha focused on addressing the population more generally through television and radio while however drawing attention to women excluded by the general narrative (Delegación del Gobierno contra la Violencia de Género, 2018b). The first strategy is more systematic, confirming the profile of Castilla y Leon as centralized, however the latter is more efficient regarding the indicator of accessibility.

This finding is further supported by the recipients of complaints for each region. In fact, 95% of complaints received by Castilla y Leon, the centralized region, are coming directly from the police slightly increasing since 2017 where they were at 93% (Consejo General del Poder Judicial, 2021a). On the other hand, Castilla-La Mancha received 85% of complaints from the police, decreasing since 2017 where they were up to 90%, and 16% directly in the courts,

showcasing that women feel comfortable accessing a more varied pool of regional resources (Consejo General del Poder Judicial, 2021b).

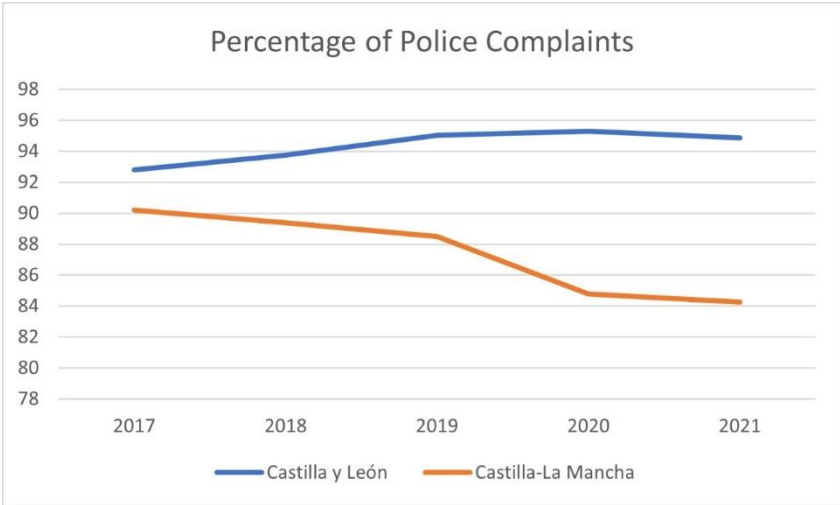


Table 15

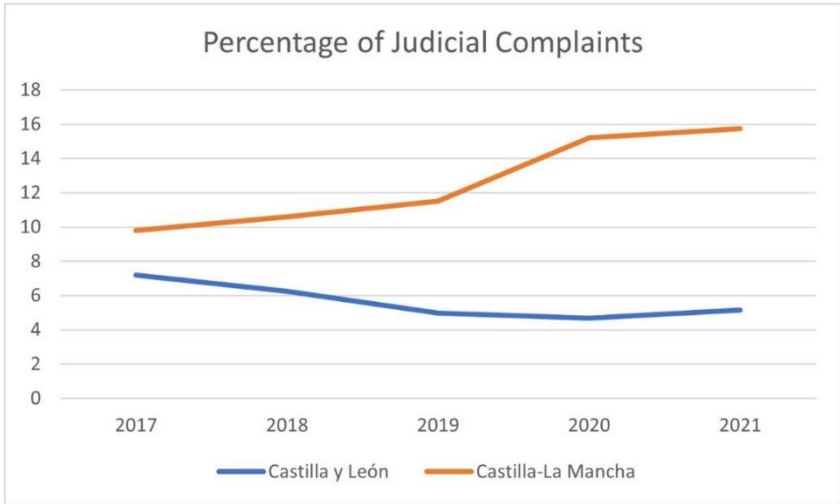


Table 16

B. Lack of clear and efficient procedures

Improving the institutional response in cases of gender violence is necessary to combat the large number of women abandoning their pursuit of justice as they face too many obstacles (Hatipoğlu-Aydın & Aydın, 2016). The goal therefore is comprising objectives 2, 5, 7, and 9 as they all seek to provide a better service to women through coordination, training and sharing of good practices (Ministerio de la Presidencia, 2019b).

B) Improve Institutional Response	2) Improving the institutional response through coordination and connected work between responsible authorities and organs.
	5) Improved training of the agents to ensure better care services.
	7) Recommendation for Autonomous Communities, Local Entities and other institutions.
	9) Financial commitment towards policies for the eradication of violence against women.

Table 17

The following table showcases specifically which objectives each autonomous community has been focusing on across the years to improve institutional response in cases of gender violence.

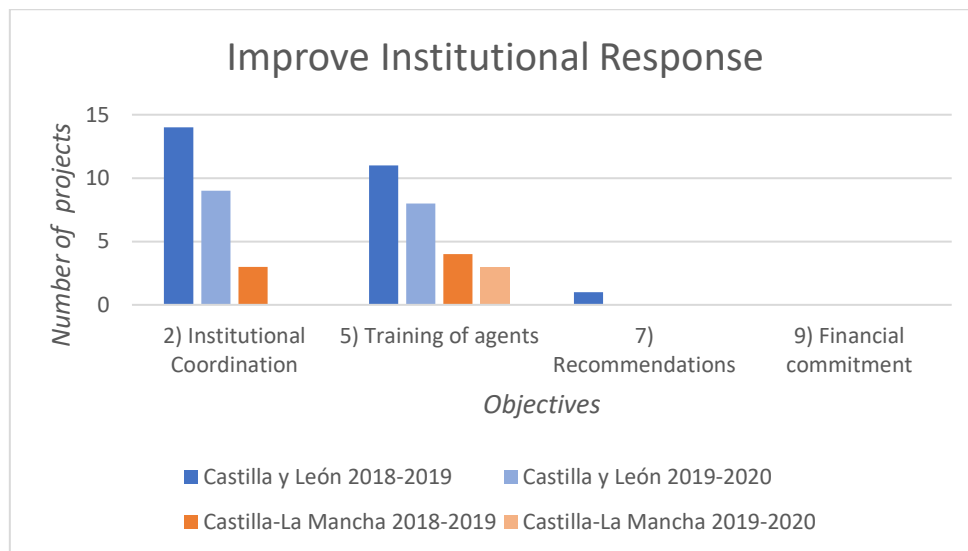


Table 18

The indicators calculating the effectiveness of the projects to improve institutional response point to Castilla y Leon, the centralized region, as the most performant one. In fact, over the course of five years Castilla y Leon has been able to increase the percentage of people prosecuted while Castilla-La Mancha's went down. In fact, in 2017 Castilla-La Mancha prosecuted 42% of the accused people whereas in 2021 the numbers had diminished to 33% (Consejo General del Poder Judicial, 2021a). Opposingly, Castilla y León's prosecutions increased from 33% in 2017 to 39% in 2021 (Consejo General del Poder Judicial, 2021a). Castilla y Leon success seems strongly linked to its ability to implement organized and systematic projects to increase inter-institutional cooperation and training of its officers.

