

**Group of Experts on Action against Violence
against Women and Domestic Violence
(GREVIO)**



**Report submitted by Italy
pursuant to Article 68, paragraph 1
of the Council of Europe Convention
on preventing and combating violence
against women and domestic violence
(1st thematic evaluation round)**

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Introduction

In accordance with Article 66, paragraph 1, the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO) shall monitor the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention). Following its baseline evaluation procedure which provided an overview of the implementation of the full spectrum of provisions of the convention by each state party, Article 68, paragraph 3, of the convention and Rule 30 of the Rules of Procedure of GREVIO (the Rules of Procedure) mandate GREVIO to carry out subsequent evaluation procedures divided into rounds. At the beginning of each round, GREVIO shall select the specific provisions on which the evaluation procedure shall be based and shall send out a questionnaire (Rule 31 of the Rules of Procedure).

For its 1st thematic evaluation round, GREVIO adopted this questionnaire to be sent to all states parties which have undergone the baseline evaluation procedure, according to an order approved by GREVIO. States parties are requested to transmit to GREVIO a reply to this questionnaire within five months from the date it was sent.

GREVIO decided to focus its 1st thematic evaluation round on the theme of building trust by delivering support, protection and justice. To address this overarching theme, the present questionnaire aims, in its first section, to identify developments in key areas such as comprehensive and co-ordinated policies, funding and data collection that have ensued following the completion of the baseline evaluation procedure. In its second section, it sets to obtain more in-depth information on the implementation of selected provisions in the area of prevention, protection and prosecution, in respect of which baseline evaluation procedures and the Conclusions on the Recommendations of the Committee of the Parties to the Istanbul Convention have revealed significant challenges and the need for further sustained implementation. In its third section, it brings its attention to emerging trends in the area of violence against women and domestic violence. Its fourth and last section requests annual statistics for two complete calendar years prior to receiving this questionnaire on specific administrative and judicial data.

The reply to the questionnaire should be submitted in one of the official languages of the Council of Europe (English and French) and should contain all the relevant information on the implementation of the Istanbul Convention since GREVIO's first baseline evaluation report, including copies or extracts of relevant legislation, regulations, case law and strategic documents or action plans referred to (Rule 33 of the Rules of Procedure).

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ABI Italian Banking Association

CAV Anti violence center

CCM Disease Prevention and Control

CNR National Research Centre

CUAV Centers for Men Perpetrators of Violence

DPO Department for Equal Opportunities

EMUR Emergency Medical Information Flow

FAD Distance Training

FEduF Foundation for Financial and Savings Education

INPS National Welfare Institute

ISS National Institute of Health

ISTAT National Statistics Office

MIM Ministry of Education and Merit

SISTAN National Statistical System

UNAR The National Office against Discrimination

Part I: Changes in comprehensive and co-ordinated policies, funding and data collection in the area of violence against women and domestic violence

Article 7: Comprehensive and co-ordinated policies

The **Department for Equal Opportunities (DPO)** is responsible for the coherence and effectiveness of policies to prevent and combat male violence against women is ensured by the definition of the **Strategic Plan on Male Violence against Women 2021-2023**, presented in the Council of Ministers on November 18, 2021. The governance system outlined in the Plan, specifically consisting of an inter-institutional Steering Committee (policy-making body) and an Observatory on the phenomenon of violence against women and domestic violence, was established to achieve an effective coordination of the various institutional and non-institutional actors involved in the implementation of these policies. This governance system became structural through the provisions set by Article 1, paragraph 149, of Law No. 234 of December 30, 2021 (Budget Law 2022). Both bodies were established by decree of the Minister for Equal Opportunities and Family Affairs pro tempore: the Steering Committee, a body with policy-making functions, was established by **decree March 29, 2022**, and the Observatory by **decree April 12, 2022**.

With specific reference to the Observatory, it is chaired by the Prime Minister or the Delegated Political Authority for Equal Opportunities and consists of three bodies: the President, the Assembly, and the Technical and Scientific Committee. The Observatory carries out monitoring, analysis, study and proposal functions, in adherence to the purpose of developing and implementing the National Strategic Plan against Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence. The Assembly of the Observatory met on two occasions in 2023, namely on Feb. 7 and July 18, 2023, and in 2024 on Jan. 22, and the Technical and Scientific Committee on six occasions in 2023, namely on Feb. 9, July 18, Aug. 8, Sept. 18, Oct. 23, and in 2024 on Jan. 22, Feb. 7, and May 27, 2024. It should be noted that the Strategic Plan on Male Violence Against Women 2021-2023 remains in force until the adoption of the new Strategic Plan 2024-2026, without a break in continuity, as was the case with the previous Strategic Plans on male violence against women. The Department of Equal Opportunities is currently engaged in the drafting of the new National Strategic Plan against violence against women and domestic violence, which will be finalized in the coming months with contributions from relevant Administrations, women's associations involved in preventing and combating gender-based violence, employers' and trade union organizations, territorial bodies and institutions. The new Strategic Plan will be adopted after obtaining the opinion at the Unified Conference, as provided for in Article 5, paragraph 1, of the Decree-Law No. 93 of August 14, 2013.

Another important development is the **Law n. 168/2023**, as it was jointly promoted by the Minister for Family, Natality, and Equal Opportunities together with the Minister of Justice and the Minister of the Interior and is primarily aimed at improving the protection of victims by increasing the focus on the crimes related to domestic violence and at tightening preventive protection measures. The Department for Equal Opportunities plays a pivotal role in coordinating policies in this regard.

The **Ministry of Justice**, according to a comprehensive and multilevel approach, aimed to implement the different provisions of the Istanbul Convention, on the one hand, through the recent regulatory measures put in place in the civil and criminal spheres in order to increase the protection of victims of domestic and gender-based violence, and, on the other hand, through the organisational measures adopted in order to verify and monitor, through dialogue with the judicial offices, the impact and effectiveness of the aforementioned reforms.

On the level of administrative organisation, it is worth mentioning that with the decree of 22 February 2023, this Ministry equipped itself with the Gender Equality Plan along the lines of the European Parliament's five-year strategy on promoting gender equality: The drafting of the Plan aimed to define a set of commitments and actions to promote gender equality in an organisation through a process of structural change, as a mandatory requirement for potential beneficiaries to participate in the Horizon Europe programme calls. Among the points recommended by the Commission for the 'content' of the Plan, and thus considered in the compilation of the document, are the following: a) work-life balance and organisational culture; b) gender equality in leadership and decision-making processes; gender equality in recruitment processes and professional development; c) gender mainstreaming in research and teaching; measures against gender-based violence, harassment and sexism.

In connection with the systemic legislative initiatives related to procedural reforms, which are described in more detail below, it should also be noted that the Ministry through the competent articulation (Directorate of International Affairs at the Department of Justice Affairs) continued negotiations on the Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on combating violence against women and domestic violence' (code COM - 2022 05 final) presented at EU level within the COPEN technical working group, recently entered into force. The negotiation, which has already reached the stage of political dialogues, is articulated in the area of combating violence against women and domestic violence throughout the Union, through measures concerning the configuration of relevant offences and sanctions; the protection of victims and access to justice; victim assistance; prevention; coordination and cooperation. The aim of the proposal is, in particular, to ensure levels of protection that not only transpose the standards laid down in the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) of 7.4.2011, but also go beyond this by laying down more comprehensive and detailed measures, as well as introducing offences such as genital mutilation and certain forms of online violence.

The competent ministerial office ensured an active and proactive participation in the debate, supporting the Commission's initiative and advocating from the very beginning solutions aimed at the highest ambition in terms of protection and safeguard of the victims of the above-mentioned types of crimes.

Regulatory interventions in the civil sector

With the recent reform of the civil process (Legislative Decree No. 149 of 10 October 2022, in force as of 28 February 2023), through the amendment of Title IV-bis Book II of the Code of Civil Procedure, a single procedure was introduced for persons, minors and families.

The new set-up was created taking into account the provisions of the Istanbul Convention and supranational demands, as well as the decisions of the European Court of Human Rights against Italy and the results of the study conducted by the Commission on femicide and against all forms of gender-based violence. The reform includes, in particular, the introduction of a section entirely dedicated to domestic and gender-based violence (Section I Chapter III).

According to the scheme intended by the reform in the implementation of the specific delegation principle, the fight against all forms of domestic and gender-based violence is realized in terms of the priority given to prevention also in civil proceedings. In the presence of allegations of violence, an immediate assessment of the victim's risk and willingness to resist violence, including psychological violence, is possible from the preliminary stages of the trial.

Within the context of family proceedings there will be:

- an immediate response to allegations of violence by way of summary assessment with the possibility of court orders;

- an autonomous, proactive, comprehensive risk assessment by the civil court;
- communication between offices (aimed at linking civil and criminal proceedings on the same matter), to enable the proceeding judge to know the existence of the risk;
- the adoption of appropriate protective measures, also in relation to children.

The system was also designed to give the judge a more central and active role through the exercise of greater court powers. The aim was to ensure that the process is managed in such a way as to avoid secondary victimisation, including through the exclusion of family mediation and the attempt at conciliation in the case of allegations of violence.

The discipline, characterised by the individualisation of the jurisdictional response, will avoid the adoption of measures with stereotyped formulas. In addition, the civil judge must take all appropriate measures to protect the safety of the victim of violence, e.g. by hearing the parties at different times, especially in separation or divorce cases.

The civil procedure reform also provides that, in compliance with the provisions of the Istanbul Convention on this point, the victim of violence should not be subject to mediation or attempted conciliation in proceedings involving him/her. The reform is also the result of good practices already in operation in offices and now implemented in legislation.

In fact, since the enactment of Law No. 69 of 19 July 2019 (so-called. 'Red Code'), there had been the introduction of Article 64-bis disp. att. c.p.p., provided for by Article 14(1) of the aforesaid law, a provision which provides for the transmission, without delay, to the proceeding civil judge of a copy of the orders applying, replacing or revoking personal precautionary measures, as well as of the notice of conclusion of the preliminary investigation, of the order with which dismissal is ordered and of the judgment issued against one of the parties, in relation to the offences provided for in Articles 572, 609-bis, 609-ter, 609-quater, 609-quinquies, 609-octies, 612-bis and 612-ter of the Criminal Code, as well as in Articles 582 and 583-quinquies of the Criminal Code in the aggravated cases pursuant to Articles 576, first paragraph, numbers 2, 5 and 5.1, and 577, first paragraph, number 1, and second paragraph, of the Criminal Code, for the purposes of deciding proceedings for the legal separation of spouses or cases concerning children or the exercise of parental responsibility.

The reform indicates specific and significant rules also for the hearing of the child, providing that the judge must proceed to the hearing in person, without delay and taking care to avoid any direct contact between the child and the alleged perpetrator of the violence and abuse (with the possibility of video recording of the investigative fulfilment, with a favourable impact of prevention of secondary victimisation, being able to use the results without unnecessary repetition by the different jurisdictional authorities involved in the ascertainment of the facts, both in civil and criminal proceedings); the rationale, from the earliest stages of the proceedings, is to prevent the passing of time from leading to an underestimation of the emergence of certain conducts and their effects also in the family context and towards defenceless persons involved in the cycle. Bearing in mind, however, that the hearing may give rise to allegations of violence or abuse, coordination is ensured between the different jurisdictions required to investigate the same facts in their respective areas of competence: this is to avoid that repeated and tiresome hearings of the child, not justified by considerations of the insufficiency and non-exhaustiveness of the information gathered, may result in secondary victimisation. In the light of the explanatory report to the Legislative Decree 149/2022, it is intended to ensure that in such proceedings it is the judge who has a direct perception of what the child reports, also in order to personally grasp all the elements that non-verbal language, which is particularly significant for that category, can provide (see Article 473-bis 45 Code of Civil Procedure inserted in Book II of the Code of Civil Procedure under Securities IV-bis, Rules for Proceedings in Matters of Persons, Minors and Families with express reference to Articles 473 bis 4 and 473 bis 5 on precautions and expedients for taking the hearing).

