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Restorative justice and terrorist crimes: An experience in the Spanish context

ABSTRACT

In 2011, a pioneering experience of restorative justice was carried out in Spain through restorative encounters between individuals who had suffered the violence of the terrorist organization ETA and those who had exercised it. These encounters, unthinkable at first, were the seed of a practice that is currently becoming more frequent. This article offers a brief introduction outlining the differences between retributive and restorative justice and then describes the experience taking into consideration the motivation of both victims and perpetrators, the conditions needed to make them possible and the outcomes. This article also provides information regarding the number of encounters, where they took place and who the people in charge of their design and implementation were. The author acted as a mediator in the encounters and provides an account from her perspective as one of the key people involved in the process.

RESUMEN

En 2011 se llevó a cabo en España una experiencia pionera de justicia restaurativa a través de los encuentros restaurativos entre víctimas que habían sufrido

KEYWORDS

mediator
pioneering experience
terrorism organization
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harm
grief
recovery

PALABRAS CLAVE

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restaurativos

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víctima
delincuente
mediador
terrorismo
reconciliación

la violencia de la organización terrorista ETA y aquellos que la habían ejercido. Estos encuentros, impensables al principio, fueron la semilla de una práctica que actualmente se está volviendo más frecuente. Este artículo describe de manera concisa las diferencias entre la justicia retributiva y la restaurativa, para a continuación describir la experiencia llevada a cabo, teniendo en cuenta la motivación de víctimas y victimarios, las condiciones necesarias para realizar los encuentros y hacerlos posibles, finalizando con un breve análisis de sus resultados. Este artículo también proporciona información sobre el número de encuentros, dónde tuvieron lugar y quiénes fueron las personas a cargo de su diseño e implementación. La autora actuó como mediadora en los encuentros y da cuenta desde su perspectiva como una de las personas clave involucradas en el proceso.

1. It is mandatory for witnesses to testify and tell the truth. Only relatives of the accused are exempt from testifying as witnesses (Article 416 of *Ley de enjuiciamiento criminal* [Law on Criminal Procedure]).

INTRODUCTION: RETRIBUTIVE JUSTICE AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE – TWO CONTRASTING AND COMPLEMENTARY REALITIES

This article focuses on the restorative encounters between victims and offenders in cases of violent extremism and terrorism. It is important to approach this subject by explaining the distinction between the ‘ordinary criminal procedure’ and ‘restorative justice’.

In Spain, criminal justice is retributive, focused on the punishment of the offender. On the contrary, in the criminal jurisdiction of minors, justice is applied in a protective way, focusing on education. It is true that in Spain the penalties are aimed at the re-education and social reintegration of the convicts, as mandated by Article 25 of the Spanish Constitution, but during the phase of instruction (investigation of the criminal act) and the phase of prosecution, such a reintegrative approach is not taken into consideration. The perpetrators of the crime are sought, and if authorship is proven, they are sentenced without focusing on the educational options for the offender. The system does not focus on crime victims either. In Spain, criminal law is public, which means that crimes are committed against the state (except private and semi-private crimes), not against the victims; hence they are considered witnesses (compensable if they are harmed and make a claim). For this reason, it is always the Public Prosecutor’s Office that exercises the public prosecution before the courts, while the victims appear as main witnesses. The prosecution does not intervene or interact with the victims in the sense of listening to them, explaining the procedure to them or preparing them for the trial. They are only seen on the day of the trial in the courtroom, where the prosecutor interrogates them in the presence of the rest of the legal operators (judges, lawyers), the accused and the public in the room. The process is then followed by the questions asked by defence lawyers. After that interrogation,¹ the victims can leave or stay in the courtroom until the trial is over, but they are not allowed to ask the defendant questions such as why they were chosen (as victims) or how they feel about the crimes. They are not present in the courtroom when the accused person testifies (the latter are the first to testify) but must wait outside to be called in; as a result, the victims can never hear the version of the accused.

In all criminal processes around the world, there is both the procedural truth – the truth that is established in court – and the truth that the victim needs. These two versions of truth rarely coincide.

The accused can invoke their right to testify, or not, against themselves, which means they can give another version of the facts that does not

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incriminate them, or even lie, without any legal consequences. In most of ETA's terrorism trials, the defendants did not recognize the legitimacy of the Spanish judges by behaving in an inappropriate manner in the courtroom, forcing them to be removed and transferred to detention cells. In this way, victims and perpetrators never met, nor could they even look at each other in the courtroom.