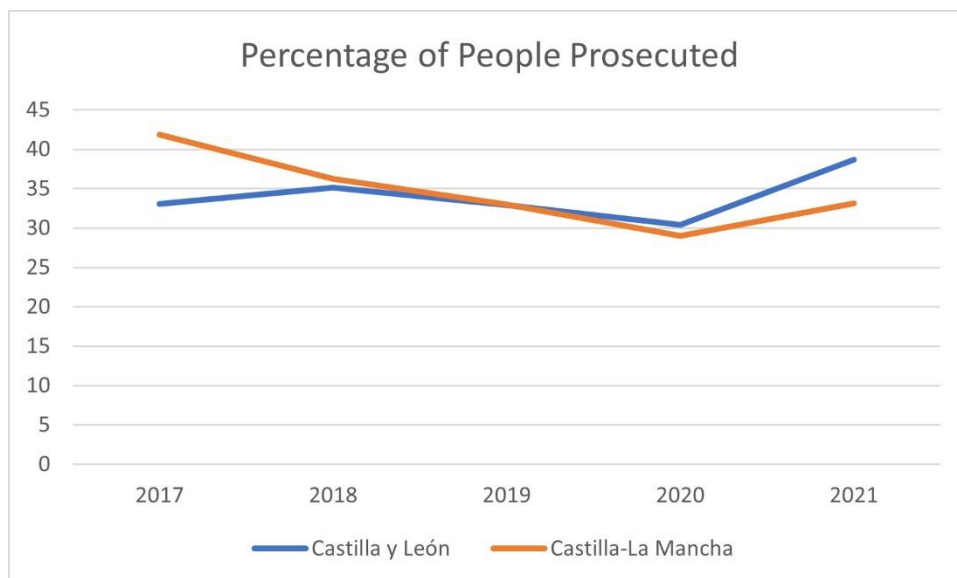


Table 19

In fact, to work towards this goal Castilla y León focused on the establishment of clearer cooperation protocols, such as the one focusing on coordination within the Centres of Social Action (CEAS) (Delegación del Gobierno contra la Violencia de Género, 2019a). The project placed at the centre of the operations an official of the social services responsible for evaluating each individual case and assess the necessary course of action in terms of social support and cooperation with other entities. Within the context of training officials, the region and the Legal Council of the Castilla y León collaborated to form professionals in the judicial administration on gender violence. Finally, each year on the 25th of November, international day for the elimination of violence against women, the gender section of the observatory of Castilla y León meets with public institutions and specialized entities to review gender violence statistics and decide the necessary course of action. The creation of protocols and regular meetings on gender violence implemented by Castilla y León, in line with a centralized and rigorous implementation, favours the ability of women to seek justice through the judicial system and have the necessary proof and support to formalize complaints into prosecutions.

In fact, Castilla-La Mancha also tried improving its institutional response but in a less systematic way, which led to more disappointing results. In 2018 it established a help desk and technical advice for the development of gender equality units in the regional administration as well as improve the management of the Women's centre, projects that were however not

continued the next year. Additionally, in 2019 it implemented one training project issued by a collaboration agreement between the Ministry of Finance and Public Administrations and the Federation of Municipalities and Provinces of Castilla-La Mancha (Delegación del Gobierno contra la Violencia de Género, 2019b). The goals were to ensure that local elected officials and social agents were informed on the issue of gender violence and the policies currently in place. However, the lack of a rigorous maintenance led the number of prosecutions to go down from 42% to 33% (Consejo General del Poder Judicial, 2021a).

C. Lack of socioeconomic means

The state support services are necessary to ensure that the basic needs of the victims and her children are fulfilled, thus allowing them to pursue justice. As mentioned in the theoretical framework, gender roles put women in situations of greater socioeconomic vulnerability, representing an important barrier hindering them from leaving abusive situations (Badesch, 2018). In fact, as they are often economically and socially dependent on their male counterpart it become dangerous for them to leave, especially if kids are involved. The state support is thus fundamental to allow them to leave the abusive situation while maintaining a certain stability, permitting them to have the necessary financial and practical means to pursue justice. These expectations are moreover reinforced by the national survey of 2019 reporting that the most likely women that continue until the termination of proceeding, and thus expecting a conviction, are the ones in need of extended economic support (Ministerio de Igualdad, 2019).

C) Social Support	3) Perfecting the help, support and protection offered to women victims of gender violence and their children.
	4) Enhancing support and protection for minors.

Table 20

The following table illustrates the extent to which each region focused on objective 3 and 4, thus helping and supporting women and minors.

