

Mapping domestic and sexual violence support-services in Italy: challenges and strengths of a study

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VIVA PROJECT

International conference on sexual harassment & sexual violence: victims,
perpetrators and bystanders

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The ViVa project

Monitoring, Evaluation and Analysis of interventions to prevent and combat violence against women

Census on specialist and general support services:

- ▶ **Women's Centres**
 - ▶ **Women's Shelters**
 - ▶ **Local Anti-Violence Networks**
 - ▶ **General support services within these networks**
- ...and on
- ▶ **Treatment programs for perpetrators of violence against women**

Goal: to **UPDATE** the information on support-services, **mapping** them and **describing** their main characteristics

Two surveys are ongoing

WOMEN'S CENTRES

- Address **all types of violence** (not only sexual violence)
- The first women's centres were triggered by **women and feminist associations**
- Working method - **Relationship between women:** women's awareness on the violence suffered, including the sexual one, emerges through a trusting relationship and an empathetic understanding
- **New NGOs/associations/actors started to deal with this issue:** the universe of support services has become increasingly **heterogeneous**
- CNR researchers identified about **400** women's centers active as of **31 Dec. 2017**

TREATMENT PROGRAMS FOR PERPETRATORS

- The first program was established in **2005** to treat sexual offenders within the Bollate Prison (Milan)
- Aside from the prison the first treatment program was created in Florence in January **2009** (CAM-Centro di Ascolto Uomini Maltrattanti)
- **29** treatment programs at the **end of 2014**
- **44** treatment programs at the **beginning of 2017**
(LeNove, 2017)
- CNR researchers identified about **60** treatment programs active (about 70 access points in total) as of **31 Dec. 2017**

METHODOLOGY (1): Participative Approach

- ▶ Substantial reason: involvement of **aware and competent** operators, who have a **critical understanding of the issue**
- ▶ Functional reason: to achieve the **highest possible response rate**

PEOPLE INVOLVED:

- ▶ Activists from **women and feminist associations** & **directors** of women's **centers and shelters**
- ▶ Men and women involved in dealing with perpetrators – **academics** and **directors** of treatment **programs**

COLLABORATION FOR:

- ▶ Definition of two **lists** with information on the women's centers/programs to map
- ▶ Creation of the **questionnaires** to survey the main characteristics of women's centers/programs
- ▶ **Interpretation** of data

METHODOLOGY (2)

Mixed-Methods Approach

Use of both **qualitative** and **quantitative** methods

1st phase: Semi-structured questionnaires, designed following a participative approach, are administrated through both **CASI** and **CATI** methods:

- *First step*: the respondents have been contacted via mail and invited to fill in the questionnaire in a Computer-Assisted Self-administrated Interview.
- *Second Step*: a Computer-Assisted Telephonic Interview will be conducted for the centers / programs that have not yet responded.

2nd phase: Face to face in-depth interviews will be carried out to investigate the **strengths** and **weaknesses** of selected women's centers and treatment programs. The selection will consist of an intentional sample, defined by the results of the previous phase

Lists of the centers/programs to be surveyed: (3 steps)

► 1ST STEP - DESK ANALYSIS ON THE AVAILABLE SOURCES

	STARTING POINT		OTHER SOURCES
	Description	Strengths & weaknesses	Description
Women's centers	Database of the National helpline (1522)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •most complete source •does not foresee standardized update procedures 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mapping "Come ci trovi". Available online at www.comecitrovi.it 2. Official websites of Regional governments
Treatment programs for perpetrators	Mapping made by LeNove	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •updated in January 2017 •does not include programs carried out with sexual offenders inside prisons 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. National Network "Relive" 2. Association "Maschile Plurale" 3. Official websites of Regional governments 4. Free online search (forum and online journals)

Lists of the centers/programs to be surveyed: (3 steps)

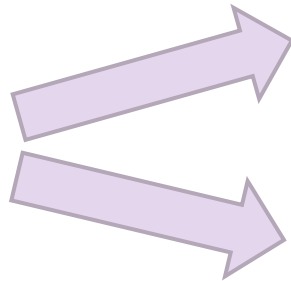
- ▶ **2nd STEP - INVOLVEMENT OF STAKEHOLDERS.** The lists built in the 1st step were sent to stakeholders in different Italian Regions. They were asked to: report centers/programs not included in the mapping and correct mistakes.
- ▶ **3rd STEP - VALIDATION OF INFORMATION.** After having merged all the information collected during the previous phases, we proceeded to carry out further checks, calling women's centres and treatment programs for perpetrators, with the aim of correcting any errors and filling in the missing information

Final lists: about 400 women's centers; about 60 treatment programs

The Questionnaires (1)

- ▶ The semi-structured questionnaires have been designed with the collaboration of researchers and professionals active in this field (participative approach)

- ▶ Two Pretesting procedures



Expert review

Experts were asked to verify the consistency of the questions, highlighting any critical issues

Pilot study

A survey were carried out on a small sample of centers/ programs in order to test the wording and the comprehension of the questions

The Questionnaires (2)

Sections

- ▶ BASIC INFORMATION ON THE SERVICE
(name, address, phone number, etc)
- ▶ MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MANAGING INSTITUTION
- ▶ STRUCTURAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL ASPECTS
- ▶ THE STAFF
- ▶ PERSONNEL TRAINING
- ▶ NETWORK
- ▶ SHELTERS and other facilities
(only for women's centers)
- ▶ SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES
- ▶ OTHER ACTIVITIES
- ▶ DATA on WOMEN supported by the centers and
MEN treated by the programs
- ▶ LOANS (fundings)

Expected results

- ▶ A complete and geo-localized mapping of services that deal with gender violence
- ▶ Bridging the lack of statistical data
- ▶ Contribute to the debate on minimum requirements of the specialized and general services

WOMEN'S CENTERS

- Update the National Helpline database
- Highlight differences between women's associations and other NGOs/associations
- Analysis of the relationship between centres and other support services
- Provide statistics on women in the care of the centres
- Explore the availability of shelters

TREATMENT PROGRAMS

- Highlight differences between programs managed by different types of actors (public, women's associations...)
- Analysis of the connections with specialist and general support services
- Provide statistics on men in the care of the programs
- Focus on the programs that treat sexual offenders within prison

Strengths and weaknesses

Strengths

- ▶ The participatory methodology allowed us to enrich the survey with different points of view
- ▶ To provide reliable information on the support services for women, as well as on treatment programs for perpetrators of violence, focusing on the heterogeneity among these services
- ▶ Comparability with official statistics

Weaknesses

- ▶ The lack of information took a long time to define the collective of the centers/ programs under investigation.
- ▶ Desirability of the answers.
- ▶ Difficulty in involving services that are not interested in being identified and recognized.