



The instrumental diagnosis. Ideal organizational model of a sleep laboratory. What expectations for patients?

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BACKGROUND

Since the publication of European guidelines for the accreditation of Sleep Medicine Centres (SMCs) in 2006, Italian SMCs and laboratories have been challenged to adequate their standards to the European ones. Therefore, this study focuses on the ideal SMC and the unmet needs related to the Italian scenario.

METHODS



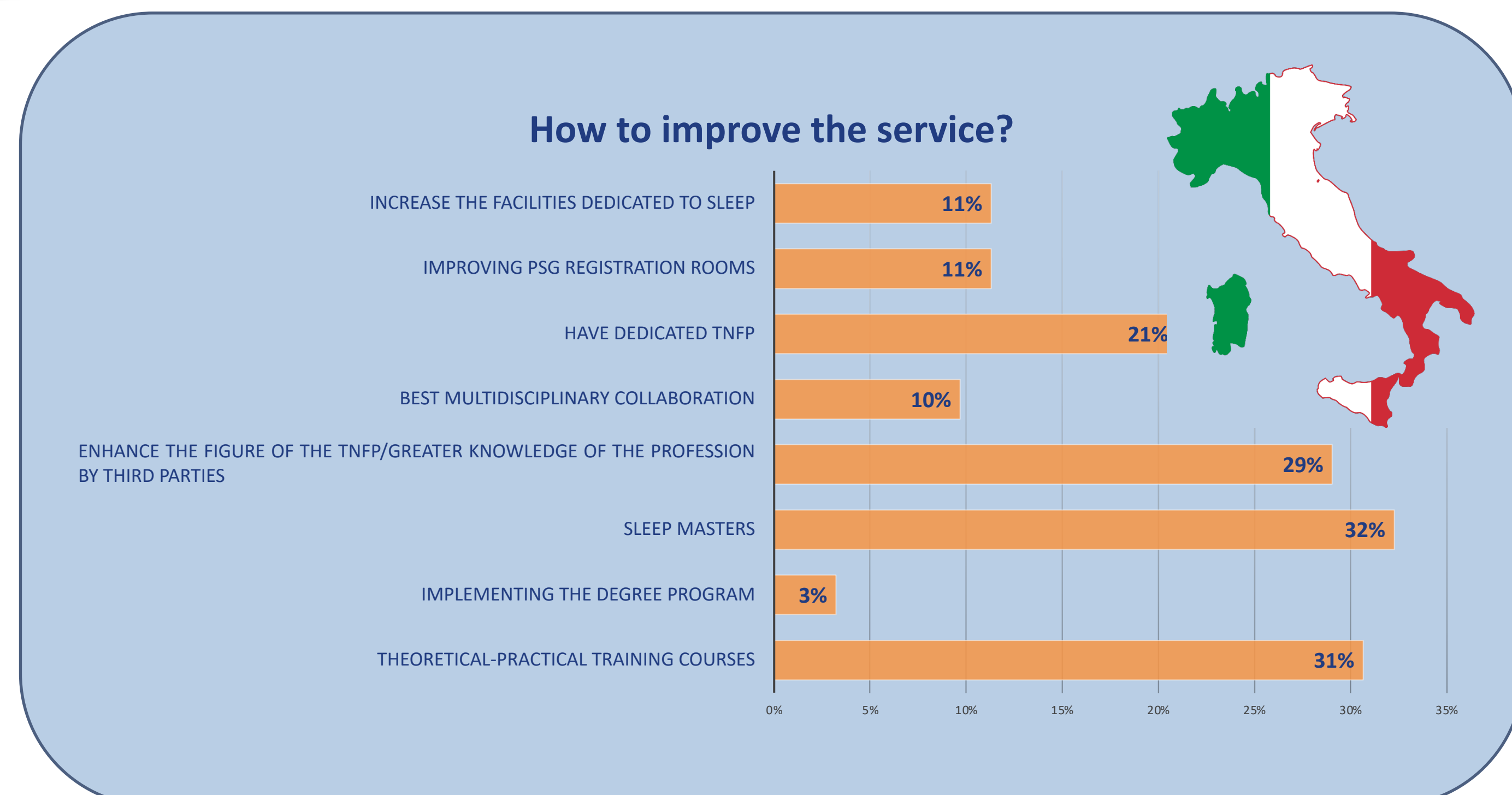