This generates what is known as secondary victimization or double victimization for the victim. Victims do not feel listened to; they hardly receive institutional support, and, in many cases, they even felt social rejection, when the terrorist organization had great support from society.

Nevertheless, 'restorative justice'² offers offenders, victims and the community an alternative pathway to justice. It promotes the safe participation of victims and offers people, who accept responsibility for the harm caused by their actions, an opportunity to make themselves accountable to those they have harmed. It is based on the recognition that criminal behaviour not only violates the law but also harms victims and the community (UNODC 2020).

One of the greatest defenders of restorative justice at the international level is Tony Marshall, who defines it as 'a process through which parties or individuals who have been involved and/ or who have an interest in a particular crime, collectively resolve how to deal with the immediate consequences of this and its repercussions for the future' (cited in Braithwaite 1999: 5). Restorative justice promotes dialogue between victims, offenders and the community with the aim of:

1. For the victim: obtaining financial or emotional reparation, procuring the truth and clearing up questions to close grieving.
2. For the offender: understanding the genuine impact of the crime, offering reparation to the victim and attaining advantageous legal repercussions (to lessen punishment).
3. For the community: facilitation of social pacification.

There is real and direct learning about the harm caused by the crime when restorative justice is applied, and this translates into less recidivism.

In recent years, restorative justice has been implemented within and beyond the criminal justice system to address serious and complex crimes and violent conflicts. Participants (victims, offenders, their supporters and community members) express satisfaction with the encounters and their outcomes (Latimer et al. 2005). The experience of restorative justice in cases of violent extremism is quite limited, but it is extremely powerful, teaching valuable lessons on how to use restorative justice for preventing and countering this kind of violence. Interestingly, on the ground, experience is one step ahead of existing legislation or doctrinal recommendations. This explains why we need to draw our conclusions using a deductive research methodology. In other words, given our experience, we have learned that the use of restorative justice should not be limited to particular criminal typologies; quite the opposite, it is applicable to every offense. The intent of the victim and victimizer and their emotional preparedness are what matter the most. Their coming to this process voluntarily is the only criterion that matters when determining whether a restorative encounter should take place or not. The data coming from our experiences in prisons tell us that individuals who request to partake in these encounters do so many years after the crime transpired and while serving their sentences.

2. From a legal point of view and according to the majority doctrine, the origin of modern restorative justice can be dated to 1974, when the first verdict of restorative justice was issued in Kitchener (Ontario, Canada). In a vandalism spree, two young people damaged 22 properties. They were gradually able to restore the damage, explain their reasons and understand the negative impact they had generated. The success of this case led to the establishment of the first restorative justice programme in Kitchener, known as the 'Victim-Offender Reconciliation Programme'. From there, it spread to the United States and later to the rest of the world. Nevertheless, according to Howard Zehr,

[i]t owes a great deal to earlier movements and to a variety of cultural and religious traditions. It owes a special debt to the Native people of North America and New Zealand. The precedents and roots of restorative justice are much wider [...]. Indeed, they are as old as human history.
(2014: 10–11)

3. The design of the programme was ordered and approved by Mercedes Gallizo, former Secretary General of Penitentiary Institutions, and prepared by Txema Urkijo, Xabier Etxebarria and Esther Pascual; Pascual was responsible for elaborating the restorative methodology.

There are many tools that facilitate restorative justice in attaining its objectives, such as criminal and penitentiary mediation, restorative circles, panels and dialogues, conferences and peace treaties or sentencing circles (Pascual 2012). There are also restorative encounters, which is the name given to the first experiences of direct dialogue between victims and perpetrators – in this case between former members of the terrorist organization ETA. We decided to use that terminology because it differed in part from the rest of the restorative practices mentioned here, in the sense that there is no need to reach a reparation agreement that deploys advantages for both parties, as is sought in mediation processes, nor does it involve group dialogues. It is a ‘face to face’ between the perpetrator of the terrorist crime and the victim, after the conviction and many years after the crime.