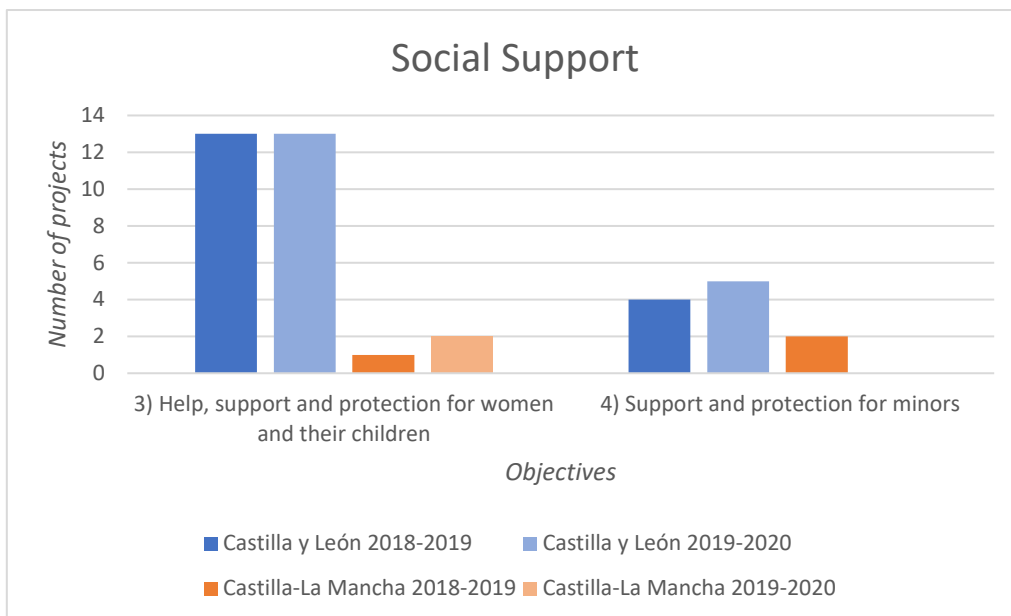


Table 21

The indicator to establish the effectiveness of the projects that ensure state support went in favour of Castilla-La Mancha as it was able to increasingly obtain more convictions, starting from 65% in 2017 to 75% in 2019, as opposed to Castilla y Leon that remained around 71% of convictions during the five years (Consejo General del Poder Judicial, 2021a).

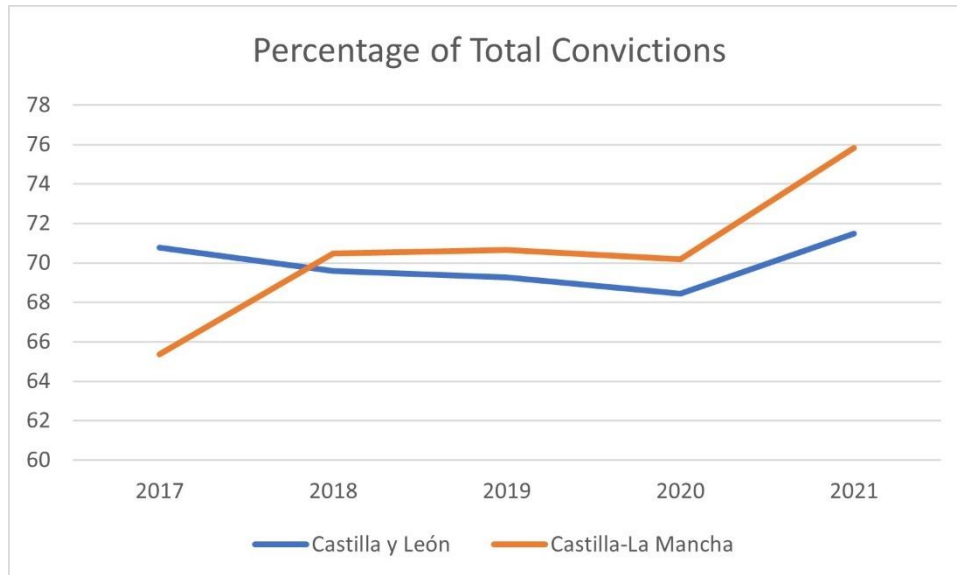


Table 22

These findings are however contrary to the efforts indicators as Castilla y Leon, the centralized region, has been the one implementing more projects on the matter, especially in 2018-2019 (Delegación del Gobierno contra la Violencia de Género, 2019a). On the other hand, Castilla-La Mancha has been moderately and inconsistently supporting both goals, augmenting the

projects dedicated to support women and their children while not expanding on the two projects of 2018 that were aimed at the support of minors (Delegación del Gobierno contra la Violencia de Género, 2018b).

Alternative explanations

As the effort and effectiveness indicators did not align, the research led to a different set of findings uncovering an interesting correlation between strategic judicial administration and convictions per autonomous community: the use of courts for violence against women.

As previously mentioned, following the organic law of 2004 special courts were created across the country specializing in violence against women. Their particularly, apart from the specialized training received by the professionals, is the fact that they combine criminal and civil proceedings to alleviate the administrative burdens of the victims (Muñoz & Echeburúa, 2016).

In 2017 there was already a visible gap between the use each autonomous community was making of the courts (Consejo General del Poder Judicial, 2018). In both regions, most prosecutions go through the more common criminal courts, with however Castilla-La Mancha having a stronger preference for the specialized courts that increased over the years. In 2017 Castilla-La Mancha processed 43% of its cases through the specialized courts and the number increased to 46% in 2021 (Consejo General del Poder Judicial, 2021a).

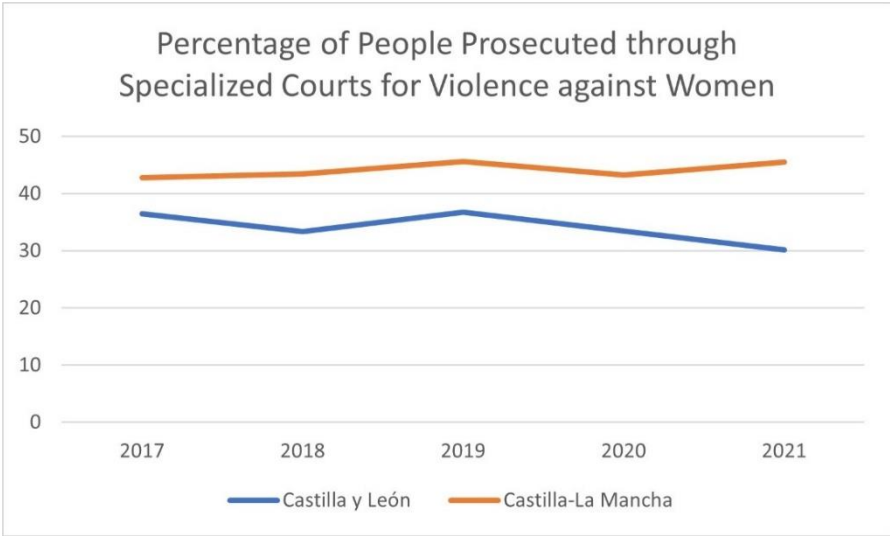


Table 23

On the opposite side, Castilla y León only processed 37% of its cases through the specialized courts in 2017 and that number decreased to 30% in five years (Consejo General del Poder Judicial, 2021a). This establishes a clearer gap between Castilla-La Mancha and Castilla y León regarding the way in the which they process cases of gender violence at the judicial level.