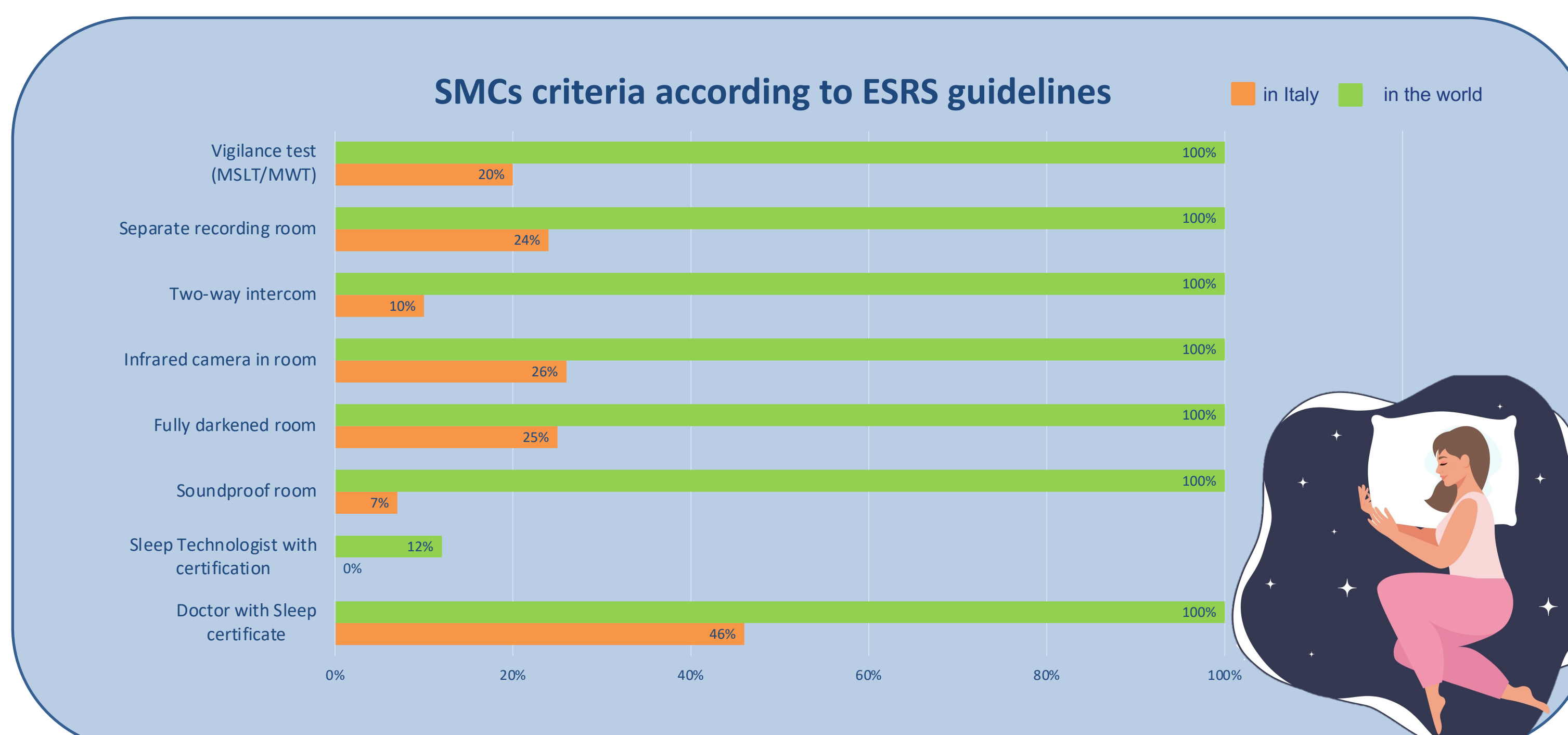
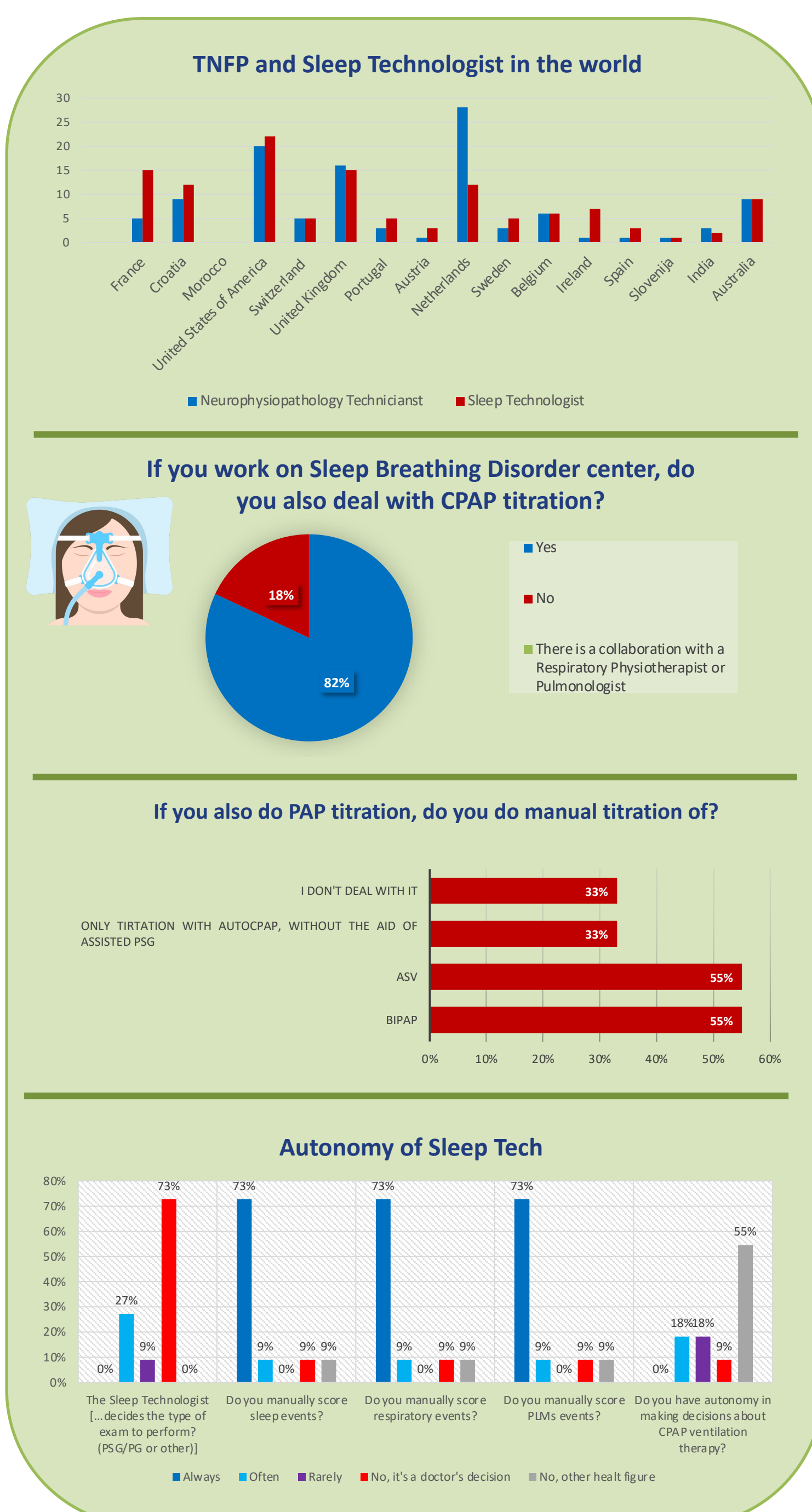
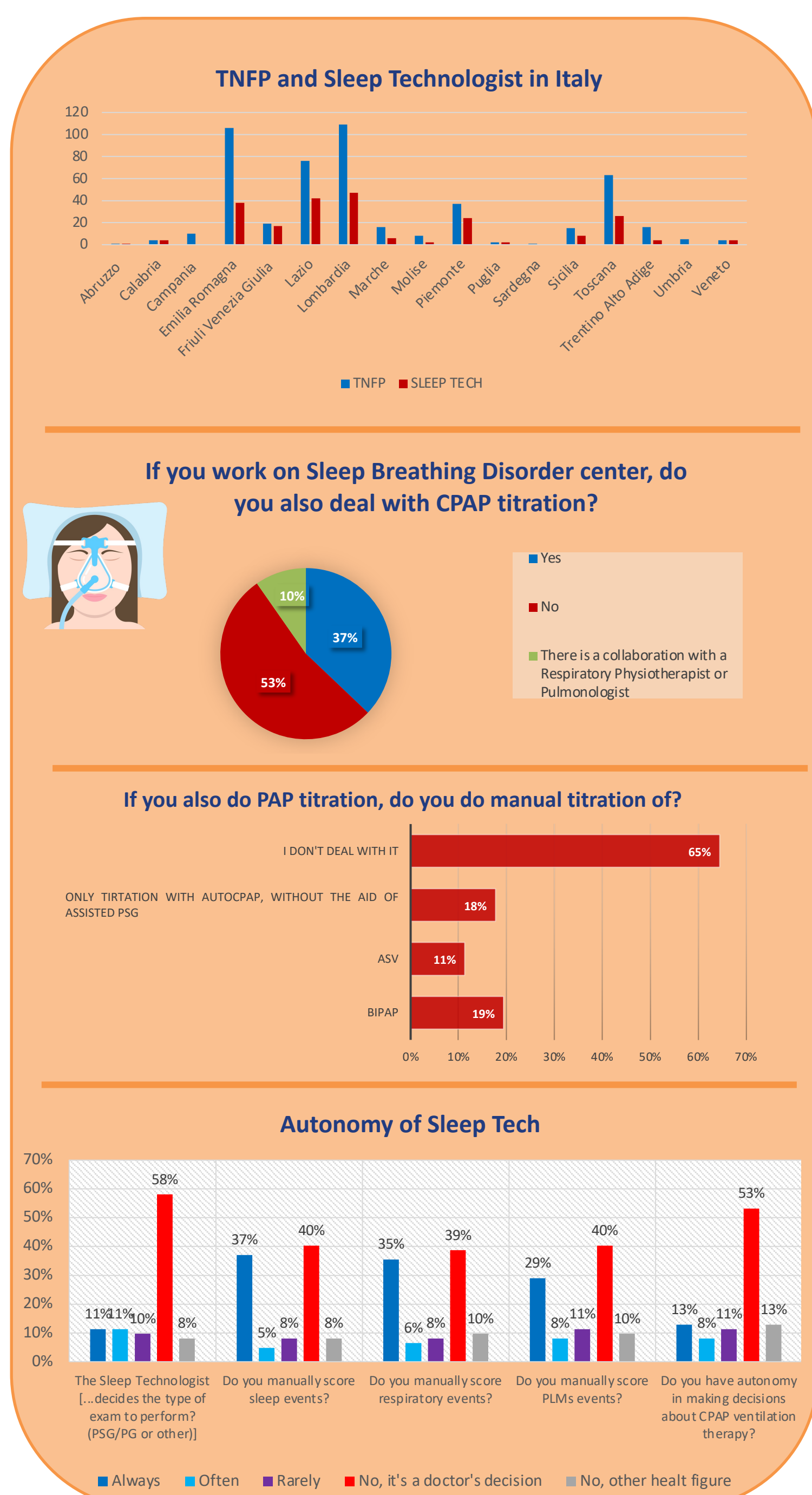
An anonymous questionnaire was created with questions relating to one's experience/training in sleep medicine, to the preparation of the rooms of the SMCs.