The judge's investigative powers have also been enhanced, and he may acquire certain documents ex officio or take any other means of evidence ex officio in compliance with the adversarial process (including testimonial evidence with the formulation of chapters of evidence, as well as the acquisition of acts from public offices and reports and interventions by the police) in order to ascertain the validity or otherwise of the facts attached; he may also proceed ex officio to freely interrogate the parties on the facts attached, availing himself if he deems it necessary of experts (specialist CTUs) to protect the alleged victim;

the free questioning may reveal the need for further investigative activities beyond the evidentiary allegations of the parties, including the appointment of a technical adviser to carry out investigations and measures necessary for the protection of the victim and minors (Article 473 bis .44 of the Code of Civil Procedure).

At the outcome of this preliminary investigation, if it emerges, even if only at the level of suspicion, that violent conduct has taken place, the judge must take the necessary measures, also with the intervention of the social services and regulating the minors' right of access in such a way as not to compromise the safety of the victims.

With specific reference to the protection of the minors involved and the instruments implementing the principle of the best interest of the child, it is worth recalling that the adoption of protection orders is now fully regulated in Article 473 bis.70 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, within the framework of which such measures may last up to one year and consist of an order to cease the conduct of abuse or violence, up to the removal from the family home of the responsible party and the prohibition to approach the victims.

It should be emphasised that recourse to the court, where abusive/violent behaviour is alleged, is irrespective of the initiation of (any) separation, divorce or custody proceedings (see Article 473a. 40 et seq. of the Code of Civil Procedure, the rules of which 'section' apply in proceedings in which family abuse or conduct of domestic or gender-based violence by one party against the other or against children is alleged).

In view of the constant connection between jurisdictional authorities, mention should also be made of the new Article 64 bis of the Code of Criminal Procedure. of the implementing provisions, pursuant to which the criminal judge 'obligatorily' and 'without delay' transmits to the civil judge, a copy of the measures adopted in the criminal proceedings for the crime of domestic or gender violence, including orders relating to personal precautionary measures, notices of conclusion of preliminary investigations, measures of dismissal and sentences of conviction (obligation extended by Article 2 paragraph 12 of Law no. 134/2021 also to cases of attempted crime).

Preventing secondary victimisation: Article 473 bis. 42 para. 6 of the Code of Civil Procedure excludes the need for a personal appearance at the hearing, and in the case of an appearance provides that the judge shall refrain from making an attempt at conciliation. In order to avoid direct contact with the victim, the judge may order the hearing to be held remotely or establish time slots for the parties to meet. For the protection of the victim, the victim's residential address may be withheld if there is a safety need or if the victim is in a protected facility.

The 'fast track' for family proceedings with allegations of violence or abuse is activated even if the conduct does not relate to specific criminal offences, but is relevant, for instance, to child custody regulations or to the determination of the charge of separation, and also in the event that the offence is statute-barred or the party fails to file a complaint within the time limit.

In conclusion, in civil proceedings, we highlight the following tools to strengthen the prevention of domestic and gender-based violence, with a view to immediate risk assessment:

- in the event of allegations of domestic or gender-based violence, the timely adoption of appropriate safeguards and protection measures; faster handling of proceedings through specific procedural arrangements; the necessary coordination of all the judicial authorities involved,

including the investigating authorities the prevention of secondary victimisation also by avoiding the simultaneous presence of the parties, where appropriate; when adopting measures concerning children, the specific consideration of any episodes of violence; the guarantee that meetings between parents and child take place, if necessary, with the accompaniment of social services and do not compromise the safety of the victim;

- the precise regulation of the intervention of the social welfare or health services, with the right of the parties and their advocates to have access to any report and assessment carried out by them, and, without prejudice to the general principle of the child's interest in maintaining a meaningful relationship with his or her parents, the specific purpose of protecting the victim and the child of this intervention, in cases of gender and domestic violence;

- the nondelegable hearing of the child, even if under the age of 12, if capable of discernment, by the judge (even by the reporting judge alone), except in cases of impossibility of the child, and the possibility for the judge himself to adopt measures concerning the children ex officio and even in the absence of petitions, safeguarding the adversarial process between the parties under penalty of nullity of the measure the possibility of ordering ex officio means of evidence for the protection of children, as well as victims of violence, also outside the limits established by the civil code, always ensuring cross-examination and the right to contrary evidence, regulating the powers of the court to investigate assets;

- the adoption of specific provisions to regulate the intervention of the social welfare or health services, in the function of monitoring, control and ascertainment, providing that the reports drawn up must clearly distinguish the facts ascertained, the statements made by the parties and the assessments made by the operators, with the right of the parties and their defence counsel to have access to any report and assessment made by the social welfare or health service managers and, without prejudice to the general principle of the child's interest in maintaining a meaningful relationship with his or her parents, that such intervention is only ordered in so far as it is specifically aimed at protecting the victim and the child and is adequately motivated, as well as regulating the prerequisites and limits of the custody of minors by the social service;

- in order to ensure maximum coordination between the authorities that may be called upon to ascertain the same facts of violence or abuse in their different areas of competence, it is provided that the civil judge shall request, also ex officio and without delay, from the public prosecutor or the other competent authorities (criminal judge, administrative authority) information on the various pending proceedings, with transmission of the acts (where they are open to inspection, because they are not covered by secrecy of investigation), within a period of fifteen days.

Regulatory interventions in the field of criminal law

In relation to the regulatory reforms carried out in the field of criminal law - recalled first of all the one put in place through the enactment of Law No. 69 of 19 July 2019, in OJ. 25.7.2019 (so-called 'Red Code'), containing significant amendments to the Criminal Code (in particular the tightening of penalties for so-called "snitching", which are typical manifestations of the breakdown of domestic relations, and the introduction of new criminal offences), to the Code of Criminal Procedure (with the introduction of provisions aimed at creating a preferential procedural route for the offences in question, the provision of disclosure obligations to the offended person in relation to the de libertate measures imposed on the offender and the partial amendment of the same measures), as well as other provisions on the protection of victims of domestic and gender-based violence - with specific regard to the period of interest, two important interventions are worth mentioning.

A first intervention, carried out through Law No. 122 of 8 September 2023, in force since 30 September 2023, concerned amendments to Legislative Decree No. 106 of 20 February 2006, concerning the powers of the public prosecutor in cases of violation of Article 362(1-ter) of the Code

of Criminal Procedure.

These amendments have firstly provided that, in proceedings for the offence provided for in Article 575 of the Criminal Code, in the attempted form, or for the offences, committed or attempted, provided for in Articles 572, 609-bis, 609-ter, 609-quater, 609-quinquies, 609-octies and 612-bis of the Criminal Code, or in Articles 582 and 583-quinquies of the Criminal Code in the aggravated cases pursuant to Articles 576, first paragraph, numbers 2, 5 and 5.1, and 577, first paragraph, number 1, and second paragraph, of the same code, the Public Prosecutor, by reasoned order, may revoke the assignment for the handling of the proceedings if the magistrate does not observe the provisions of Article 362, paragraph 1-ter, of the Code of Criminal Procedure i.e. he does not proceed to obtain information from the offended person and from the person who lodged the complaint, complaint or petition, within the term of three days from the registration of the notice of offence, unless there are unavoidable requirements for the protection of minors under eighteen years of age or for the confidentiality of the investigation, also in the interest of the offended person. In such cases, the magistrate may submit written observations to the public prosecutor within three days of notification of the withdrawal. The Public Prosecutor, either directly or by assigning another magistrate of the office, shall, without delay, obtain information from the offended person or from the person who lodged the complaint, suit or petition, unless the above-mentioned unavoidable protection requirements provided for in Article 362(1-ter) of the Code of Criminal Procedure exist. Secondly, a monitoring mechanism has been introduced whereby the Public Prosecutor at the Court of Appeals, on a quarterly basis, acquires from the district Public Prosecutors' Offices data on compliance with the time limit within which information must be obtained from the offended person and from the person who lodged the complaint, suit or petition in the above proceedings and sends a report at least every six months to the Public Prosecutor at the Court of Cassation.

A second and broader regulatory intervention was then carried out through Law No. 168 of 24 November 2023, containing 'Provisions for combating violence against women and domestic violence', published in the Official Gazette. General Series No. 275 of 24 November 2023 and entered into force on 9 December. As already mentioned above, the Law n. 168/2023 was jointly promoted by the Minister for Family, Natality, and Equal Opportunities together with the Minister of Justice and the Minister of the Interior. Despite being fostered by Government it was then unanimously approved by the Parliament on 22 November 2023, indicating the bipartisan commitment to the fight against gender-based violence.

The objective pursued with the reform is to make preventive protection more effective by strengthening measures against the reiteration of crimes against women and tightening penalties for repeat offenders, as well as to broaden the protection of victims of violence in general. The attention shown by the legislator to the prevention of gender-based violence is indeed of particular importance, especially with reference to the perpetration of so-called "snitch" offences, in order to prevent the conduct perpetrated from further degenerating into even more serious episodes.

It is worth mentioning from the outset that among the most relevant interventions of the reform are the strengthening of the preventive measure of the warning by the Questore (Head of Police) and information to victims of violence; the application of the preventive measures of special surveillance and the obligation to stay in the municipality of residence or abode, also to suspects of crimes related to violence against women and domestic violence; the introduction of regulations aimed at enabling faster trials on gender-based and domestic violence, the application of personal precautionary measures and the possibility of providing for the applicability of monitoring through the so-called electronic bracelet.

Also of particular interest are the training initiatives on combating domestic and gender-based violence and the introduction of a provision in favour of victims, i.e. a sum of money paid in advance as compensation.

For the purposes of interest here, the following provisions in particular should be noted.

Article 1 of Law no. 168/2023, entitled 'Strengthening of measures on warning and information to victims', extended the scope of application of the prevention measure of the Questore's warning, both ex officio and at the request of the offended person, and of the obligations to inform victims of violence, to law enforcement agencies, health authorities and public institutions.

The scope of applicability of the Questore's official warning has been expanded to include cases of commission of acts attributable to the crimes, conducted or attempted, of private violence (Article 610 of the Criminal Code), aggravated threat (Article 612, second paragraph, of the Criminal Code), persecutory acts (Article 612-bis of the Criminal Code), unlawful dissemination of sexually explicit images or videos (so-called "revenge porn," Article 612-ter of the Criminal Code), trespassing (Article 614 of the Criminal Code), and damage (Article 635 of the Criminal Code).

Penalties have been made more severe (increased by up to one third) for cases in which the act is committed, in the context of domestic violence, , by a person who has already been cautioned, even if the offended person is different from the one for whose protection the caution was adopted, in relation to the aforementioned offences as well as to those of battery (Article 581 of the criminal code) and personal injury (Article 582 of the criminal code).

The definition of domestic violence has been extended to include 'witnessing violence', i.e. violence committed in the presence of minors, which can produce traumatic effects equal to those caused by direct violence.

Provision has been made for the possibility of revoking the cautioning measure at the request of the cautioned person, not before three years have elapsed, after assessing his or her participation in remedial courses and their outcomes.

The scope of application of the measures in support of victims of domestic or sexual violence has been widened, providing that the obligation of the police, health services and public institutions, which receive the report of the crime from the victim, to inform the latter about the anti-violence centres on the territory, as well as to put her in contact with them, if she expressly requests it, is also applicable in cases of private violence (610 criminal code, aggravated threats (Article 612, second paragraph of the criminal code), housebreaking (Article 614 of the criminal code) and damage (Article 635 of the criminal code).