Additionally, there is a correlation between the courts used and the percentage of conviction as specialized courts have on average a significant higher percentage of convictions that in 2021 reached 88%, as opposed to the criminal courts that only obtained 65% (Consejo General del Poder Judicial, 2021a).

Castilla y León, that has a preference for processing gender violence cases in criminal courts, has a consistent higher number of convictions in them than Castilla-La Mancha (Consejo General del Poder Judicial, 2021a). However, the latter was able to increase the number of convictions during the five-years going from 51% to 64% whereas Castilla y León only slightly increased it from 65% to 67% (Consejo General del Poder Judicial, 2021a).

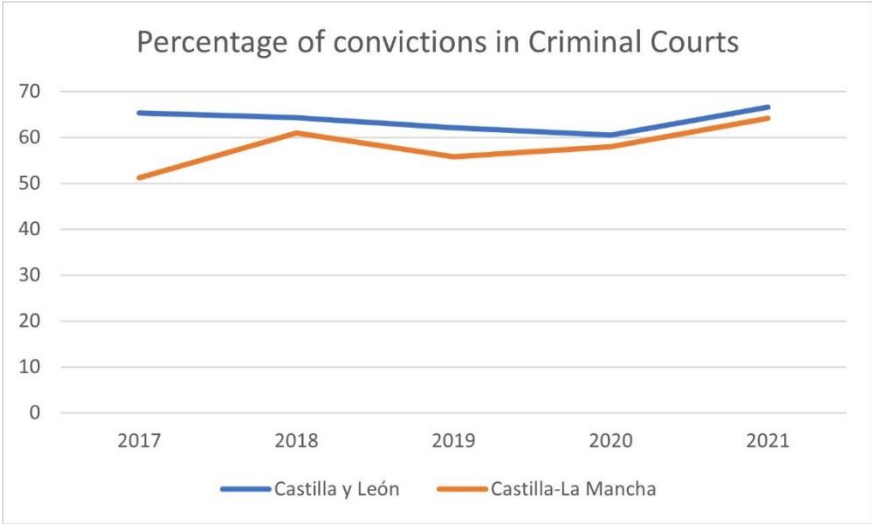


Table 24

On the other hand, Castilla-La Mancha, that prefers specialized courts, has a consistent higher number of convictions in them, increasing from 84% in 2017 to 90% in 2021 (Consejo General del Poder Judicial, 2021a). In Castilla y León the convictions are slightly lower than those of Castilla-La Mancha but still significantly higher than the ones in the criminal courts. Additionally, they also increased from 80% to 86% over the course of five years (Consejo General del Poder Judicial, 2021a).

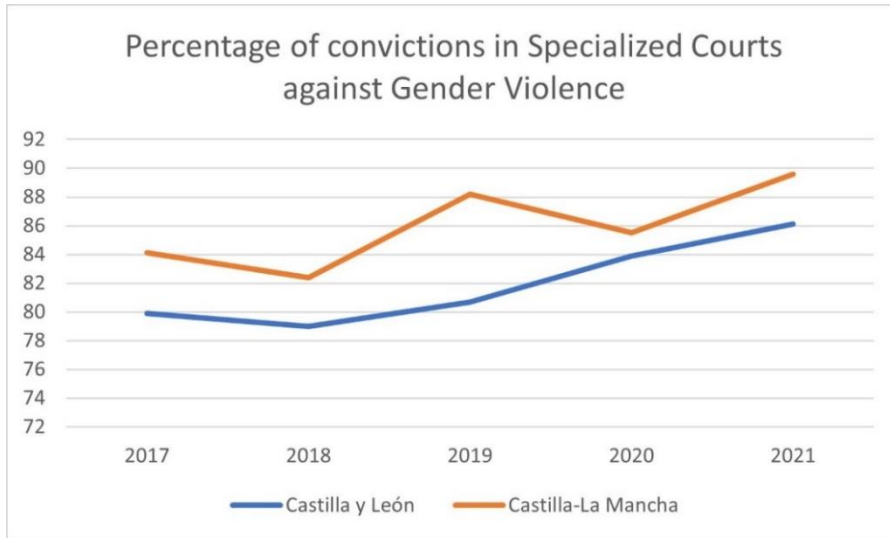


Table 25

The impact of the use of the specialized courts is moreover reflected in the total statistics including the data of specialized, criminal as well as provincial courts, and could explain the inverse tendencies of the two autonomous communities. In fact, as Castilla-La Mancha increased its use of specialized courts its percentage of prosecutions decreased, explained by the more limited capacity of the courts, while its number of convictions increased. Following the opposed tendencies, as Castilla y León decreased its use of the specialized courts and focused more on the criminal ones, its number of prosecutions increased while maintaining a stable percentage of convictions.