POPULATION

100 Neurophysiopathology Technicians (TNFP) from Italy and other countries and foreign SMCs participated in the questionnaire.



RESULTS



This preliminary comparison between Italian and international SMCs shows:

- A greater amount of TNFPs with a sleep medicine expertise in the international centers than in Italian counterpart.
- International centers recognize the figure and the role of Sleep Technologists, who have a greater decision-making autonomy. Conversely, in the Italian scenario, TNFPs employed in sleep laboratories complained the lack of such setting.
- Foreign SMCs appear to be more compliant with the ESRS guidelines.

DISCUSSION

The Neurophysiopathology Technician plays an important role within SMC, both from a technical-organizational and relational point of view. Furthermore, the TNFP must develop conscious decision-making autonomy on the techniques to be adopted for the optimal patient's evaluation and treatment.

However, although the training courses of the Italian TNFP is in some ways greater than those present abroad, more specific training in the field of sleep seems to be missing. This gap could be both the cause and the consequence of a reduced enhancement of the role of the sleep technologist in Italy. Indeed, the most evident data that emerges from the study concerns the decision-making autonomy understood as the choice of the best instrumental diagnostic procedure derived from the patient's history.

What are the possible solutions?

In order to improve the SMCs a higher attention should be dedicated to sleep facilities, improving sleep recordings rooms in accordance with ESRS guidelines.

Moreover, masters and theoretical-practical courses must be implemented for TNFP and sleep medicine staff, paving the way for a certification of Sleep Technologist, both in Italy and abroad.

REFERENCES

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Would you like to contribute to the questionnaire?