I have had the privilege of participating as a facilitator in the first restorative encounters that ever had taken place, and it is from this perspective that I write this article, from the vantage point of the mediator. I believe that restorative justice complements retributive justice, that it can only be applied after the fact, when victims are in the third phase of the devictimization process and perpetrators are accepting responsibility for their criminal acts. It is impossible to carry out such encounters if the victim is in a hateful phase (although this emotion is perfectly legitimate), or if the perpetrator does not assume his or her individual responsibility in the collective dynamic of sowing terror in the name of an organization.

THE BEGINNING OF RESTORATIVE ENCOUNTERS: WHY, WHERE, WHEN AND HOW?

In 2011, at the initiative of several of the prisoners who were serving sentences for terrorist offenses, the Basque government’s Directorate for Victims of Terrorism, which at the time was led by Maixabel Laso, with Txema Urkijo and Jaime Arrese as her advisors, was asked to contact victims who would be willing to meet with the ex-terrorists at the Nanclares de la Oca prison in Vitoria. At that time, there were 30 prisoners who had belonged to the terrorist organization ETA and had dissociated themselves from it, expressly renouncing armed struggle in writing. From that moment on, an intervention strategy based on restorative justice was designed. The programme was called Restorative Encounters.³ The restorative work began with six inmates who freely and voluntarily decided to participate in the preparation of the meetings. After exhaustive and meticulous preparation, we also worked with six victims who wanted to participate as well. Once the two parties were ready, the first four restorative encounters were held in May 2011.

Simultaneously in preparation for the other pending encounters, Xabier Etxebarria and Txema Urkijo designed and executed the ‘Restorative Workshops’, also held inside the prison. In these workshops, different figures such as philosophers, journalists and politicians came to discuss with the ex-terrorists various issues related to ETA terrorism. It was in one of these workshops that the perpetrators were shocked to hear the story of two middle-aged men, whose parents had been murdered by ETA when they were children. This workshop had a profound effect on the perpetrators, who then decided to join the preparations for the restorative encounters, enabling four more meetings to take place. From that moment on and given that interest had increased even in other Spanish prisons, a team of mediators was created

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and one person was placed in charge of carrying out the encounters: the author of this article.

As the team began its work and after two encounters (while others were in preparation), the governing party of Spain changed following the elections of November 2011. In February 2012, the encounters were discontinued; nevertheless, the process was unstoppable. We were able to continue our work outside the prison when the convicts were released on temporary leave or were granted freedom. In these cases, we did not need institutional support or legal coverage.

With the return of the Socialist Party to power, after the elections of 2019, restorative meetings were reactivated in various prisons in Spain during the years 2021 and 2022, and nine more encounters were held. In total there have been 25 restorative encounters with the support of the General Secretariat of Penitentiary Institutions and the Basque government, all of them with significant social impact in Euskadi. This is in addition to many other reconciliation initiatives that have taken place in the Basque Country during all these years.⁴

4. Such as the Glencree experience and several educational programmes with secondary school students and victims.

REQUIREMENTS TO PARTICIPATE

- Voluntary participation to start the process, stop it or terminate it. This applies throughout the entire process. Free consent is the primary criterion for initiating a restorative justice process (Biffi 2021: 8). The mediator must ensure that the person participates on his own accord, without pressure or coercion from other prisoners, family members, prison authorities, judges and so on. In cases of terrorism, many times the person suffers or endures pressures not to participate, in the case of both victims and perpetrators. In the case of victims, some decline the invitation because their children or other members of their families do not support their participation in such an experience. In these cases, there are only three options: to participate and confront the family, not to participate so as not to harm the family, or to do so secretly.

The victimizer may feel pressured not to participate either by prisoner collective, which supplies legal support, or by other members of the terrorist organization, who consider participants traitors to their cause. We also verified that the perpetrators who partook in the encounters did not receive pressure from their families. We concluded that these militants committed to the encounters with the same self-determination that they had demonstrated when deciding to join the terrorist organization, never regarding how their families positioned themselves towards the encounters themselves. However, it also became evident that their families support them unconditionally.

Nevertheless, the pressure exerted by judges or prison authorities to participate in restorative justice experiences can contaminate voluntariness. It is just as negative to impede someone from participating as it is to coerce him/her to partake in the experience. In both cases, voluntariness would be compromised. In the first sessions, the mediator must verify that the consent to participate was given freely, completely unencumbered. The fear that participation in the encounters might be based on obtaining sentencing advantages proves itself unfounded. No one can endure the groundwork required for the encounter and the encounter itself if they are not participating sincerely and honestly.