Provision has been made for ex officio prosecution of caution-able offences, if committed, in the context of domestic violence, by a person who has already been cautioned.

Provision has been made for the police body prosecuting offences relating to domestic violence to notify the Prefect if it detects the existence of concrete and relevant elements from which the danger of repetition of the conduct can be deduced, so that he can adopt dynamic surveillance measures, represented by mobile surveillance, to protect the offended person. The provision also provides for the extension of the cases in which a warning may be issued by the Questore, at the request of the offended person, and an increase in the penalty for acts committed by a person who has already been warned, even if the criminal acts were committed against a person other than the person for whose protection the warning was issued.

Finally, the obligation to inform the victim about the presence of anti-violence centres in the area and to put her in contact with them, if she expressly requests it, has been extended to cases of attempted murder (Article 575), deformation of the person's appearance by means of permanent facial injuries (Article 583-quinquies), and unlawful distribution of sexually explicit images or videos (Article 612-ter).

Article 2 of Law No. 168/2023, entitled 'Strengthening of prevention measures', introduced amendments to Legislative Decree No. 159 of 6 September 2011 (Code of Anti-Mafia Laws and Prevention Measures) in order to prevent the commission of offences by certain categories of persons deemed socially dangerous. In particular, the article provided:

- the extension of the applicability, by the judicial authorities, of personal prevention measures to persons suspected of the crimes, committed or attempted, of murder (Article 575 criminal code), grievous bodily harm (Article 583), where aggravated by family or emotional ties (Article 577, first paragraph, no. 1) and second paragraph, criminal code), deformation of the person's appearance by permanent facial injuries (Article 583- quinquies criminal code), sexual violence (Article 609-bis criminal code);
- the applicability of the measure of surveillance, in the above-mentioned cases, by means of electronic monitoring pursuant to Article 275-bis of the Code of Criminal Procedure (so-called 'electronic bracelet'), subject to the need for the consent of the data subject and verification of technical feasibility;
- the imposition by the Court, in respect of persons suspected of crimes of domestic violence, when ordering the measure of surveillance, of a prohibition on approaching certain places, habitually frequented by the persons to be protected, and of maintaining a certain distance, not less than five hundred metres, from such places and from such persons. In such cases, provision has been made for additional and specific restrictions where attendance at the above-mentioned places is necessary for proven needs or for work reasons.

The provision also intervenes on the subject of emergency measures which can be adopted by the President of the Court, pending the proceedings for the application of the measure of prohibition or obligation to stay, providing that, in the case of persons suspected of the above crimes, the President of the Court may order, by decree the temporary application of the prohibition to approach persons to be protected or certain places habitually frequented by them, and of the obligation to maintain a certain distance, not less than five hundred metres, from such places and from such persons, until the preventive measure of special surveillance has become enforceable. Even in such cases, the application of the so-called electronic bracelet is envisaged, subject to the consent of the person concerned and verification of technical feasibility. If consent is refused or if it is not technically feasible, the court imposes, on a provisional basis, an obligation to report to the police authority at least every two weeks.

In the event of a breach of the emergency measures, imprisonment from one to five years and arrest, also outside cases of flagrancy, is provided for.

Finally, the provision stipulates that the criminological analysis on gender-based violence, drawn up annually by the Ministry of the Interior, Department of Public Security, also includes monitoring the technical feasibility of electronic remote-control instruments.

Article 3, under the heading 'Measures on the formation of the roles of hearings and the handling of trials' gave absolute priority to the formation of the roles of hearings and the handling of trials relating to the offences of: violation of orders to stay away from the family home and violation of the ban on approaching places frequented by the offended person (Article 387-bis of the criminal code); coercion or inducement to marry (Article 558-bis of the criminal code); aggravated personal injuries pursuant to Article 576(1)(2), (5) and (5.1) and pursuant to Article 577, first paragraph, no. 1 and second paragraph, of the criminal code); deformation of the appearance of the person through permanent injury to the face (Article 583- quinquies of the criminal code); non-consensual termination of pregnancy (Article 593-ter of the criminal code); unlawful dissemination of sexually explicit images or videos (Article 612- ter of the criminal code); incapacity procured by means of violence, where there are special aggravating circumstances

Article 4 of Law No. 168/2023, entitled 'Expedited processing of business in the pre-trial phase', provides that, in trials concerning gender and domestic violence offences, priority must also be given to the request for the application of personal pre-trial measures and to the related decision.

Article 5 of Law No. 168/2023, entitled 'Provisions concerning the powers of the Public Prosecutor',

introduces measures aimed at fostering the **specialisation of prosecution offices** in the field of gender and domestic violence: with reference to the powers of the public prosecutor, in the event of delegation, the identification of one or more deputy public prosecutors or one or more magistrates must be specifically for the handling of gender and domestic violence cases. It should be noted - as already indicated on the occasion of the questionnaire sent by this Department on the 'development of indicators on gender-based violence facilitated by technology' (TF-GBV)- that in accordance with the objectives of the norm, teams/departments of public prosecutors specialised in the investigation and prosecution of gender-based violence offences have been set up within the Italian public prosecution offices: According to benchmark statistics, in 2021, 77.5% of Italian prosecutors' offices had a team of prosecutors specialised in such offences (including those committed through the use of technology).

Article 6, entitled 'Training initiatives on violence against women and domestic violence', provides, in declared conformity with the objectives of the Istanbul Convention, for the preparation, by the delegated political authority for equal opportunities, with the support of the technical-scientific committee of the Observatory on the phenomenon of violence against women, after consultation with the Assembly of the Observatory itself, of special national guidelines aimed at guiding the appropriate and homogeneous training of operators who, in various capacities, come into contact with women victims of violence, without prejudice to the provisions on the training of police officers in Article 5 of Law 19 July 2019, No. 69. Provision is also made for the inclusion of specific training initiatives on violence against women and domestic violence in the policy guidelines, which the Minister of Justice annually proposes to the Scuola Superiore della Magistratura.

Article 7 of Law no. 168/2023, entitled 'Time limits for the evaluation of the precautionary requirements', then introduced into the Code of Criminal Procedure Article 362-bis, in turn entitled 'Urgent measures for the protection of the offended person' and containing a comprehensive regulation of the procedure for the application of precautionary measures in relation to crimes of domestic violence, gender and sexual violence, specifically providing that the Public Prosecutor must formulate the *de libertate* request within thirty days from the entry of the name of the person who committed the crime in the register of crime reports and that the Judge must rule on the request within twenty days from the filing of the request.

Article 8 of the same law, entitled 'Reporting of time limits', then made changes to the implementing, coordinating and transitional provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure concerning the reporting of offences to the Attorney General, in particular introducing the obligation for the Attorney General at the Court of Appeal to acquire, on a quarterly basis, data on compliance with the time limits relating to proceedings referred to in Article 362-bis of the Code of Criminal Procedure, concerning 'Urgent measures for the protection of the offended person', from the Public Prosecutor's Offices of the district, and also to send, every six months, a report to the Attorney General at the Court of Cassation.

Article 9 of Law no. 168/2023, entitled 'Changes relating to the effects of violation of orders of protection against family abuse', raised the penalty provided for the offence of violation of orders of removal from the family home and of the prohibition on approaching places frequented by the offended person, prescribing the application of the penal discipline also to the violation of orders of protection against family abuse issued by the Judge in civil proceedings, and to the violation of an order of equal content, taken in proceedings for the personal separation of spouses, or in proceedings for the dissolution or termination of the civil effects of marriage.

Article 10 of Law no. 168/2023, entitled 'Arrest in deferred *flagrante delicto*', introduces into the Code of Criminal Procedure Article 382-bis, whereby, in the cases referred to in Articles 387-bis, 572 and 612-bis of the Criminal Code, a person is nevertheless deemed to be in a state of *flagrante delicto* if on the basis of video-photographic documentation or other documentation legitimately

obtained from computer or electronic communication devices, from which the fact emerges unequivocally, is found to be the perpetrator, provided that the arrest is made no later than the time necessary for his identification and, in any case, within forty-eight hours of the fact. It should also be mentioned that Article 2, Paragraph 15 of Law No. 134 of 27 September 2021 ('Delegation to the Government for the efficiency of the criminal trial as well as in the matter of restorative justice and provisions for the speedy definition of judicial proceedings') included the offence referred to in Article 387 bis of the Criminal Code. ('Violation of orders to stay away from the family home and of the prohibition to approach places frequented by the offended person') - among those for which compulsory arrest is provided for pursuant to paragraph 2 (l-ter) of Section 380 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

Article 11 of Law No. 168/2023, entitled 'Provisions on the subject of emergency removal from the family home', supplemented Article 384-bis of the Code of Criminal Procedure with further provisions on the precautionary measure of emergency removal from the family home by prescribing that, even outside cases of flagrancy, the Public Prosecutor must order against the person seriously suspected of having violated the orders of removal from the family home, of prohibition to approach places frequented by the offended person, as well as of having committed ill-treatment against family members, injuries and other crimes committed with threats and violence, the urgent removal from the family home and the prohibition on approaching places habitually frequented by the offended person, where there is a risk that the repeated criminal conduct will expose the life or physical integrity of the offended person to a serious and present danger, and it is therefore not possible to wait for the judge's order. Within the following 48 hours, the Public Prosecutor makes the request for validation to the Judge for Preliminary Investigations, in the absence of which the emergency removal order becomes ineffective. The judge is obliged to set the validation hearing within 48 hours.

Article 12 of Law No. 168/2023, entitled 'Strengthening of precautionary measures and the use of the electronic bracelet' intervenes in the context of precautionary measures, making amendments to the Code of Criminal Procedure in the area of prescriptions concerning the use of the electronic bracelet. In particular, the police are required to ascertain in advance the technical feasibility of using the so-called electronic bracelet (or other suitable technical control instruments) where the judge has ordered its application in conjunction with house arrest. Provision is also made for the application of pre-trial detention in custody in the event of tampering with the electronic bracelet or other technical control instruments, ordered with the measure of house arrest, or with the measures of the obligation to leave the family home or the prohibition to approach places frequented by the offended person.

In addition, the provision in question broadens the range of offences for the commission of which the coercive measure of removal from the family home may be ordered and imposes on the person who has committed the offence, in conjunction with the application of the aforementioned measure, the use of an electronic bracelet and the duty to maintain a certain distance, not less than 500 metres, from the family home or the places frequented by the offended person.

The provision also stipulates that the measure may also be ordered outside the penalty limits for the application of precautionary measures.

Also for the measure of the prohibition to approach the places frequented by the offended person, governed by Article 282-ter of the Code of Criminal Procedure, the provision quantifies at 500 metres the minimum distance that the Judge must in any case guarantee in ordering the measure and provides that, in cases of removal from the family home for domestic and gender-based violence, the measure may also be ordered outside the limits of the penalty provided for the application of precautionary measures. The judge is also allowed, by the same order, to apply a more severe measure where the defendant refuses to consent to being monitored by means of the

electronic bracelet or where it is established that its use is not technically feasible.

Article 14 of Law No. 168/2023, under the heading 'Provisions on information to the person offended by the crime and reporting obligations' provides:

- the obligation to immediately notify victims of domestic or gender-based violence of measures that adversely affect the offender's personal freedom;
- the obligation on the part of the Judge to communicate the termination, revocation or replacement of custodial coercive measures to the competent law enforcement authority for the possible adoption of preventive measures, as measures aimed at preventing the commission of offences by certain categories of persons deemed socially dangerous;
- the obligation to notify the Prefect of the termination or revocation of constraining and disqualifying measures, or their replacement with a less serious measure, in relation to proceedings for the offences set out in Article 362(1-ter) of the Code of Criminal Procedure. (e.g. sexual violence, sexual acts with minors, group sexual violence, deformation of the person's appearance by permanent facial injuries in aggravated forms). The Prefect may adopt supervisory measures to protect the offended person, subject to quarterly review.