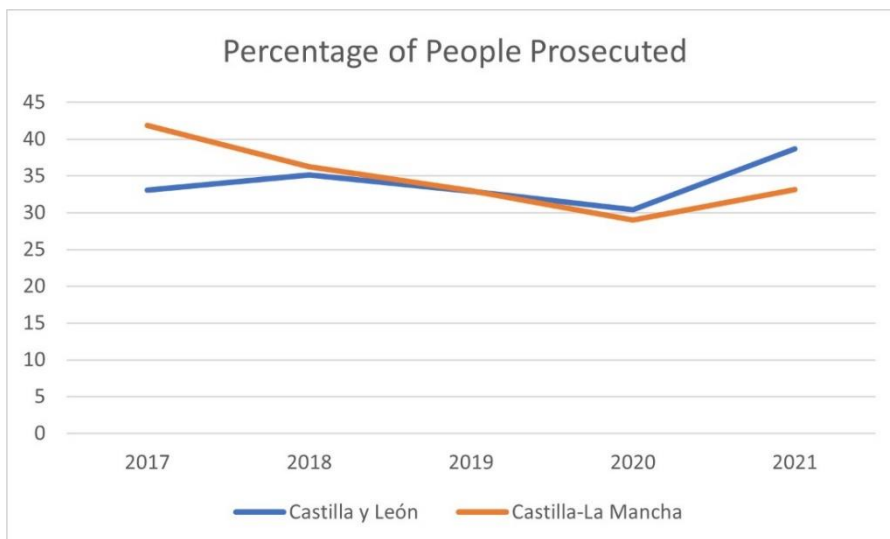


Table 26

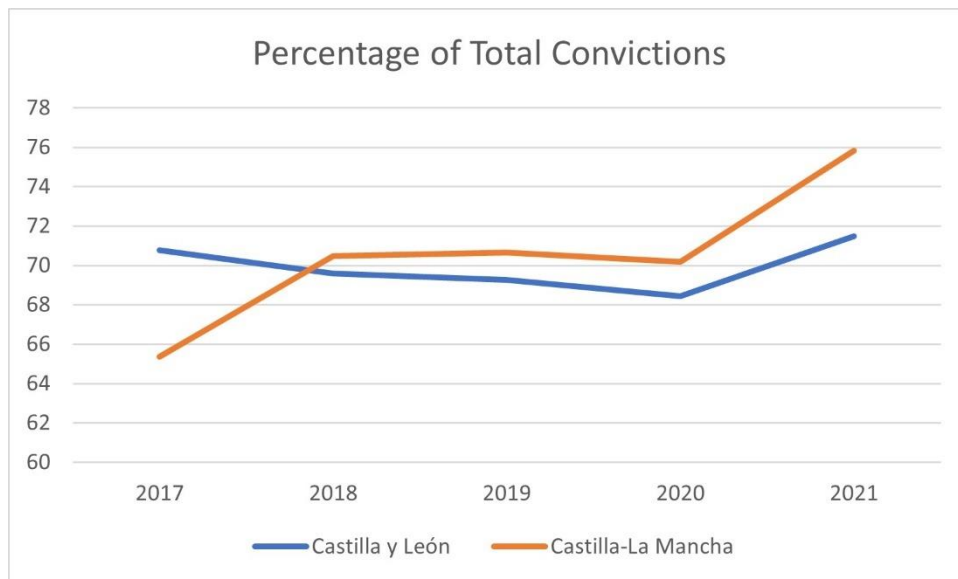


Table 27

These findings seem to indicate that each autonomous community has decided to do a trade-off regarding an aspect of access to justice. Castilla-La Mancha has decreased the number of prosecutions to offer a higher quality of justice, while Castilla y León prefers to render the judicial proceedings available to more people but offering a lower quality of justice. As there is currently very little literature on the specialized courts and it is focused on the legal perspective, it is difficult to assess whether the different strategies are linked to the centralized or decentralized tendency of each community. Nonetheless, it does correspond to the scholarship of ‘territorial inequality’ proving that access to justice is dependent on the strategic priorities of each region.

These findings are preliminary but indicate an interesting avenue for further research on the specialized courts for victims of gender violence that is currently lacking.

4. Discussion

The following table provides a simple visualization of the comparative areas of strength and weakness of the two autonomous communities.

	Castilla y León	Castilla-La Mancha
a) Awareness and Prevention	-	Higher percentage of complaints coming directly from the victims
b) Improvement of institutional response	Higher percentage of prosecutions resulting from complaints	-
c) Social Support	-	Higher percentage of convictions per people on trial

Table 28

Hypothesis 1: *Decentralization increases women’s access to justice as it offers public services more tailored to the population’s needs.*

Based on the three indicators used, thus awareness and prevention, improvement of the institutional response and social care, the decentralized tendency of Castilla-La Mancha has overall resulted in a more efficient access to justice for women.

Castilla-La Mancha paid the most attention to the goal of awareness and prevention, more specifically to the objectives 1 and 8, thus including specific attention to marginalized women that have to endure multiple vulnerabilities. This bottom-up tendency, in line with the scholarship on decentralization, has resulted in a more efficient access to justice for women. In fact, more victims directly reached out to the police in Castilla-La Mancha than in Castilla y León (Consejo General del Poder Judicial, 2021b).

Regarding the second goal of improving institutional response, Castilla-La Mancha has however proven less efficient than the more centralized Castilla y León. The former had spent limited resources on this goal, mostly focusing on training public officials on the issue. Nonetheless, over the course of five years Castilla-La Mancha has decrease the number of people that end up being prosecuted, while Castilla y León’s increased.

Finally, the decentralized region was able to provide a higher percentage of convictions per prosecution, thus more efficient in providing justice to women. However, these results might not be completely linked to the efforts undertaken for the State Pact as they did align. In fact,

Castilla-La Mancha had invested in a few projects to maintain women and children's victims of abuse, mostly training women to join the workforce and regain their independence. It was however not its main area of focus and it dedicated to it less efforts than Castilla y León. This effectiveness might therefore not be caused by decentralized tendencies but rather by strategic choices. In fact, Castilla-La Mancha has been consistently sending more cases to the specialized courts that have always been able to obtain a higher percentage of convictions. The number of these courts is however limited which could explain the trade-off: less people are prosecuted but the number of convictions is higher.

Consequently, this thesis leans more towards justifying Hypothesis 1, especially regarding the first goal of awareness and prevention, thus the first step of the process to ensure women's access to justice.

Hypothesis 2: Decentralization hampers women's access to justice as it hinders the top-down implementation of national laws and policies.

This thesis showcased how decentralization leads to differences in implementation regarding the focuses of the policies as well as the modes of implementation. Nonetheless, the results of the two regions remain too close to consider decentralization as a hindering factor. It seems more to refer back to Charron et al.(2014) work, thus that decentralized countries are able to obtain more similar levels of development at the regional level.

Nevertheless, the analysis of the progresses as well as the shortcomings of the centralized region Castilla y León shows interesting results.

First of all, Castilla y León had a more systematic approach in working towards awareness and prevention by targeting specific demographics, thus youth and the working professionals, and implementing protocols across both years. The strategy was successful in increasing the number of victims that came forth, nonetheless it remained lower than Castilla-La Mancha's. The important number of complaints deriving from police intervention moreover illustrate how its most successful goal had been improving institutional response.

Castilla y León focused on rendering the system more centralized by establishing the central figure of the case worker while at the same time training the officials that are susceptible to deal

with victims of gender violence. The increased response is evident in the important role of the police as well as the increased cooperation amongst institutional units leading to higher number of prosecutions.

Finally, Castilla y León focused on providing support to women victims of gender violence and the minors involved but did not manage to obtain justice for as many people as Castilla-La Mancha did, even if the numbers were close. Nonetheless, also in this case the justification is not linked to centralization and decentralization but strategy. While Castilla-La Mancha has been focusing always more on the specialized courts, Castilla y León has paid increasingly less attention to them, prioritizing instead criminal courts.