5. The encounters have been made known in several audio-visual projects such as the documentary on TV3 *El perdó* ('Forgiveness'), the documentary series produced and presented by Jon Sistiaga titled *ETA: The End of Silence*, and the film *Maixabel* directed by Iciar Bollain based on the life story of Maixabel Lasa, among others.

It is true that judges look favourably upon the participation in restorative justice processes on behalf of those convicted of terrorist crimes. At times, it becomes a requirement imposed by the court, but it contaminates the voluntariness of the process. It is also true that sentences in Spain have a reintegrative purpose, so judges need to prove that the person is ready to live in freedom and restorative justice gives them substantial cause to grant prison permits, grade progression and parole. But as a society, we must ask ourselves: how do I want convicts to leave prison? Conscious of the damage they have caused, acknowledging their responsibility, with a guarantee of non-recidivism?

These men and women may initially be motivated by the promise of obtaining certain prison benefits after a restorative encounter, but only those who want to offer the truth to the victim in an honest and profound way will be able to complete the months of preparation and hold an encounter. If they only wish to improve their prison situation, the mediator will detect this throughout the numerous preparatory interviews, and the victim will also identify this within minutes of sitting together. Hence, in each interview, the mediator must meticulously examine the perpetrator's willingness and motivation for participating.

- *Confidentiality.* This requirement is of great importance for all the parties involved and is decisive for the success of the restorative encounter itself. The mediator can gain the perpetrator's trust thanks to the confidential nature of the encounter. This matters because the former militant is the repository of very sensitive information, making him or her the custodian of emotions and experiences that, on many occasions, neither of the parties has verbalized until this moment. Consequently, these processes are so delicate that they require special protection with no public exposure, either before or during the process. As time passes, the parties may want to make their conversations known for different reasons, as has occurred in some cases.⁵ However, the participants are the only ones who can do so, since the mediator is owed to confidentiality. Others have preferred to remain anonymous; therefore, the mediator will never be able to share this information.
- *No prison benefits.* There are no direct benefits for participating in restorative encounters. However, when assessing the prognosis of recidivism, the degree of involvement in prison conduct programmes and the risk variables of an inmate, prison conduct boards and prison supervision judges granting exit permits, grade progressions and probation take many factors into consideration, some of which are enhanced in restorative encounters and, therefore, improving the inmate's assessment. I refer here to variables such as taking responsibility for the criminal act, recognition of the damage caused, request for forgiveness from the victims of the crime and so on. Although there are no direct benefits from participating in restorative encounters, in the long run, the encounters do generate positive effects on sentences in combination with other factors (length of the sentence, good behaviour, etc.). These prison benefits can be controversial and even produce discomfort for some victims. However, as a society, this is precisely what we should expect from a prison sentence. It should serve to re-educate and reintegrate people; individuals should leave prison prepared to live in freedom and knowing that they will never repeat that criminal act. And yes, indeed, restorative justice contributes to these objectives since it allows the perpetrators to understand the impact

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of their crime, to empathize with the victim and to become aware of the pain and damage the crime has generated in the victim, in society and in their own personal and social context. This is the best guarantee of non-recidivism.

- Conducted by a mediator (also called facilitator), duly trained and qualified, with experience in the field of intervention and restorative justice, who knows how to guarantee the impartiality and neutrality that must be exercised during the preparation and development of the encounters. Such impartiality and neutrality do not mean that he or she is not aware of the moral asymmetry between victim and perpetrator. To begin with, the victimhood was imposed on the sufferer; on the contrary, the perpetrator chose to opt for armed struggle and could have decided otherwise. Here lies the first difference. The second discrepancy is that while the victim has suffered irreparable harm, the perpetrator is the one who caused it. Therefore, the mediator knows perfectly well who is in violation of the other's human rights and who is not. Impartiality and neutrality refer to the treatment the two parties receive in conversation with the mediator, expecting to be treated with the same degree of respect.
- *Process flexibility*. There are no set rules. The restorative justice process is open, tailor-made to each party's needs and expectations (Biffi 2021: 8). The mediator adapts to the rhythms of the participants and their needs. At times the interviews need to be conducted in evocative spaces for the parties; in other instances, it may be requested that the encounter be shortened or lengthened. In addition, one must constantly adapt to the demands of the environment, and this requires a large degree of flexibility.