Article 16 of Law No. 168/2023 introduces amendments regarding the submission of the application for compensation for victims of violent intentional crimes provided for by Article 13 of Law No. 122 of 2016, while Article 17 provides for the possibility of requesting a temporary provision in favour of the victim or the beneficiaries in the event of the victim's death, in cases where there is a need as a result of the commission of crimes of murder, sexual violence or grievous bodily harm, or deformation of appearance through permanent facial injuries committed by the spouse, including separated or divorced, or by a person who is or was linked to the victim by a relationship of affection. The application for the temporary provision must be submitted to the Prefect, who initiates a preliminary investigation aimed at verifying the existence of the requirements, also availing himself of the police. It is up to the Solidarity Committee for the Victims of Mafia-type Crimes and Violent Intentional Crimes to determine the provisional compensation at the outcome of the preliminary investigation conducted by the Prefect. The interim payment is counted in the final settlement of the indemnity determined in the conviction or plea bargaining judgment, even if final, or in the issuance of a criminal decree of conviction, even if not enforceable. The Committee declares the forfeiture of the provision and orders the repayment of the amount paid out in the event of failure to apply for compensation within the prescribed time limit or inadmissibility of the application for compensation; lack of the conditions for applying for compensation (e.g: lack of self-assessment of the non-final nature of the criminal judgment or enforcement proceedings or of the receipt of sums in connection with the offence).

Lastly, Article 15 of the amendment introduces changes concerning the granting of suspended sentences (Article 165 of the criminal code), laying down provisions aimed at enabling offenders to take part in rehabilitation programmes, while Article 18 regulates the procedures for the recognition and accreditation of the organisations in charge of such programmes.

Organisational Measures

Turning to an examination of the organisational measures, it should first be noted that the Ministry of Justice, as early as 2020 - one year after the entry into force of the "Red Code" - launched a complex and articulated study and monitoring activity on the issue of gender-based violence, with particular attention to the first application phase of the measures introduced with the reform.

The work undertaken by the Department aimed at acquiring an adequate knowledge of the impact of the new rules on the judiciary.

On the occasion of the first report (available on the website of the Ministry of Justice) on the regulations introduced by the 'Red Code', the prosecution offices were consulted in order to verify

the appropriateness, uniformity and implementation methods of some of the most important regulatory innovations introduced, with the results listed below.

From an organisational point of view, the following good practices have already been collected:

- creation of specialised groups on the subject;
- priority in the registration of crime reports related to gender-based violence;
- use of investigation protocols;
- development and adoption of Guidelines and Questionnaires for listening to the offended person;
- formulation of delegations of powers of investigation to the judicial police with particularly specific content;
- prescription of a specific burden of justification (in writing) for the use of the three-day derogation clause;
- preparation of a set of questions to be asked to the offended person by category of offence;
- creation within the judicial departments of dedicated areas to welcome and listen to victims;
- specification, when listening to the offended person, of a request as to whether separation and divorce proceedings are pending, for the purposes of the operation of Article 64 of the Code of Criminal Procedure;
- integrated approach between subjects institutionally entrusted with the care and protection of victims of this type of crime, i.e. between Public Prosecutors' Offices, Courts, Anti-Violence Centres, Bar Councils, sector associations;
- promoting and carrying out specific training activities, aimed at both the judiciary and the police forces;
- duty to notify the victim of the offender's release from prison;
- structuring of dedicated and well-characterised sections visible from the same home page of the websites (within the dedicated sections, timetables and locations are also indicated where any listening desks set up in conjunction with other offices can be found).

On the basis of the initial results, a more specific monitoring activity was initiated, aimed at verifying the incidence on domestic violence phenomena of measures to combat the spread of the COVID19 epidemic, which had inevitable repercussions on households, also due to confinement: see in this respect the 'Red Code' report published on the website of the Ministry of Justice [here](#).

In addition, specific monitoring was carried out on information flows from the criminal sector to the civil sector when a separation or divorce process is under way and child custody proceedings are to be conducted, based on the provisions of Article 64 bis of the Code of Criminal Procedure. (see the above-mentioned report).

Again, considering the importance of knowing the context of the emergence of the phenomenon of gender-based violence, the Ministry, as of 1 January 2023, through a technological intervention carried out on the criminal information systems, has endeavoured to introduce an important novelty, consisting in allowing judicial offices to detect a further specific statistical data, i.e. the relationship between victim and perpetrator, in order to constantly monitor the phenomenon of gender-based violence.

The Ministry of Justice, in fact, devotes special care and attention to the statistical collection of any data suitable to allow an ever deeper knowledge of the phenomenon of gender-based violence, according to the strategic choices that the Government may make in the priority objective of prevention and raising the standards of protection of the victims of these types of crimes.

It should also be pointed out that the updating and innovation of the information systems, as a function of constant monitoring of the characteristics of the phenomenon of gender-based violence, also implements the objectives of the technical round table set up under the cooperation agreement between the Ministry itself and the National Institute of Statistics (Agreement for feeding the

database on gender-based violence with judicial information flows, in **Annex 1**). This responds to the shared need to concretely implement the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence also on the basis of the recent regulatory framework on statistical surveys on gender-based violence that is being implemented with all the institutional actors involved (**law no. 53 of 5 May 2022**). The law was jointly promoted by the Minister for Equal Opportunities together with all the authorities involved, to improve the data collection on Gender-Based Violence from all the entities working in this field.

With this law on 'Provisions on statistics on gender-based violence', the Italian legislator intervened with the precise aim (set out in Article 1 of the afore-mentioned law) of guaranteeing an adequate flow of information in terms of frequency and content on gender-based violence against women, in order to design adequate prevention and counteraction policies and to ensure effective monitoring of the phenomenon.

Article 5 of Law no. 53/2022, entitled 'Statistical Surveys by the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Justice', then provides that, in order to deepen the analysis of the phenomena referred to in Article 1, the information systems must detect the relationship between the perpetrator and the victim as well as, where known: the age and gender of the perpetrators and victims; information on the place where the event took place; the type of weapon used, if any; whether the violence is committed in the presence of the perpetrators' or victims' children at the scene; whether the violence is committed together with persecutory acts. With specific regard to what is of interest here, the provision also provides for the Ministry of Justice to identify the fundamental methods and information to monitor, also by means of its information systems, the phenomenon of violence against women and necessary to reconstruct the relationship between the perpetrator and the victim, with regard to proceedings relating to - in addition to homicide, including attempted homicide under Article 575 of the Criminal Code, also in the aggravated hypotheses under Articles 576, first paragraph, numbers 2, 5 and 5.1, and 577, first paragraph, number 1, and second paragraph, of the Penal Code, to assault as referred to in Article 581 of the Penal Code, to bodily harm as referred to in Article 582 of the Penal Code also in aggravated cases pursuant to Articles 583 and 585 of the Penal Code, to kidnapping as referred to in Article 605 of the Penal Code, to private violence as referred to in Article 610 of the Penal Code trespassing as referred to in Article 614 of the Criminal Code, abandonment of a minor or incapacitated person as referred to in Article 591 of the Criminal Code, damage as referred to in Article 635 of the Criminal Code, extortion as referred to in Article 629 of the Criminal Code, threatening as referred to in Article 612 of the Criminal Code, aiding and abetting prostitution as referred to in Article 3 of Law no. 75 of 20 February 1958, circumvention of an incapable person as referred to in Article 643 of the Criminal Code and trafficking in persons as referred to in Article 601 of the Criminal Code - to offences of sexual violence as referred to in Article 609-bis of the Criminal Code, also in the aggravated cases referred to in Article 609-ter of the Criminal Code and group sexual violence as referred to in Article 609-octies of the Criminal Code sexual acts with a minor as referred to in Article 609-quater of the Penal Code and corruption of minors as referred to in Article 609-quinquies of the Penal Code; ill-treatment against family members and cohabitants as referred to in Article 572 of the Penal Code; persecutory acts as referred to in Article 612-bis of the Penal Code; unlawful dissemination of sexually explicit images or videos as referred to in Article 612-ter of the Penal Code; violation of orders of removal from the family home and the prohibition on approaching places frequented by the offended person, as per Article 387-bis of the Penal Code; to coercion or inducement to marry, as per Article 558-bis of the Penal Code; to practices of mutilation of female genital organs, as per Article 583-bis of the Penal Code; to deformation of the person's appearance by permanent facial injuries, as per Article 583-quinquies of the Penal Code; non-consensual termination of pregnancy as referred to in Article 593-ter of the Penal Code; violation of family care obligations as referred to

in Article 570 of the Penal Code and violation of family care obligations in the event of separation or dissolution of marriage as referred to in Article 570-bis of the Penal Code; child prostitution as referred to in Article 600-bis of the Penal Code;

The aim of the intervention is to obtain more precise information on the actual scale of the phenomenon, on the presence in detention facilities of sex offenders and abusers with a final legal position and/or defendants, and to monitor the possible continuation of relations between offender and victim through interviews, video interviews and exchange of correspondence.

Links with other institutions, including European ones

Inter-institutional dialogue activities, also at EU level, aimed at promoting the development and implementation of planning, regulatory and organisational proposals, through the holding of hearings and the acquisition of opinions and contributions, in synergy with the Superior Council of the Magistracy, the competent ministerial bodies, the Scuola Superiore della Magistratura and other bodies and institutions, including European ones, active in the field.

Compilation of European case law on gender and domestic violence; examination of censures against Italy, cataloguing, identification of remedies.

Recognition and analysis of particularly relevant European and non-European interventions/practices/jurisprudential experiences.

Devising and implementing project proposals aimed at participating in European Union calls for funding.

Analysing and reflecting on language

A collection of civil and criminal court decisions, with particular regard to those already the subject of public debate, as well as press articles on gender-based and domestic violence, aimed at examining the language used, both because of its impact on cultural education in the field of combating gender-based violence and because of its potential to create situations of secondary victimisation. Evaluation and analysis of the ECHR judgments on this issue.

In 2023, the **Ministry of Defense** approved the “Code of conduct to prevent and combat discrimination and to protect the integrity and dignity of persons”.

With the adoption of the Code, the Italian Defense aims to:

- ensure equal opportunities for all workers by encouraging the adoption of decisions and organizational behavior based on the principles of fairness, respect, collaboration and fairness;
- prevent all forms of discrimination affecting the dignity of the person and promote organizational well-being;
- use timely and impartial procedures to end any proven incidents of discrimination, sexual harassment, moral and/or psychological violence;
- guarantee to those who report violations of this Code the right to privacy and the protection against direct and indirect retaliation;
- disseminate knowledge of the functions and areas of competence of the “person of trust” (a person identified by the organization to be the point of contact for workers believed of being harassed);
- identify and monitor incidents of harassment, bullying, straining, occupational stalking, discrimination and any unwanted sexual acts or behaviour;
- identify the actors involved and their respective roles in the prevention and combating of harmful conduct indicated in the Code;
- inform the employers of the Ministry of Defense of their rights and obligations regarding the prevention and removal of all discriminatory behaviour and the maintenance of a working climate which ensures respect for the dignity of each person.