Having analysed the results, Hypothesis 2 is not justified by the findings of this thesis since even if the decentralized region has scored lower regarding improving institutional response and the regionalized implementation has led to different areas of interest, overall the results of the two autonomous communities are too similar.

5. Conclusion

The purpose of this thesis was investigating whether decentralization has an impact on women's access to justice. The findings and analysis suggest that it does, however on specific aspects of women's access to justice rather than as a whole.

In fact, decentralized bottom-up tendencies favoured women's awareness and trust in public institutions, making them more willing to directly contact the police or the court in cases of abuse. On the other hand, more rigid and centralized tendencies improved institutional response, making it possible to formalize more complaints through the judicial system. These findings contribute to the academic debate as well as the shared good practices on centralized versus decentralized tactics. It illustrates that neither approach seems to be inherently better, but that it is rather dependent on the goal one is trying to achieve.

The results of this thesis suggest pursuing additional research investigating specialized judicial courts as the findings suggest that they are the reason for the higher number of convictions in Castilla-la Mancha. They are particularly interesting considering the trade-off they represent in the context of women's access to justice. In fact, as there are not many specialized courts, the autonomous communities seemed to have to choose between prosecuting more people and

consequently rely predominantly on the criminal courts or prosecute less people but be able to offer and obtain more high-quality justice. Castilla y Leon chose the first while Castilla-La Mancha the latter, and ultimately Castilla-La Mancha seems to have done the most efficient choice, at least in terms of outcome.

Limits

This study has three main limitations: the restricted number of regions analysed, the concept of decentralization used and the reliability of data on gender violence.

This study takes into consideration only two regions, Castilla-La Mancha and Castilla y Leon, as they were the ones that better fit the researched profile of similar size, quality of government and development index. While it was able to analyse in depth the different elements influencing each region's ability to support women access to justice, it might have missed out on elements that would have appeared comparing other autonomous communities. The specific indicators used, thus the relationship between efforts represented by the projects of the State Pact and the effectiveness of women's access to justice, might have shown different tendencies in other Spanish regions.

Secondly, as the two units needed to belong to the same legal system to be comparable, the definition of centralization was based on the centralized approach to implement national guidelines, using a similar logic to the implementation of EU directives that also tend to result in differences of prioritizes and effectiveness in different member states (Steunenberg, 2007). The operationalization of this variable was done rigorously but in a way that was very specific to the Spanish context that combined a, in principle, apolitical State Pact as it was reached unanimously and the integral support to victims of gender violence that the Spanish state is willing to supply.

Finally, while the research has tried to compensate of the data on gender violence by using specific statistic, as previously mentioned the exact number of women affected is difficult to calculate and it needs to be taken into consideration while assessing the results.

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Appendix

Table 5

The following tables provide additional information regarding the comparison between the services to women victim of gender violence offered by Castilla-La Mancha and Castilla y Leon in 2017.

INFORMATION, AWARENESS, PREVENTION AND TRAINING IN GENDER VIOLENCE				
Type of resource	Name of the resource		Description of the resource	
Autonomous Community	Castilla-La Mancha	Castilla y Leon	Castilla-La Mancha	Castilla y Leon
Specialized telephone information systems for victims and the general population	Permanent Hotline	Women Support Hotline	Free phone service available 24h/day all year long in the region . Help to women victims of gender violence and other people involved.	Help provide immediate help to women requiring information, legal assistance and psychological help , with particular attention paid to women victims of gender violence.
Training programs for professionals in contact with victims.	Relation Program. Training for the staff of the Women's Centres and Reception Resources. Training of the School of Citizen Protection of Castilla-La Mancha. Training for lawyers from the legal professions of Castilla-La Mancha. Training for the pharmaceutical sector on violence.	Specific training for professionals in psychology, law and social work. Training for professionals in pharmacies.	Prevention on gender violence, course aimed at school professors . Courses aimed at professionals working at Centros de la Mujer, los Recursos de Acogida and los Puntos de Encuentro Familiar with a focus on providing psychological attentions to minors victims of gender violence . Prevention on gender violence, course aimed to lawyers and pharmacists .	Formation in areas of psychology, law and coordination to professionals in social services. Formation to pharmacists on how to detect situations of gender violence and contact social services .
Regulation or recommendations for advertising agencies and media		Collaboration agreement with the Association of Journalists of Castilla y León.		Formation of journalists on how to appropriately report and sensitizes on cases of gender violence.

Awareness-raising and prevention campaigns	Winter campaign Institutional events	Campaign in relation to November 25th.	Collaboration with the Regional Federation of Hospitality and Tourism of Castilla-La Mancha, aimed at women victims of gender violence as well as anyone susceptible to have witnessed cases of gender violence. Events on the 8th of March (International women's day), 23rd of September (International day against sexual exploitation and women's trafficking), 15th of October (International day of rural women) and 25th of November (International day for the elimination of violence against women)	Official campaign of Castilla y Leon to commemorate the 25th of November, the international day of the elimination of violence against women.
Training and awareness-raising programmes in schools	Reading promotion and awareness-raising programme. Workshops in educational centres in the region	Creativity competition aimed at university students. Campaign aimed at children and adolescent students.	Formation programmes to teachers working with young children , especially those living in community centres.	Contests and campaigns aiming to involve university and high school students in the events of the 25th of November for the international day for the elimination of violence against women.
Other resources on information, awareness-raising, prevention and training	Companies for a society free of gender violence. Aid for the prevention of multiple discrimination.	Workshops aimed at rural women and men. Awareness-raising actions on women's rights and against gender violence. Actions and campaigns of awareness and prevention in pharmacies.	Actions to sensitize on violence against women and contribute to the reintegration in the professional field of women victims of gender violence. Projects to combat gender inequalities, especially those linked to intersectional discrimination.	Formation on gender violence aimed at informing the rural population.