MOTIVATIONS FOR PARTICIPATING

Why would a person who has suffered a traumatic event, an irreparable loss, want to meet the perpetrator who has caused that suffering? And in the same way, we may ask, why would a person who has committed an atrocious act and who can no longer remedy the crime in any way want to see the person to whom he or she has generated all that pain? Not every victim or perpetrator wants to participate in a face-to-face encounter with their 'opponent'. However, there are people who do wish to have that dialogue. Both options, either not wanting to dialogue or desiring it, are legitimate and unquestionable. However, there is more than one reason to explain why victims and perpetrators want to engage in a restorative dialogue. Numerous studies underscore that individuals are not always aware of the motivational basis of their behaviour (Anderson 1989); however, their intentions can be inferred from observing their verbal and behavioural manifestations. In this case, it is the facilitator who interprets the statements and actions and discovers what encouraged an individual to participate. All the different grounds are undeniably valid and powerful. Given how this was such a complex and meditated decision, everyone involved is ready to accept the significant emotional and cognitive mobilization the encounter instils in them (Lozano 2013: 90).

The victims who participated in the restorative encounters did so motivated by several reasons (Pascual 2013: 145):

1. To be an example of peace and coexistence for their children and grandchildren.

6. In 2012, the new Conservative government officially stopped these encounters. In 2021, the socialist administration implemented them again.

2. To be able to ask questions about everything that occurred on that tragic day.
3. To discover exactly what happened and why the perpetrators accepted to carry out the action.
4. To be able to reproach the victimizer.
5. To be able to understand why someone can kill.
6. To witness how the perpetrators feel today.
7. To understand what their contribution to the armed struggle has helped them achieve (if anything).
8. To follow what their faith demands of them.
9. To contribute to peace and reconciliation in the Basque Country.

These motivations are then translated into questions that victims pose to offenders in their conversations. However, no victim can receive proper answers to these questions via the ordinary criminal process since the victims are not granted a space within the process. In many cases, the information they seek will allow them to come to terms with their grieving and find emotional solace for they no longer need to imagine details about the crime or why the murder took place. Sometimes, we discover that victims have been suppressing a feeling of guilt because in some way they feel 'responsible' for the murder of their loved one, believing they could have avoided the crime if they had only been with their family member at the time of killing.

It is interesting to note that among the initial motivations for participating in the encounters, none of the victims expressed their desire to receive an apology for the crime committed. In some cases, they emphatically expressed that 'I do not need an apology to live'; 'I do not want to be asked for forgiveness'; and even 'I do not want you to ask me for forgiveness, for you to transfer onto me the ethical responsibility of freeing you from your guilt'.

On the other hand, for the offenders, the initial motivations for participating in the meetings were:

1. To contribute to peace after the armed struggle.
2. To be able to give answers to what the victims need.
3. To be able to make reparations as deemed possible.
4. To fulfil a personal need that carries remorse and guilt.
5. To pay their debt to the victims and to society.

In the same manner as the victims expressed how unnecessary it was for the perpetrator to ask for forgiveness, some of the victimizers said, 'I am ashamed to ask for forgiveness. It falls short'; 'I do not want to transfer onto the victim the responsibility of having to forgive me or not'.

At the end of the encounters, it is very clear that the initial hopes of the victims were transformed into fulfilled expectations. In most cases, the encounters allowed them to recover their lost faith in humanity.

Regarding the perpetrators, their initial motivations for participating in the process allowed them to express their feelings with depth and sincerity and to discover just how generous human beings (the victims) can be.

STATISTICS

Since their inception in January 2011⁶ and until their end in May 2023, 25 restorative encounters in terrorist offenses (Figure 1) have been carried out

with institutional support, 18 of which have been held inside prisons.⁷ All of the encounters took place under the request and supervision of socialist governments, specifically under the umbrella of the PSOE government and with the support of Mercedes Gallizo and Ángel Luis Órtiz, both of them Secretaries General of the Penitentiary Administration. Without their support, these experiences would never have seen the light.

A restorative encounter with a 'direct victim' refers to those cases in which the perpetrator dialogues with a direct relative of the murdered person or with the survivor of a crime that he committed. An invisible thread unites both victims and perpetrators of the crime. However, a restorative encounter with the 'indirect victim' takes place when a victim dialogues with a member of the terrorist organization who is not directly linked to the victim through a crime for which he or she is responsible.

