



BETWEEN RECOGNITION AND DEPOLITICIZATION OF ANTI-VIOLENCE METHODOLOGIES: NOTES FROM ITALY

M. Pietrobelli, A.M. Toffanin, B. Busi, P. Demurtas

ENGV Conference 2023
Wolverhampton, 21-23 June 2023



ANALISI E VALUTAZIONE DEGLI
INTERVENTI DI PREVENZIONE E
CONTRASTO ALLA VIOLENZA
CONTRO LE DONNE



Institute for Research
on Population
and Social Policies

Overview of Presentation

Introduction

Theoretical
framework

Methodology

The Italian case

Notes to discuss

- In Italy women's and feminist associations working to combat VAW and support women survivors established peculiar, and effective (Grevio, 2020) methodologies of intervention: **gendered, intersectional, oriented to social and cultural transformation.**

These methodologies are represented by activists as opposed to those used by social services:

Survivor-oriented intervention vs standardized intervention
active and non-judgmental listening vs self-righteous attitude
symmetrical relation vs top-down approach
empowerment vs protection

Overview of Presentation

Introduction

Theoretical
framework

Methodology

The Italian case

Notes to discuss

- are these methodologies *recognized* within the Italian antiviolence system?
- can these practices be a model for gender social policy?
- and what about the risk to “depoliticize” interventions to prevent and combat male violence against women?
- is VAW in Italy a gendered issue?

To contextualise: Italy

Introduction

Theoretical
framework

Methodology

The Italian case

Notes to discuss

- Southern European Familistic Welfare Model (Ferrera, 2021)
- 16° position regarding the EIGE equality index 2023 (close to EU average)
- 31.5% of women aged 16-70 have been victims of some forms of violence during their life (Istat, 2014)
- 4.5% of women aged 16-70 have been victims of sexual or physical violence during the last 12 months (Istat, 2014)
- ongoing regulatory processes at national and local level, also through funding
- the Country is still lacking an organic law on VAW at the national level
- regulations are fragmented and heterogeneous at local level (Virgilio, 2017)

Research purposes & theoretical framework

Introduction

**Theoretical
framework**

Methodology

The italian case

Notes to discuss

Analysis of tensions, negotiations, conflicts and alliances within the process of regulation of the system to combat VAW in Italy

Theoretical framework:

- anti-violence system as **organizational field**... (DiMaggio, Powell, 1983, 1991; Cannito et al., 2022) ... and as **power relation field** (Bourdieu, 1991)
- conceptualization of VAW and funding system analysed as stakes in a **recognition process** with symbolic and redistributive dimensions (Fraser, 2003; 2014)
- transformations' process within welfare and care services (Payne and Askeland 2008; Bruni 2013; Giullari et al. 2019)
- anti-violence policy and practices as care policy (Fine, Davidson, 2018; Fine, Tronto, 2020; Lynch, 2022)

Voices from the ground and from public authorities

Introduction
Theoretical
framework
Methodology
The Italian case
Notes to discuss

- interviews and case analysis within women anti-violence centres on:
 - the Italian anti-violence system
 - the professional practices of “women’s relationship methodologies”
 - gender, intersectionality and multi-agency approaches within anti-violence policies
- desk review of documents adopted by Italian institutions at national and local level, as well as by civil society associations.



2018-2021
2022-2024
viva.cnr.it/en

1° WORK AREA: **Mapping** support services for women victims of violence and Treatment programmes for Perpetrators

2° WORK AREA: **Supporting policies** to prevent and fight VAW, through national plans on VAW evaluation



Regulation of interventions and practices: which representation of violence?

Introduction

Theoretical
framework

Methodology

The Italian case

Notes to discuss

- establishment phase along with the rest of Europe (Corradi & Stöckl, 2016)
- increasing state involvement drives further regulation and/or transformation of the field of practice
- violence as a social issue, encompassing a focus on socio-cultural structural roots of violence:
 - ✓ focus on gender-based approach
 - ✓ the phenomenon is represented as «vaw» (not ipv)
 - ✓ specialised services (in particular those of feminist and women's tradition) aim at being **agent of radical social transformation** and **providers of services**, they are **not social services**
 - ✓ **focus on women helping women interventions**, with a human rights and equality approach

Developments in the Italian context



Developments in the Italian context

Period	1979-2000	2001-2010	2011-2020	2021-present
Actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women and feminist movements • Radical party • Municipalities and regional authorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women's centres and shelters • Municipalities and regional authorities • National State 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women's centres and shelters • Local anti-violence networks • Municipalities and regional authorities • National State • Perpetrators programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women's centres and shelters • Local anti-violence networks • Municipalities and regional authorities • National State • Perpetrators programs
Public Power Actions	<p>1979-1999: Family law, penal level 1966: Law against sexual violence</p> <p>Some of the local and regional authorities partially financed women's centres and shelters</p>	<p>2002: Law Against Violence within Family Relation (penal level) 2006: National helpline 2007: First national survey on Violence Against Women 2009: Law on stalking 2010: National Plan Against Violence and Stalking</p> <p>Some of the local and regional authorities partially financed women's centres and shelters</p>	<p>2013: Istanbul Convention Ratification 2014: National minimum standard for women's centres and shelters – required for funding 2015: National Extraordinary Plan on Sexual and Gender Based Violence 2017: National Strategy Plan on Male Violence Against Women 2019: Red code (relevant for PP)</p> <p>Women's centres and shelters financed through specific Anti-Violence Law.</p>	<p>2021: National Strategic Plan On Male Violence Against Women 2022: National minimum standard for women's centres and shelters; And for perpetrator programs.</p>
Dominant conceptualization of violence	<p>Men's violence against women Movements: survivors oriented approach Public power: securitarian approach</p>	<p>Men's violence against women Movements: survivors oriented approach Public power: securitarian approach</p>	<p>Gendered: Male Violence Against Women Movements: holistic, Intersectional survivors oriented approach Public power: integrated approach</p>	<p>Gendered: Male Violence Against Women Movements: holistic, intersectional survivors oriented approach Public power: integrated approach – recently securitarian?</p>

To conclude

Policy narratives and some clashes

Introduction

Theoretical
framework

Methodology

The Italian case

Notes to discuss

- Gender approach in VAW policy
- Preventing and combating VAW as social and public responsibilities, also through specialized services recognition
- Italian gender equality strategy 2021-26: where is VAW?
- Funding system: recognition without redistribution
- AVCs as services providers or actors for social and cultural transformation?

So, why?

Implications for research

Introduction

Theoretical
framework

Methodology

The italian case

Notes to discuss

In a comparative international analysis:

- is VAW still a gender issue within national laws, in particular those related to funding?
- preventing and combating VAW as social and cultural issue, or as providing services?
- to what extent the different approaches to gendered violence are translated into practice? what are the objectives of the interventions with women (and men)?



Thank you!

marta.pietrobelli@irpps.cnr.it

angelamaria.toffanin@irpps.cnr.it

beatrice.busi@irpps.cnr.it

pietro.demurtas@irpps.cnr.it



ANALISI E VALUTAZIONE DEGLI
INTERVENTI DI PREVENZIONE E
CONTRASTO ALLA VIOLENZA
CONTRO LE DONNE



Institute for Research
on Population
and Social Policies