As far as the **Ministry of Health** is concerned, a recent regulation on gender-based violence has

a specific impact on public health. Law **No. 53 of May 5, 2022**, "Provisions on statistics on gender-based violence", aims to ensure an adequate flow of information, in terms of cadence and content, on gender-based violence against women, in order to design appropriate prevention and response policies and to ensure effective monitoring of the phenomenon. According to article 4 of the law, all public health facilities, particularly emergency rooms, are obligated to provide data and information on violence against women. In addition, it establishes that the Emergency Medical Information Flow (**EMUR**) of the emergency room must be complemented with the information useful and necessary for the detection of gender-based violence against women, ensuring the identification of the relationship between the perpetrator and the victim, and the following additional information

- the type of violence, whether physical, sexual, psychological or economic, inflicted on the victim;
- If the violence is committed in the presence of either the perpetrator's or the victim's children, and if it is combined with acts of persecution;
- the revictimization risk indicators set out in Annex B of the DPCM of 24 November 2017, without prejudice to the guarantee of anonymity of victims. [...]

With regards to the **Ministry for Disabilities**, in 2023, the National Observatory on the Condition of People with Disabilities in Italy, provided for by Law 18/2009, was reinstated. This Observatory has the task of identifying lines of intervention transversal to the various Administrations and other subjects of civil society to improve the living conditions of people with disabilities. Recently, within this Observatory, a specific Working Group on the issue of violence against women with disabilities has been set up, composed of representatives identified by all the Administrations, Bodies, Associations that participate in the work of the Observatory.

The Working Group originates from what emerged following the meeting of the National Observatory on the Condition of Persons with Disabilities held on 24 November 2023, on the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, in the presence of Minister Alessandra Locatelli and Minister Eugenia Roccella.

The aim of the Working Group is to offer contributions on the specific issue of violence against women with disabilities also to make them available to the Observatory on the phenomenon of violence against women and domestic violence so that they can be useful elements for the acts that will be carried out and with a view to starting a synergistic collaboration between the two Observatories.

The main lines of intervention of the Working Group are:

1. accessibility of communication and information;
2. minimum standards of anti-violence centers and shelters;
3. Guidelines on gender-based violence, with particular regard to the training of operators.

The activities of the Working Group, which are still in progress, will end in July with the elaboration of a document that will report, among other things, the synthesis of the proposals that emerged, discussed and shared by the Group itself.

Article 8: Funding

Anti-Violence Centres and Shelter Houses constitute the axis of the territorial network providing for women victims of violence, through specialized services, based on a gender approach and the principles of the Istanbul Convention and with a methodology of to the reception of victims. Within the **Department of Equal Opportunity** a dedicated committee, composed of representatives from

the regions, was set up to define the funding requirements, in order to ensure that these services receive specific funding in a continuous form under Articles 5 and 5a of Decree-Law No. 93/2013, necessary to their continuous and regular operation. Therefore, at the legislative level, it was established **the adoption of a National Strategic Plan against violence against women and domestic violence**, subject to the acquisition of the opinion in the State-Regions Unified Conference, at least every three years, and to the allocation of resources, in the amount of 5 million euros per year, starting in 2022. These resources were increased by Budget Law 2023, which raised the annual allocation to 15 million euros. Article 5 (National Strategic Plan against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence), together with Article 5-bis (Actions for Anti-Violence Centres and Shelter Homes) of Decree-Law No. 93, constitutes the regulatory framework on preventing and combating male violence against women and domestic violence, consistent with the objectives of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, adopted in Istanbul on May 11, 2011 (the so-called Istanbul Convention). The structure of the National Strategic Plan follows the four P: Prevention, Protection, Punishment/Prosecution of Crimes, Coordinated Policies. An evolution in the approach can be observed: while the original wording of Decree Law No. 93 of 2013 referred to an Extraordinary Action Plan, as it was in response to an emergency of the phenomenon that was particularly compelling in 2013 with 179 femicides (the highest number ever), with the subsequent amendments made to the aforementioned Article 5, the now “national strategic” Plan represents the programmatic framework containing the guidelines and development stages for achieving the goals set for preventing and combating male violence against women and supporting victims. Within the framework of Italy's international commitments, the implementation of the Plan contributes to the fulfilment of its obligations under the Council of Europe's Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence of 2011 as well as to the achievement of Goal 5 of the United Nations' Agenda 2030, bearing the goal of “achieving gender equality and self-determination for all women and girls.” In addition, to make it structural and concretely operational, the Plan, as mentioned following recent legislative changes, is accompanied by appropriate resources starting in 2022.

With regard to the financing of anti-violence centres and shelters, the allocated resources are transferred, by the Department for Equal Opportunities to the Regions on the basis of annual decrees of allocation signed by the political authority pro tempore delegated to equal opportunities. In 2019 a monitoring system was introduced on the status of resource utilization highlighted in the Report to Parliament.

Over the past five years, it can be confirmed that there has been a significant increase in the resources allocated to anti-violence centres and shelters. In fact, for the period 2019-2023 the total appropriations transferred to the regions amounted to: 183 million.

In detail, the following amounts were transferred through the annual allocation decrees:

- 30,000,000.00 for 2019;
- 28,000,000.00 for 2020;
- 30,000,000.00 for 2021;
- 40,000,000.00 for 2022;
- 55,000,000.00 for 2023.

With the latest distribution **decree (Nov. 16, 2023)**, an amount of 40 million euros (+10 mln compared to 2022) was allocated to regional facilities and initiatives 15 million euros (+5 mln compared to 2022). Thus, an increase of 15 mln over the previous year (+15 mln), registering an increase of 37.5 per cent.

One innovation is noted with respect to previous years, and which is intended to be repeated in 2024: an amount of 9 million euros was allocated, consistent with the objectives of the PNRR, the

National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021-2026, as well as the National Strategic Plan on Male Violence Against Women 2021-2023, for initiatives, to be undertaken at the regional level, aimed at supporting women's empowerment, reintegration into employment, and economic and social recovery of women in particular in their path out of violence.

Finally, Law No. 213/2023 (Budget Law 2024) increased resources by 5 million, following a parliamentary decision, for each of the years 2024, 2025 and 2026, allocating them for the implementation of Centres Anti Violence. In addition, 20 million euros were allocated for each of the years 2024 to 2026 for the purchase and construction of Shelter Houses.

The above-mentioned resources are transferred from the central government to the regions, which can financially support NGOs.

Since 2015, the **Ministry of Health** has continuously provided funding, in most cases through the Project Fund of the National Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (CCM), in collaboration with educational institutions and local bodies of great scientific and operational importance.

The implementation of Article 15 of the Istanbul Convention, which places the training of professionals dealing with victims and perpetrators of gender and domestic violence at the heart of any prevention strategy, was followed by the pilot project for the distance training of 29 Italian Emergency Rooms PS (2015-2017) and then by the capillary project "Distance Training (FAD) for Social Health Workers in Italian Emergency Departments, aimed at preventing and combating gender-based violence" (2019-2021), both in collaboration with the ISS (National Institute of Health). In particular, the FAD project was aimed at social-health workers in PS, with the aim of enabling them to intercept and bring to light cases of violence, thus providing a more timely and punctual management of the person who is a victim of gender-based violence. In the eight months of implementation (from 29 January to 29 September 2020), the project involved 26,347 operators and professionals, belonging to 642 emergency rooms in all Italian Regions reaching almost all the PSs in the national territory (around 97%).

The CCM 2021 project "Strategies for the prevention of violence against women and minors through the training of health and social-health workers with particular regard to the effects of COVID-19" - IPAZIA CCM2021 (2021-2024), led by the Region of Tuscany and involving various regions and authorities representing the national territory. The Ipazia project aimed to develop and test a training model based on the problem-based learning - competence-oriented methodology, articulated in a basic course (FAD course) addressed to operators of territorial health and social health services dealing with violence against women and minors, in the territorial areas of the operational units involved in the project, and in a specific course for "training of trainers" identified by each participating Local Health Authority, who will be able to disseminate the acquired skills to the social health personnel of the territories of competence. The objectives of the Ipazia project were to promote the systematic application of correct protocols so that every victim, even in cases of multiple discrimination, is given the same opportunity to be assisted in finding ways out of the cycle of violence, and to facilitate the exchange of good practices by creating a community of practice capable of pooling the knowledge and skills of health and social-health operators in the territorial services in order to provide training and combat violence against women and minors at local level, not only in the PS.

For this reason, since 2015, in close collaboration with the ISS and the Regions, a professional training course financed by the Ministry of Health has been running, involving first of all the emergency services of Italy and, with the latest Hypatia project that has just ended (May 2024), the operators and workers of the territories, for a correct, continuous and capillary training that must be considered one of the fundamental tools for the prevention of violence against women.

The new project on violence against women, funded by the National Centre for Disease Prevention

and Control (CCM), launched in January 2024 and carried out by the ISS, entitled "Violence against women: long-term health effects for precision prevention", has the overall objective of defining new strategies and models for the care of women who have suffered violence as well as of creating a territorial model that guarantees long-term care for women and minors, based on precision medicine. The project follows on from a previous ISS project called EpiWE (epigenetics of violence against women) and aims to increase knowledge of the epigenetic changes caused by the phenomenon of violence in order to prevent and establish early care pathways for violence-related diseases in the long term.

Article 11: Data collection and research

Since GREVIO's first baseline evaluation report, (2020) the **National Statistics Office (ISTAT)** has been continuously engaged in developing the collection of relevant data, fostering the involvement of the data producer from the law enforcement agencies, the justice sector, specialized services and the public health care sector. The activities carried out by Istat in this perspective have been supported by the agreement with the National Department of Equal Opportunity (signed in 2017 and renewed in 2024) that aims at building an integrated system of information related to the gender-based violence.

Istat enhanced the cooperation with the **Ministry of Health** with the renewal of a common agreement (signed in 2019 and renewed in 2023) assuring regular provision of data related to gender-based violence from the health care system. The new protocol is in line with the provisions of the law 53/2022, on measuring violence against women. Anyway, as a result of the collaboration, since 2020 it has been released information on the access of women to the Emergency Room of hospitals and the hospitalizations of women with reference to specific diagnosis, together with demographic information on the victims. The release of related analysis aims at developing the study of consequences on women in terms of health and monitoring such data distinguishing the effect due to the increasing use of specific measure to identify victims. More information are available here: <https://www.istat.it/it/violenza-sulle-donne/il-fenomeno/violenza-e-accesso-delle-donne-alle-strutture-ospedaliere>.

In 2021 Istat signed an agreement of cooperation with the **Ministry of Justice** in order to develop and assure the provision of data referred to gender-based violence. Based on the agreement a task force (tavolo tecnico) was established with the aim to identify cases related to gender-based violence, the information needed to identify related penal proceedings and all information needed to further analyse the phenomenon.

Since 2020 a milestone has been achieved towards improving data collection and research related to violence against women, the approval of a national law specifically dedicated to the collection of data on gender-based violence: the afore-mentioned **law n.53** of 5th of May 2022. The law binds the Ministry of Health (art.4), **the Ministry of Interior** and **the Ministry of Justice** (respectively art. 5 and 6) to provide data referred to violence against women with specific information, in coordination of the **Department for Equal Opportunities**. Moreover, it provides the collection of data about the specialized support services for survivors of violence to be carried out by Istat in cooperation with the Regions (art 7) and ask Istat to carry out the survey on violence against women every 3 years (art.2).

The Women's Safety Survey, financed by the **Department for Equal Opportunities**, is expected to go into the field in 2024, with dissemination of the results in 2025; the survey will have a sample of about 25,500 women aged 16-75, of whom 21,000 Italian, 4,000 foreigners and 500 refugees in Italy. It should be noted, however, that the timing of the start-up is still being fixed, due to a pending appeal concerning the awarding of the public tender called by Consip S.p.A. for the service of conducting the interviews.