INTER-INSTITUTIONAL COORDINATION				
Type of resource	Name of the resource		Description of the resource	
Autonomous Community	Castilla-La Mancha	Castilla y Leon	Castilla-La Mancha	Castilla y Leon
Coordination tools with local authorities	Local coordination protocols	NO INFO	The Centros de la Mujer have established protocols collaborating with the police, the judicial system, the health services and the other services that intervene in cases of violence against women.	NO INFO

SECURITY				
Type of resource	Name of the resource		Description of the resource	
Autonomous Community	Castilla-La Mancha	Castilla y Leon	Castilla-La Mancha	Castilla y Leon
Specialized Units of Autonomous Police				
Cooperation programs between the Autonomous Police and State Security Forces and Bodies				

JUSTICE				
Type of resource	Name of the resource		Description of the resource	
Autonomous Community	Castilla-La Mancha	Castilla y Leon	Castilla-La Mancha	Castilla y Leon
Comprehensive Forensic Assessment Units				
Psychosocial teams of the Integral Forensic Assessment Units				
Crime Victim Assistance Offices				
Protection Order Coordination Centres	Coordination points for the communication of protection orders	Protection Order Coordination Points	Point of coordination between the 5 provinces of Castilla-La Mancha.	9 points of coordination, one for each management point of social services . They also provide follow up on protection orders based on the requirement of the local community.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE				
A) RECEPTION AND ACCESS TO HOUSING FOR VICTIMS AND THEIR DEPENDENT CHILDREN MINORS OR WITH DISABILITIES				
Type of resource	Name of the resource		Description of the resource	
Autonomous Community	Castilla-La Mancha	Castilla y Leon	Castilla-La Mancha	Castilla y Leon
Emergency Centres	Emergency Centres	Emergency Centres	Provide helps for a short amount of time	Integral urgent attention, adapted to peoples need . Maximum stay 2 days , active 24h/day all year long .
Host House	Host Houses - Host Houses for Young Women	Host Houses	Temporary help promoting autonomy	Stay of maximum 6 months with a possible extension of additional 3 months . Combines with psychological, educative, health, work and judicial in cooperation with competent jurisdictions .
Sheltered or transit housing	Sheltered flats		Houses to encourage a return to self-sufficient life	
Public or official housing with preferential access for victims	Priority access to public housing	Individual Housing Program for Victims of Gender Violence	Priority given to women victims of gender violence.	Priority given to women victims of gender violence as well as a particular mechanism to make sure they are made available.

B. COMPREHENSIVE CARE FOR VICTIMS AND THEIR DEPENDENT CHILDREN MINORS OR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES				
Type of resource	Name of the resource		Description of the resource	
Autonomous Community	Castilla-La Mancha	Castilla y Leon	Castilla-La Mancha	Castilla y Leon
Comprehensive care centres/services	Women's centres		Provide the gender perspective in all social intervention with the aim of creating effective equality and combat discrimination.	
In particular, centres/services for the specialised care of minors	Psychological assistance program for minors victims of gender violence		Free specialized psychological assistance to minors that witnessed gender violence until their complete recuperation.	
Family meeting points	Family meeting points	Family meeting points	Allow encounter between kids and parents that do not have custody.	Protect the rights of minors to see their parents. Special protocol in case of gender violence.
C. ACCOMPANIMENT AND TELECARE OF VICTIMS				
Type of resource	Name of the resource		Description of the resource	
Autonomous Community	Castilla-La Mancha	Castilla y Leon	Castilla-La Mancha	Castilla y Leon
Accompaniment and/or transport services				
Mobile telecare systems	Immediate location devices		Use of personal phone or of one provided by the Instituto de la Mujer (112) number to immediately inform the police of a situation of danger for the victims.	

D. EMPLOYABILITY OF VICTIMS				
Type of resource	Name of the resource		Description of the resource	
Autonomous Community	Castilla-La Mancha	Castilla y Leon	Castilla-La Mancha	Castilla y Leon
Orientation and/or training programmes for the employment of victims	Agreement with the Ministry of Economy, Business and Employment	Support service for the socio-labour integration of women victims of gender violence - Programa Empleo Mujer Castilla y Leon	Information, professional orientation and support to women victims of gender violence in places where the Centros de la Mujer is established and provide that type of support.	Facilitate technical support to women's victims of gender violence - Programa Empleo is the last step for a full reintegration of women victims of domestic violence to acquire autonomy and go back to a normal life.
Business Grant Programs for Victim Recruitment		Grants co-financed by the European Social Fund to promote the labour insertion of women women victims of gender-based violence of Castile and León.		Programa Operativo Fondo Social Europeo de Castilla y Leon (2014-2020) to encourage businesses and NGO to employ women victims of gender violence.
Other resources to improve the employability of victims	Extraordinary plan for the employment of Castilla-La Mancha. Subsidies for the reduction of gender gaps in the workplace.	Does not exist	Prioritizing employment to women victim of gender violence. - Economic subsidies to women that stayed in the shelters.	Does not exist

E. FINANCIAL AID FOR VICTIMS AND THEIR CHILDREN				
Type of resource	Name of the resource		Description of the resource	
Autonomous Community	Castilla-La Mancha	Castilla y Leon	Castilla-La Mancha	Castilla y Leon
Financial aid to women victims	Solidarity aid Aid after the withdrawal of the host resource		Help to women that suffer consequence of violence against women. Economic subsidies to women that stayed in shelters.	
↳ In particular financial support to promote employment and training	Tuition aid for the university studies of victims		Help to victims of gender violence that want to receive a higher education diploma in a public university in Castilla-La Mancha.	
Financial aid to children of victims				
F. THERAPY TO AGGRESSORS				
Type of resource	Name of the resource		Description of the resource	
Autonomous Community	Castilla-La Mancha	Castilla y Leon	Castilla-La Mancha	Castilla y Leon
Centres that offer therapy to aggressors		Psychological treatment service for abusers.		Psychological treatment on a voluntary basis offered to men that express problem with aggressivity and violence towards women in a domestic setting.

Table 6; Table 8; Table 10; Table 18

The following table illustrates more precisely the distribution of projects implemented for the State Pact in the years 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 per objective and autonomous community. As illustrates at the bottom of the table, some projects were working towards two or more objectives, explaining why the addition of projects per objective is not equivalent to the total number of projects.

Projects implemented to work towards the ten objectives of the State Pact				
	Castilla y León 2018-2019	Castilla y León 2019-2020	Castilla-La Mancha 2018-2019	Castilla-La Mancha 2019-2020
Objective 1	20	16	9	8
Objective 2	14	9	3	0
Objective 3	13	13	1	2
Objective 4	4	5	2	0
Objective 5	11	8	4	3
Objective 6	0	0	0	0
Objective 7	1	0	0	0
Objective 8	1	0	6	1
Objective 9	0	0	0	0
Objective 10	0	0	0	0
Total Projects/ Programmes	44	33	21	13
Project with more than one Objective	17	15	4	1

Table 14; Table 15

The following table portrays extended data on the number of complaints per gender violence obtained through police reports in Castilla-La Mancha and Castilla y León between 2017 and 2021. It further breaks down the specific origin of each report.