Both encounters require the same type of preparation, supervision and care. However, the encounter between direct victims and perpetrators is, undeniably, more emotionally powerful for both parties (Figure 2).

The highest number of individuals participating in the encounters as victims of terrorist violence have been children who lost their father. This percentage reaches 42 per cent, compared to the lowest, which represents the number of victims who lost a child. The widowed victims who participated in the encounters were all women.

This is explained by the fact that most of the 'targets to be eliminated', paraphrasing the terrorist organization, were men who occupied political positions, police forces, businessmen who refused to pay ETA's revolutionary tax, judges, prosecutors, military and so on. The positions 'pursued' by the organization were mostly held by men, in a Spain in which the incorporation of women into the workforce and positions of power has been noticeable in the past decades, hence the number of middle-aged married male fatalities, orphans and widows. Figure 3 illustrates the percentage of victims participating by gender.

In the case of the perpetrators participating in the restorative meetings, the participants have been 100 per cent male; therefore, we will be referring to the offender in the next section as 'he'.

7. Additionally, there have been encounters that were held without the need for institutional support and of which we are unaware.

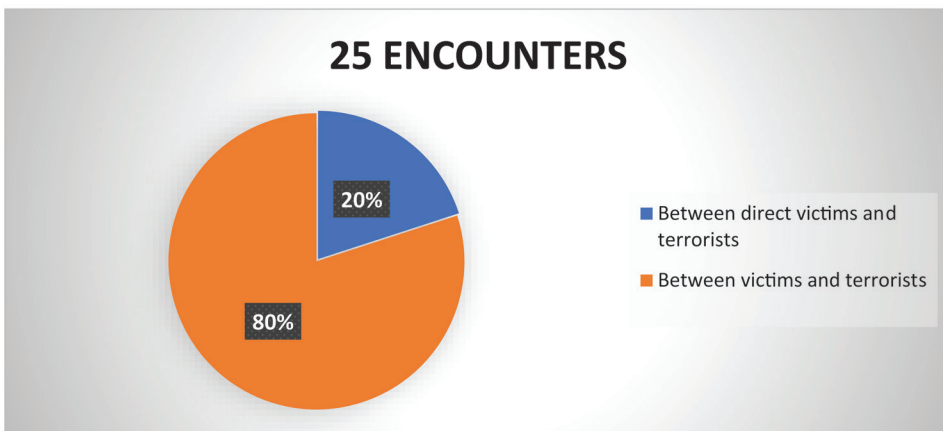


Figure 1: Types of encounter.

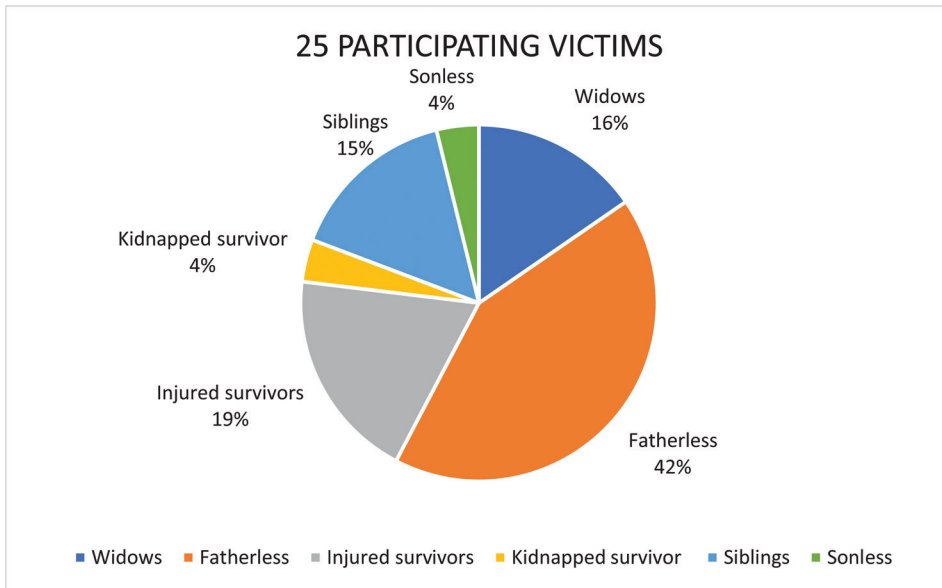


Figure 2: Identity of victims.