With reference to the **Ministry of Health**, the law provides that data about the access to the Emergency Room of hospitals include as compulsory set of variables: the victim-perpetrator relationship; the type of violence suffered by the victim (physical, sexual, psychological or economic); whether the violence is committed in the presence of children of the perpetrators or victims; if the violence is committed together with persecutory acts (stalking); the indicators related to risk of revictimization of the Brief Risk Assessment for the Emergency Department (DA-5).

The **Ministry of Interior** and **the Ministry of Justice** are bound to record for a list of specific crimes the victim-perpetrator relationship, age and gender of the perpetrators and victims; information on the place where the violence occurred; the type of weapon possibly used; if the violence is committed in the presence of the perpetrators' or victims' children at the scene; if the violence is committed together with persecutory acts (stalking). The Ministry of Interior collects data on victim perpetrator relationship since January 2024, and assured to share data with Istat on September 2024. Data will be about the first semester 2024 and the data sharing to Istat will be twice a year. As of 2024 the Ministry of Interior data collection is in-line with the provisions set by law n.53 of 5th of May 2022.

Moreover, the **Ministry of Justice** should record if it is designed a Public Defender with regard to the suspects and the accused, as well as the injured party and the civil party.

The law includes the provision of multi-agency database involving the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Justice to record, among others, information, at every level of the judicial proceedings, on complaints, preventive measures applied by the police commissioner or by the judicial authority, precautionary measures, protection orders and security measures, dismissal measures and sentences.

Ministry of Justice collect data on the variable "victim-perpetrator relationship" and other important information since January 2023, but data are not yet available. Perhaps the use of

a “FLAG – gender-based violence”, enable the correct data collection.

Other data collection Istat is carrying on are about:

The second edition of survey on “Stereotypes on Gender Roles and the Social Image of Violence” among the adult population; and the module on gender roles aimed at 11-19 year olds.

Since 2020, Istat is studying the sentiment and emotion analysis to the issues of violence and gender stereotypes in social media, in order to understand how communication diversifies and changes even in the virtual dimension and what reactions (stimulation and propagation of violence, outrage...).

Furthermore, Istat is conducting, always in agreement with the Department of Equal Opportunity a study on territorial networks for the governance of violence against women. These are networks that arise from protocols or agreements between public and private entities entered into in order to prevent and combat violence.

The **Ministry of Health** highlights how in the implementation of Article 4 of Law No. 53 of 5 May 2022, the information flow related to the Emergency Room outline of the Information System for monitoring the services provided in the field of emergency health care (EMUR), as per the Decree of the Minister of Labor, Health and Social Policies of 17 December 2008, was supplemented with a set of information useful for the detection of gender-based violence against women. In particular, the aforementioned EMUR decree has been updated to provide an additional purpose to the system, i.e. to ensure the monitoring of the phenomenon of gender-based violence against women and to allow the processing of statistical data that will enable the planning of appropriate policies to prevent and combat gender-based violence against women, providing for the collection of further information useful for the detection of gender-based violence against women, including data on violence, including the victim-perpetrator relationship, the type of violence (physical, sexual, psychological or economic) and its frequency, as well as other details relating to violence to assess the risk of revictimization (e.g. the existence of any persecutory acts, constant jealousy and violence, aggression during pregnancy, use or threat of weapons or strangulation, increase in violence in the last 6 months, fear for one's life).

Currently, the draft decree amending the EMUR decree for the collection of the aforementioned information has received the positive opinion of the Conference of States and Regions at its last meeting on 30 May, already signed by the Minister for Equal Opportunities, will be signed by the Minister of Health in the next few days to continue the administrative procedure for publication in the Official Gazette.

With regards to the **Ministry for Disabilities**, Article 2 of Law No. 53/2022 on "Provisions on statistics on gender-based violence", given that statistics are used to analyze the phenomenon and intervene to provide prevention and contrast policies, provides in Article 2 that:

1. In order to support policies and actions to combat gender-based violence, the Presidency of the Council of Ministers - Department for Equal Opportunities for the conduct of sample surveys makes use of data and surveys carried out by the National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT) and the National Statistical System (SISTAN). Every three years, ISTAT and SISTAN carry out a sample survey entirely dedicated to violence against women, which also produces estimates on the hidden part of the different types of violence, i.e. physical, sexual, psychological, economic violence, including the presence of the perpetrators' or victims' children at the scene of the crime, and persecutory acts with reference to behavior that constitutes or contributes to constituting a crime, up to the regional level. ISTAT and SISTAN

publish the results of this survey and send them to the Presidency of the Council of Ministers - Department for Equal Opportunities, which coordinates the efforts in this field.

The **Minister with responsibility for Equal Opportunities** has the power to provide guidance on the identification of statistical survey needs for the prevention and combating of violence against women. The questions for the collection of data are those used in the most recent survey on women's safety carried out by ISTAT. If new information needs are identified for a better understanding and analysis of the phenomenon and for the identification of more effective measures to combat violence against women, the questions referred to in the previous period may be supplemented by ISTAT, also on the direction of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers - Department for Equal Opportunities, with specific measures. Questions on psychological and economic violence for women in a relationship must also be supplemented with questions relating to the presence of minor children or the presence of minor children in the home. With regard to the perpetrator-victim relationship, the list of the minimum set of modalities that must be provided for in the ISTAT surveys is as follows: 1. spouse/cohabitant; 2. boyfriend; 3. ex-spouse/ex-partner; 4. ex-boyfriend; 5. other relative; 6. colleague/employer; 7. acquaintance/friend; 8. Customer; 9. Neighbor; 10. schoolmate; 11. teacher or person who carries out a care and/or custodial activity; 12. doctor or health care professional; 13. person unknown to the victim; 14. Other; 15. Unidentified author.

This means that the legal foundations have been laid so that in the context of the perpetrator-victim relationship, it can also occur in the future when this relationship is part of a relationship of true caregiving with a woman with disabilities, especially in the case of cohabitation.

After all, ISTAT data from 2014 indicated that 36% of those in poor health and 36.6% of those with severe limitations had suffered physical or sexual violence, compared to the national average among all women, with and without disabilities, which was around 31.5%. In particular, Istat had also found that the risk of being subjected to attempted rape or rape was more than doubled for women with severe limitations, equal to 10.0% compared to 4.7% for women without limitations or health problems. Psychological intimate partner violence, current or past, was also higher among women with health problems or functional limitations.

The research and evaluation activities carried out by the **National Research Centre (CNR)** since 2017 are aimed at reconstructing the different contexts of action as well as the characteristics and intervention practices of the specialized and general services active in preventing and combating violence. Among the most recent activities are:

- Implementation of the LARA online archive, a web archive of regional legislation to prevent and combat male violence against women, using laws, regulations and administrative acts of various kinds as units. LARA is a tool to support researchers in their studies as well as practitioners involved in planning and implementing activities to combat male violence against women, including activities to support children and activities to support offenders. LARA is a public resource and its access and consultation are free of charge.

- The CNR has carried out the Second national survey on programs for perpetrators of violence. The survey provides an updated picture of perpetrator programs in Italy up to 31 December 2022. The study focuses on the characteristics of the managers of the programs, the structural characteristics of the centers, the personnel employed, the approaches and phases of intervention, the evaluation measures and the funding. With regard to the men in care, the methods of access to the programs and their personal data have been studied. The analyses allow us to analyze the changes observed in relation to the first national survey, carried out in 2018. The research also included a qualitative study to examine evaluation studies measuring the effectiveness of perpetrator programs.

- Based on the qualitative study of the practices of specialized services (namely, women anti-violence centers and shelters) and their interactions with general services conducted in the first phase of the ViVa Project (2017-2021), empowerment measures for women with experience of gender-based violence has also been analyzed. In particular, analyses have been carried out with the aim of reconstructing: the European legal framework on empowerment measures for women in situations of violence; national policies for women's employment and gender equality; empowerment measures adopted at regional level. These studies are preparatory to the implementation of a field study which is currently underway, the aim of which is to identify the strengths and critical points in the implementation of empowerment measures at local level.

The **Ministry of Justice** underlines the impact of the Permanent monitoring centre on the effectiveness of regulations on gender and domestic violence established at the Ministry of Justice

In order to provide an effective and structured contribution to the national bodies, based on the conviction that the degree of effectiveness of the regulations on combating gender-based violence is strictly dependent on their implementation, it was deemed necessary to set up a **permanent Observatory within the Ministry of Justice, the 'Permanent Monitoring Centre on the Effectiveness of Regulations on Gender and Domestic Violence'**. In the implementation of the monitoring center's objectives, working jointly with the CSM for the purpose of their preparation, questionnaires were forwarded to the ordinary public prosecutors' offices at the Juvenile Courts to detect good practices and critical issues in the implementation of the regulations on domestic and gender-based violence. For ease of reading, the results of the survey are attached to this document given the complexity and quantity of the information requested from the offices (see **Annexes 5,6**).

In addition, statistical data on civil and criminal proceedings of interest were acquired through the Superior Council of the Magistracy and the General Directorate for Statistics and Organizational Analysis of the Department, which can also be consulted in an annex to this document (**annexes 7,8**). The monitoring center has also compiled a collection of legislation covering domestic and supranational sources on gender-based and domestic violence (**Annex 9**). The collection has been compiled taking into account the complex succession of regulatory interventions that give women offended by violence a priority dimension of protection and constitutes a reconnaissance of the 'dedicated' regulatory sources, through an accurate reconstruction of the instruments and measures, both procedural and substantive, adopted also in response to the supranational obligations to free the victim from the reiteration of violent conducts and to emancipate her from dysfunctional relational dynamics. The activities carried out by the monitoring center can be communicated and made visible on the dedicated page of the Justice website www.ovg.giustizia.it. The anti-violence brochure (**Annex 10**) presented by the Minister of Justice and aimed at the information and prevention of domestic and gender-based violence phenomena was also published on the aforementioned page.

Civil Sector

A. Activities of extraction, collection and processing of judicial and statistical data in civil matters, aimed at the development of technical solutions and possible regulatory proposals with a view to improving the efficiency of the general regulatory system, with regard to:

- cases of violence in separation, divorce and child custody cases;
- adoption of protective measures against family abuse provided for in the civil code;

- economic protection measures for battered women, effectiveness of protection under the law;
 - disputes in which domestic violence was alleged, settled by mutual consent;
 - adequate communication between the judicial authorities involved civil, criminal, juvenile with mutual exchange of information and alerts;
 - impact of the application of precautionary measures on child custody decisions and meeting protocols.
- B.** Focusing on possible regulatory proposals in relation to:
- verification by civil judges of the criteria for choosing OTCs, in relation to their specialization, in cases involving allegations of family violence;
 - training courses for magistrates aimed at identifying the questions to be submitted to the auxiliaries;
 - provision of specific areas in the registers of technical advisers for the registration of auxiliaries specialised in gender-based violence; provision for periodic updating of the professionals concerned as a requirement for continued registration.

Criminal sector

A. Activities of extraction, collection and processing of judicial and statistical data in criminal matters, aimed at the development of technical solutions and possible regulatory proposals with a view to improving the efficiency of the general regulatory system, with regard to:

- outcomes of criminal proceedings: dismissals, acquittals, convictions;
- examination of the factors that statistically affected the determination of the sentence, with reference to the recognition of aggravating and mitigating circumstances;
- collection of data on applied personal security measures and preventive measures.
- monitoring of communications between the judicial authorities involved, civil, criminal, juvenile with mutual exchange of information and alerts.