	Total police reports									
	Castilla y León	Castilla-La Mancha	Castilla y León	Castilla-La Mancha	Castilla y León	Castilla-La Mancha	Castilla y León	Castilla-La Mancha	Castilla y León	Castilla-La Mancha
	2021		2020		2019		2018		2017	
Complaints received	5,170	6,543	4,759	5,541	5,269	6,051	5,241	5,672	5,410	5,103
Total police reports	4904 (94,85%)	5514 (84,27%)	4536 (95,31%)	4698 (84,79%)	5007 (95,03%)	5354 (88,48%)	4914 (93,76%)	5070 (89,39%)	5021 (92,81%)	4603 (90,2%)
Percentage of total police reports	94,85%	84,27%	95,31%	84,79%	95,03%	88,48%	93,76%	89,39%	92,81%	90,2%
Complaint from the victim	4276 (87,19%)	4933 (89,46%)	3806 (83,91%)	4238 (90,21%)	4227 (84,42%)	4721 (88,18%)	3784 (77%)	4310 (85,01%)	3994 (79,55%)	4089 (88,83%)
Complaint from a family member	53 (1,08%)	102 (0,18%)	72 (1,59%)	95 (2,02%)	90 (1,81%)	147 (2,75%)	93 (1,89%)	180 (3,55%)	64 (1,27%)	53 (1,15%)
From direct police intervention	575 (11,72%)	479 (8,69%)	658 (14,51%)	365 (7,77%)	690 (13,78%)	486 (9,08%)	1037 (21,1%)	580 (11,44%)	963 (19,18%)	461 (10,01%)

Table 16

The following table portrays extended data on the number of judicial complaints per gender violence in Castilla-La Mancha and Castilla y Leon between 2017 and 2021. It further breaks down the specific origin of each report.

	Filed Judicial Complaints									
	Castilla y León	Castilla-La Mancha	Castilla y León	Castilla-La Mancha	Castilla y León	Castilla-La Mancha	Castilla y León	Castilla-La Mancha	Castilla y León	Castilla-La Mancha
	2021		2020		2019		2018		2017	
Complaints received	5,170	6,543	4,759	5,541	5,269	6,051	5,241	5,672	5,410	5,103
Total filed judicial complaints	266 (5,15%)	1,029 (15,73%)	223 (4,69%)	843 (15,21%)	262 (4,97%)	697 (11,52%)	327 (6,24%)	602 (10,61%)	389 (7,19%)	500 (9,8%)
Injury report received directly in court	177 (66,54%)	401 (38,97%)	144 (64,57%)	348 (41,28%)	135 (51,53%)	538 (77,19%)	173 (52,91%)	334 (55,48%)	164 (42,16%)	176 (35,2%)
Assistance services	21 (7,89%)	578 (56,17%)	44 (19,73%)	272 (32,27%)	45 (17,18%)	64 (9,18%)	26 (7,95%)	14 (2,33%)	21 (5,4%)	73 (14,6%)
Filed directly by the victims in court	59 (22,18%)	45 (4,37%)	29 (13%)	221 (26,22%)	63 (24,05%)	91 (13,06%)	116 (35,47%)	246 (40,86%)	201 (51,67%)	246 (49,2%)
Submitted directly by family members	9 (3,38%)	5 (0,49%)	6 (2,69%)	2 (0,24%)	19 (7,25%)	4 (0,57%)	12 (3,67%)	8 (1,33%)	3 (0,77%)	5 (1%)

Table 19; Table 22; Table 23, Table 24; Table 25; Table 26; Table 27

The following table portrays extended data on the number of people prosecuted and convictions in Castilla-La Mancha and Castilla y Leon between 2017 and 2021. It further breaks down the specific court where people were prosecuted.

	Total Percentage of People persecuted									
	Castilla y León	Castilla-La Mancha	Castilla y León	Castilla-La Mancha	Castilla y León	Castilla-La Mancha	Castilla y León	Castilla-La Mancha	Castilla y León	Castilla-La Mancha
	2021		2020		2019		2018		2017	
Complaints received	5,170	6,543	4,759	5,541	5,269	6,051	5,241	5,672	5,410	5,103
Total People Prosecuted	1999 (38,67%)	2167 (33,12%)	1448 (30,43%)	1606 (28,98%)	1735 (32,93%)	1998 (33,02%)	1841 (35,13%)	2056 (36,25%)	1789 (33,07%)	2136 (41,86%)
People prosecuted in Courts of VAW	603 (30,17%)	987 (45,55%)	484 (33,43%)	697 (43,4%)	638 (36,72%)	912 (45,65%)	614 (33,35%)	894 (43,48%)	653 (36,5%)	914 (42,8%)
Percentage of convictions among those prosecuted in Courts of VAW	519 (86,10%)	884 (89,6%)	406 (83,9%)	596 (85,5%)	515 (80,7%)	804 (88,2%)	485 (79%)	737 (82,4%)	522 (79,9%)	769 (84,1%)
People on trial in criminal court	1380 (69,03%)	1170 (53,99%)	949 (65,54%)	901 (56,1%)	1077 (62,07%)	1077 (53,9%)	1205 (65,45%)	1152 (56,03%)	1122 (62,72%)	1208 (56,55%)
Percentage of convictions per people persecutes in Criminal Court	919 (66,6%)	751 (64,2%)	574 (60,5%)	523 (58%)	669 (62,1%)	601 (55,8%)	775 (64,3%)	702 (60,9%)	733 (65,3%)	618 (51,2%)
People on trial in provincial courts	16 (0,8%)	10 (0,46%)	15 (1,06%)	8 (0,49%)	20 (1,15%)	9 (0,45%)	22 (1,2%)	10 (0,49%)	14 (0,78%)	14 (0,66%)
Percentage of convictions amongst the people prosecuted in provincial courts	11 (68,8%)	8 (80%)	11 (73,3%)	8 (100%)	18 (90%)	7 (77,8%)	21 (95,5%)	10 (100%)	11(78,6%)	9 (64,3%)