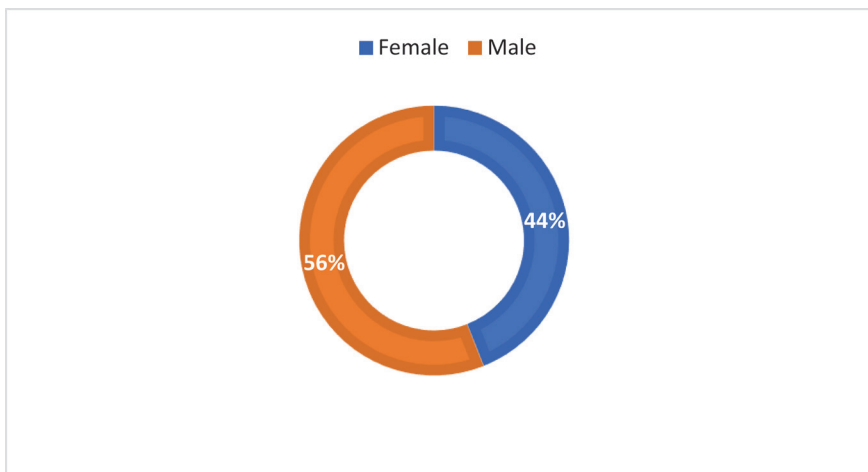


Figure 3: Gender of victims.

WHAT HAVE RESTORATIVE ENCOUNTERS ACHIEVED?

1. The perpetrator provides the victim with the answers needed to close his or her mourning; grieving can come to an end.
2. The perpetrator helps suppress hatred and turns into an agent of peace and an example of coexistence for future generations. There is a clear snowball effect.
3. To demystify victim and victimizer: the victim sees a person who is suffering, not a criminal. When a victim sits in front of a perpetrator, looks into

his eyes and listens to his life story, the victim discovers that he or she is facing a human being who also feels and suffers. The victim sees a person who is defeated because he joined a cause that he believed was just and necessary, but instead has only served to sow pain and generate terror; he has devoted his life to a useless fight. This terrorist life meant giving up many things including destroying his own family and, of course, the life of his victims. When a person is able to make this self-critical reflection, as well as recognize that his life and his struggle have served no purpose, except to generate pain, he recovers his humanity. Victims meet people in this state. This is why they see a person who is suffering and not the criminal they expected when they sat down to talk.

4. To reproach and make the other person understand the damage he has caused.
5. To listen to the harm produced and its consequences. This helps avoid the repetition of violence.
6. To learn the value of forgiveness: asking for it gives the offender a new humanity; they recover the humanity they once lost. And for the victim, it restores their lost faith in humanity.
7. This experience demonstrates the greatness of human beings, capable of the worst and of the best.
8. Although the number of encounters is small, as Etxeberria Mauleón states:

Their impact far exceeds the size of this number. Because, first, for the skeptics, they have proven that these paths are possible; and second, because their symbolic and purposeful burden for the whole of society cannot be denied. It is up to us, in this sense, those of us who are convinced of their fruitfulness, as a gesture of solidarity, to welcome their meaning and spread it.

(2013: 32)

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Esther Pascual Rodríguez is the undergraduate director of the degree in criminology at the University Francisco de Vitoria, Madrid. She joined higher education six years ago and makes it compatible with her law practice (started in 2001) and with her work in mediation (ongoing since 2005) in coordination with the Association for Mediation and Peace-Making of Madrid. This association pioneered programmes for penitentiary and penal mediation, designing pilot programmes that have become widespread in Spain. She is the author of various publications on sentencing and restorative justice. One especially important book of hers on this topic is *Los ojos del otro: Los encuentros restaurativos entre víctimas y ex miembros de ETA* (Editorial SalTerra, 2013), a book that narrates the overwhelmingly powerful, humane and transformative experience that those particular encounters embody from the theoretical perspective of the facilitator. Esther participated in the restorative justice encounters between victims and former members of ETA as a mediator and as the coordinator of the project when other facilitators joined the team, as well as being the author of the intervention protocols that were put in place. She holds a Ph.D. from the Universidad Complutense, Madrid (2012), with a thesis on mediation titled 'La mediación en el sistema penal: Propuestas para un modelo reparador, humano y garantista'. Esther also trains mediators and considers herself to be a life-long apprentice.

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