B. Focusing on possible regulatory proposals in relation to:

- honorary judiciary: VPO - GOT - training; assessment of professionalism; verification of the limits of employment in the civil sector and in the criminal sector in both the investigation and trial phases; arrangements for periodic verification of professionalism in the performance of delegated functions.

With regards to Minors

Criminal sector

Collection and processing of data on:

- gender-based and domestic violence on minors, both as primary victims and as secondary victims (cases of so-called witnessing violence);
- type of protection adopted for the victim (removal from the family, community, etc.);
- extension to minors of the protection granted to the primary victim.

Civil sector

Relationship between the so-called right to co-parenting and child protection: collection of decisions aimed at verifying the incidence of the phenomenon of gender and domestic violence in the regulation of relations between the abuser and minor children, on visitation rights and their modalities, and on the adoption of measures to protect the victim during the execution of encounter protocols.

Gender and domestic violence among minors

- data collection aimed at verifying the incidence of the problem;
- statistical survey of court outcomes;

- inter-institutional involvement (judicial offices, social services, counselling centres, order of psychologists) aimed at prevention and treatment of cases;
- collection of statistical data on procedures under Article 403 of the Civil Code;
- elaboration of specific regulatory proposals and technical-organisational solutions.

In the framework of the collaboration agreement with the national **Department of Equal Opportunity**, since 2018 **ISTAT** has been building a system of data collections to gather information on the Protection System of survivors of violence, intended as the system of specialized support services mostly managed by specialized NGO's. In this framework in 2020 it was carried out the first edition of an annual data collection on women seeking for help in Anti-violence centers. For each woman who started a personalised pathway out of violence in the Anti-violence Center during the year is filled a form with relevant information. Among the information collected some are related to the perpetrator of violence.

Information on restraining order and perpetrator convictions on the basis of survey of women seeking for help in Antiviolence Centers

The worker of the Centers in charge of filling the questionnaire report whether the supported woman asked authorities for any barring/ restraining orders (to protect her / children) or a warning (by the police commissioner), whether such order was issued, the time to be issued, authority of issuance, whether the issued order was breached.

Moreover, it is reported if the perpetrator was charged and if was sentenced, if he had previous criminal records.

In the most recent edition of the data collection, are also gathered information about possible proceeding related to the children of the woman followed by the center: whether there is such proceeding, whether there are issued related provisions and if they take into account the violence disclosed by the woman and the eventual provisions issued against the perpetrator.

Besides, it is reported if the judicial authority provided for an evaluation of the parental ability (of the woman, of the perpetrator of violence, of both).

In 2022, this survey shows that the support of the Centers stimulates greater awareness on the part of the woman, which is expressed, among other things, in reporting the violent person to the authorities - although this information is not always available (7.3% of cases). In fact, it is found that 41.8% of women who have started the path of leaving violence with Centers have been reported to the police, at least once, the perpetrators (among them 9.7% reported more than once).

The proportion of reports is higher if the perpetrator is an ex-partner (49.4%): specifically, 33.9% were reported once and 15.5% more than once. In contrast, if the perpetrator is another family member or relative, the percentage of reports is lower (29.5% of cases, including 5.2% more than once). Among perpetrators of violence, current partners are reported in about 41% of cases, as are friends/acquaintances/colleagues. The propensity to report is also affected by the number of violent incidents and rises from 24.9 percent in the case of a single violence experienced to 56.9 percent in the case of more than five, while no major differences are observed as the type of violence varies (ranging from 48.9 percent in the case of physical violence, 46.7 percent in the case of sexual violence, and 41.9 percent for other types of violence).

About one in four (27.5%) perpetrators, a removal order or a ban on approaching and/or a warning, requests were met in 69.7% of cases. The time passed to obtain the measure was "within seven days" for 15.4% of cases and "between eight and 14 days" for 17.4%. In 23.5 percent of cases, however, the woman had to wait 15 to 30 days for the requested measure;

longer times occurred in 28.3 percent of cases (the measure was obtained between one and two months for 16.7 percent of perpetrators and in more than two months for 11.6 percent). Among reported perpetrators, 12% had no charges over time, 21.3% had charges in the past, and 32.7% are still under investigation, while for 29.5% of cases this information is missing. In 4.5% of cases, however, the complaint was withdrawn. 31% of the defendants have been convicted; for 64.2% the trial is still ongoing while 1.3% have been acquitted. Even after indictment, cases of withdrawal of the complaint continue to occur (1.5 percent).

DATA on WARNING FROM QUESTORE – data from Ministry of Interior

The warning from the Questore, as already mentioned, is part of the multiple tools to protect the victim of gender-based violence outside the criminal process, which is monitored by the Ministry of the Interior. This preventive measure - created for the purpose of securing the victim of persecutory acts, domestic violence, cyberbullying - was applied, according to ministerial data for the year 2022, on more than 3,600 occasions, thus far more frequently (+138%) than the approximately 1,500 in the year 2014, the year following the entry into force of the Law that introduced the extension of this institute to cases of domestic violence as well. Fifty-six percent (about 2,000) of these warnings in 2022 related precisely to facts deemed to be attributable to the offenses of battery or minor bodily injury in the context of domestic violence, a figure that shows a very strong increase (+46%) over the previous year. However, this significant increase was not reflected in the measure of emergency removal from the family home , which is applicable in cases of flagrante delicto where there are reasonable grounds to believe that the criminal conduct may be repeated, placing the life or physical or psychological integrity of the offended person in serious and present danger: removal from the family home was in fact ordered in 380 cases in the year 2022, a figure almost identical to the 377 in the previous year.

Part II: Information on the implementation of selected provisions in priority areas in the field of prevention, protection and prosecution

Article 12: General obligations

Within the Italian legal framework, the role of the **Equality Councilors** is regulated by Legislative Decree. n. 198/2006 and subsequent amendments, the so-called **Equal Opportunities Code** (hereinafter, Code) in particular, from articles 12-20, 25, 26, and 36-38. In fact, the Equality Councilors, in addition to having important functions of promotion and control of the implementation of the principles of equal opportunities and non-discrimination between men and women in the world of work, carry out delicate tasks of protecting workers who have suffered gender-based discrimination in the workplace, both at an extrajudicial level and before a court, based on the principles and procedures established by the articles 36, 37 and 38 of the Code. In the exercise of these functions, they are recognized as public officials, with the consequent obligation to report to the judicial authorities any crimes of which they become aware (art. 13, paragraph 2, of the Code). The presence of the Councilors throughout the whole territory (at national, regional, and local level) guarantees the full implementation of their dual function of a promotional nature and anti-discrimination protection. In fact, with reference to anti-discrimination tasks, they can resolve disputes on a territorial basis: in particular, at the national and regional level, Equality Councilors have an autonomous power of intervention in the event of a so-called collective discrimination, which occurs where the workers harmed by the discriminatory conduct cannot be immediately and directly identified, while at the provincial level the equality councilors deal with cases of individual discrimination.

In relation to the GREVIO questionnaire, the contribution provided concerns cases of discrimination relating exclusively to harassment and sexual harassment in the workplace dealt with by the Equality Councilors in the respective areas of concern. With reference to the case of harassment, they act under art. 26 of the Code, which, as is known, provides a definition of a behavior that constitutes harassment and harassment of a sexual nature in the workplace, and which is to be considered as discrimination. Moreover, under the same article, all less favorable treatments suffered by a worker for having refused harassment or having submitted to it, and all the measures adopted as a reaction to a complaint or to an action aimed at obtaining compliance with the principle of equal treatment between men and women, they are also considered harassment and therefore considered as discrimination. Finally, under this article, all provisions having a negative effect on the employment relationship due to the complaint are declared null and therefore not productive of legal effects. In addition, the employer has a responsibility in creating a work environment safe and is actively involved to prevent this kind of phenomenon (also through the adoption of a code of self-regulation and training course of the personnel on the issue). This, in short, is the legal framework in which Equality Councilors operate in these issues. Bearing all this in mind, in reference to the elements requested by GREVIO, the following are qualitative quantitative data relating to the cases of harassment and sexual harassment in the workplace received by the network of Councilors and actually taken care of, for which specific actions were carried out and whose outcomes are relevant. Equality Councilors have faced in the two-year period 2022-2023 a total of 44 cases of harassment and sexual harassment throughout the national territory of which 25 cases in 2022 and 19 in 2023. The analysis of the collected data allows us to focus attention on some important elements of the phenomenon (Tab. 1).

The complaints were detected especially in the North of Italy (84% nel 2022 e 78% nel 2023), and they concern medium-low qualifications female workers (56% nel 2022 e 46% nel 2023). In most cases it is the victim who in addition to suffering the harassment, also faces the economic damage

due to the measures taken from the employer to distance the victim from the harasser (demotions or sometimes dismissals or resignations): in 2022, 32% of the measures concerned the female worker while only 8% concerned the harasser and, similarly, in 2023 the trend appears confirmed (26% compared to 16%). The Equality Councilor direct action was decisive in most of the cases (40% in 2022 and 37% in 2023) but also pro-active in readdressing victims to other solutions (48% in 2022 and 63% in 2023). A minority of complainants are male (4% in 2022 and 26% in 2023). In some cases, these complaints have an intersectional nature, as harassment is related to both gender and sexual orientation. The almost absence of cases in the Centre and in the South of Italy which stands equally at 8% in 2022 and 11% in 2023 respectively, may be linked to the lower employment rate, especially in the regions of southern Italy compared with the whole territory, or the reticence of the victim to report what happened. However, from a more general point of view, the limited number of cases treated by Councilors could be interpreted as a widespread difficulty in highlighting discrimination in the workplace (so-called phenomenon of under-reporting) through notification or complaint. At this regard, this situation may be due also to a poor knowledge of the role of Equality Councilors, and to the fact that this matter can be treated by other subjects, depending on the severity of the situation e.g., trade unions, associations or bodies entitled to act, lawyers. Even where the case falls within the scope of application of the Penal Code, the Equality Councilor, however, has an autonomous power to act compared to the others. In fact, Equality Councilors can intervene in trials already underway (*ad adiuvandum*), based on the Code, but the jurisprudence of the Supreme Court of Cassation also recognized the legitimacy of the autonomy of the Equality Councilor for standing as a civil party in criminal trials for crimes that fall within the scope of its action. Any assessment in this regard must in any case also be carried out in agreement with the worker (Cassazione Penale, sez. VI, sentenza 16/04/2009 n. 16031). Anyway, from the data analysis, emerges that in the legal treatment of cases (both before a court and with a conciliation) the role of the Equality Councilors has also proven to be essential. Even where there was no direct competence, the Equality Councilors played an Important role in mediating between the parties, (institutions, employers, workers), involving where appropriate also third parties. In fact, the role of Equality Councilors is fundamental especially where irregularities in employment contracts arose, and if there is a need to restore a situation of regularity. In most cases, the victims of harassment also experienced the loss of job, or a demotion, which also means an economic loss. This situation emerges in many of the annual reports drawn up by the Equality Councilors on the activities carried out, where we found many examples of collaborative relationship carried out by Equality Councilors and anti-violence centers (CAV)), unions, Labor Inspectorate, and Unified Guarantees Committees (CUG, for public administrations, art. 57 legislative decree n. 165/2001), collaboration which contributes to the emergence of the phenomenon. By way of example, the following is the case where the Equality Councilor Intervened under complaints of a victim in the public sector. Although not directly involved in the case, which fell under the Penal Code, the Equality Councilor was also consulted by the victim and was able to intervene on multiple fronts. As a first step, was checked the possibility of activating the leave for women victims of violence under art. 24 of legislative decree n. 80/2015, and the regularity of the documents related to safety at work. Then the Councilor dialogued with employers in order to adapt the Company's Risk Assessment and Prevention Document (DVR, a mandatory document under art. 28 legislative decree n. 81/2008) and collaborated with the criminal lawyer of the victim. Moreover, the Councilor reported the issue to the CUG which took steps to carry out training courses to raise awareness on the issue among its member and prepare prevention activities within the workplace (e.g., Listening Desk). Listed below, the summary table of the cases observed:

Tab. 1 HARASSMENT/SEXUAL HARASSMENT CASES DEALT BY EQUALITY COUNCILORS AND THEIR OUTCOMES - YEARS 2022-2023

YEARS		2022		2023	
TOTAL CASES OBSERVED		24	%	20	%
TERRITORIES	NORTH	20	84%	16	80%
	CENTER	2	8%	2	10%
	SOUTH	2	8%	2	10%
SEX	M	1	4%	5	25%
	F	23	96%	15	75%
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VICTIM AND HARASSER	COLLEAGUE	8	33%	11	55%
	DIRECTOR	16	67%	9	45%
PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION OF THE VICTIMS	WORKER/EMPLOYEE	13	54%	9	45%
	SUPERVISOR/EXECUTIVE	0	0%	3	15%
	TRAINING STAGE	3	13%	1	5%
	N.A.	8	33%	7	35%
OUTCOME OF THE EQUALITY COUNCILOR ACTION	CONCLUSIVE	10	42%	7	35%
	PRO-ACTIVE	11	46%	13	65%
	NOT RESOLVED	3	12%	0	0%
OUTCOME AS EFFECTS ON THE WORK RELATIONSHIP	Measures towards female worker (dismissal/disciplinary note/transfer)	8	34%	5	25%
	Measures against harasser (dismissal/disciplinary note/transfer)	2	8%	3	15%
	Female worker kept same place	2	8%	0	0%
	Court	6	25%	3	15%
	Cases not falling within the identified cases	6	25%	9	45%

In general terms, a recent report published on the 1st of July 2024 by ISTAT estimates that in the 2022-2023 timeframe 13.5 per cent of women aged 15-70, who work or worked, will have experienced sexual harassment at work in their lifetime (especially younger women 15-24 year olds, 21.2 per cent) compared to 2.4 per cent of men aged 15-70 (see full [report](#)).

The **Department for Equal Opportunities** implemented different initiatives in the field of prevention, detailed below.

Training of housewives: In order to encourage the acquisition of digital skills, which are also functional for job placement, the Department for Equal Opportunities promoted a Public Notice reserved for housewives and homemakers. The Notice for the selection of projects aimed at the personal training of housewives and homemakers was dedicated to the promotion of digital training activities, carried out by public and private entities. Participants carry out activities in the domestic sphere, with priority given to women, without subordination and free of charge, aimed at caring for people and the domestic environment, registered and enrolled in compulsory insurance. Both public and private training institutions in individual or associated form, as well as associations and organizations and social cooperatives, with particular reference to training aimed at housewives, participated in the selection. The Notice collected a total of 162 eligible projects throughout Italy with

a good response from public and private training institutions, associations and organizations and social cooperatives operating in the training sector. A total of 14 projects were funded for a total amount of about 3 million euros. It should be noted that this line of activity, although falling within the scope of gender equality policies, provides the strengthening of digital skills that can also be useful to acquire greater awareness in the use of the new tools of the digital world and social networks, from the perspective of potential “victim” of abuse by others. For this reason, it can be considered a concurrent measure to the implementation of the National Strategic Plan Against Violence.

Memorandum with the Italian broadcasting TV (RAI): on February 1, 2022, a Memorandum was signed with RAI S.p.A and other parties, aimed at promoting equal and balanced representation of the sexes in communication activities. The Department for Equal Opportunities is committed to enhancing and sharing with the other signatory parties good practices and experiences developed in its professional sphere. Specifically, the signatories have committed to promoting communication models and messages that:

- a) uphold the principle of equal representation of the sexes, ensuring equal access in the public space of communication;
- b) are respectful of the personal, cultural and professional dignity of women and their specificity, competence and identity;
- c) enhance a real and non-stereotypical representation of the multiplicity of roles assumed by women in society;
- d) promote the principle of equal representation between the sexes, ensuring equal access in information or communication spaces;
- e) use non-sexist and non-stereotypical but inclusive language in the development of texts and choice of images.

Memorandum of Understanding with Poste Italiane: A second initiative is represented by the Memorandum of Understanding between the Minister for Equal Opportunities and Family and Poste Italiane S.p.A., signed on April 13, 2022, with the aim of spreading an inclusive business culture aimed at ensuring respect for equal opportunities, reducing situations of individual fragility and valuing diversity of thought. In particular, the initiative - in continuity with the previous Protocol signed in 2016 - provides for mutual collaboration, each within the scope of its competencies, for the development of communication and awareness campaigns aimed at preventing and combating all forms of violence and discrimination, violation of human rights, the principle of equal treatment and equal opportunities. Poste Italiane, in particular, intend to contribute to the visibility of communication and public awareness campaigns promoted and implemented by the Minister for Equal Opportunities and Family and the Department for Equal Opportunities.

Memorandum of Understanding signed in November 2023 between the Minister for the Family, birth rate and equal opportunities, the Minister of Education and Merit and the Minister of Culture having as its object “ Prevention and combating male violence against women and domestic violence – initiatives aimed at the world of schools ”(more details are provided in reference to art. 14 below)

An Integrated Communication Plan was prepared in December 2023 to disseminate, through communication campaigns, the regulatory tools and operational interventions in support of women victims of male violence. Within the Communication Plan, foreign, migrant/asylum-seeking women are also identified as a target audience. In this communication context, strengthening multilingual information campaigns that take into consideration the different cultural backgrounds of migrant and refugee women and girls and that aim to promote awareness of and ways to access gender-based violence response services, including the national anti-violence and anti-stalking number 1522, with

a specific focus on the target audience of young foreign and migrant women, is considered a priority. In the Integrated Communication Plan, one line is dedicated to the revision of the 1522 website, including the part translated into other languages, in order to provide complete information on services dedicated to women victims of violence, including foreign women. It is also planned to enrich the content of the Department's institutional website. From 2024 will be implemented a new Integrated Communication Plan. In order to convey a positive message aimed at urging women to embark on a path out of the dimension of violence, especially domestic violence, the Minister thought it appropriate to renew the claim of the sign bearing the number 1522, which will be translated into 11 languages (English, Spanish, French, German, Arabic, Chinese, Russian, Portuguese, Romanian, Bengali, Slovenian).

Article 14: Education

The Ministry of Education and Merit (MIM) has promoted multiple initiatives aimed at schools, in compliance with the [National Guidelines](#) adopted with note 5515 of 10.27.2017, *Educate to respect: for equality between the sexes, the prevention of gender violence and all forms of discrimination*. Each of them is aimed at affirming the Culture of Respect. In this broad sector, gender discrimination has particular importance as a separate issue or as part of a broader framework of combating all forms of oppression (e.g. bullying, racial or religious discrimination, etc.).

Below, an account of the most significant actions:

Memorandum of understanding signed on November 2023 between the Minister for the Family, birth rate and equal opportunities, the Minister of Education and Merit and the Minister of Culture having as its object "[Prevention and combating male violence against women and domestic violence – initiatives aimed at the world of schools](#)".

With this agreement a series of actions will be implemented joint initiatives, aimed at students of first and second cycle schools on the topic of preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence with the aim of spreading the values of mutual respect and gender equality, thus contributing to reducing discriminatory and violent attitudes and acquiring the necessary tools to recognize discrimination and violence against women and girls. A first initiative connected with the protocol is the competition notice "[From a glance: films by students on violence against women](#)" [DD n. 26 of 02/26/2024](#), currently in progress.

November 25 – International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

With resolution no. 54/134 of 17 December 1999, the United Nations General Assembly established 25 November as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in Objective 5, recommends "Achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls", in fact gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but the necessary condition for a fair and sustainable world. In order for equality and the fight against all forms of violence to be primary elements for the creation of an inclusive school, the Ministry of Education and Merit is constantly committed to the promotion and implementation of activities aimed at fighting all forms of violence and discrimination with the aim of stimulating new generations to a culture of mutual respect by valuing individual personalities.

In this regard, every year the Ministry, in view of November 25th, promotes initiatives in order to raise awareness, prevent and combat all forms of violence and discrimination.

For November 25, 2023, the MIM lit up red, to represent adherence to the anniversary. Furthermore, on that day, at the MIM headquarters, the Minister celebrated the anniversary with a [video message](#)

In this regard, greater information may be provided by the General Directorate for organizational planning, innovation of administrative processes, communication and contracts.

Protocol between the MIM and the Ministry of Health renewed on 19/01/2022, prot. n. 0000001 "Protection of the right to health, study and inclusion" which includes among the areas of intervention identified the "prevention of communicable diseases [...] through structural training activities; the promotion of psycho-physical well-being, also through interventions on the issues of reproductive health, affectivity and global education on relationships; prevention activities of the phenomenon of cyberbullying, against all forms of violence and discrimination".

Observatory on the phenomenon of violence against women and domestic violence

The MIM participates in the Observatory established at the Department for Equal Opportunities of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers in implementation of the art. 5, paragraph 2bis of the Legislative Decree of 14 August 2013, n. 93, converted with amendments to the law of 15 October 2013, n. 119 and established with the Ministerial Decree of 12 April 2022: institutional initiatives and activities aimed at preventing and combating the phenomenon of violence against women and of domestic violence, also in implementation of the National Strategic Plan on male violence against women 2021.23 (articulated in 4 Axes: Prevention, Protection and support, Prosecute and punish, Assistance and Promotion).

Working group to combat violence against women with disabilities

The MIM, through the General Directorate for students, inclusion and school orientation, is included in the Group, established on 25 November 2025, which operates within the National Observatory on the condition of people with disabilities. The Group is currently engaged in defining actions along three lines:

- Accessibility of communication and information
- Minimum standards of anti-violence centers and shelters
- Guidelines on gender violence and training of operators.

MIM-Arma dei Carabinieri Memorandum of Understanding "Increasing the culture of legality and awareness of the importance of safety among young people, promoting knowledge and respect for the rules", renewed on 19/05/2022. Among the issues are gender violence, stalking and femicide.

Further actions for the affirmation of the culture of respect which, in a preventive way, aim to combat gender violence, in particular against women, and to affirm equality against every cultural stereotype are described below:

NOISIAMOPARI.IT" PORTAL (www.noisiamopari.it)

The portal was created to collect contributions, teaching materials and proposals for new training courses designed for male and female teachers, for students and for families, with the aim of starting activities to combat stereotypes and discrimination. The portal is also a useful tool for sharing good practices proposed by educational institutions and associations participating in the Forums and institutional observatories established at the MIM.

MARCH 8 - International Women's Day

The day, commonly referred to as Women's Day, occurs on 8th March each year to remember both the social, political and economic achievements of women, and the discrimination and violence to which they have been subjected and still are, in all parts of the world.

In addition to the initiative organized on "STEM Month", in view of March 8, schools of all levels, within their didactic and organizational autonomy, are invited to carry out an in-depth study of the issues related to gender equality and the fight against discrimination referred to in Article 3 of the Italian Constitution.

On the occasion of 8 March 2024, the Minister celebrated the anniversary with a [video message](#).

March – STEM Month

A field in which the Ministry has historically been involved is the breaking down of stereotypes according to which girls are better suited to social and humanistic subjects and boys to technical and scientific ones. A good gender mainstreaming process in this case ensures that all people can choose what to study regardless of gender, freeing this choice from the influences of gender stereotypes. This also and above all means preventing segregation in the job market and in the careers of tomorrow.

The MIM, in collaboration with the Department of Equal Opportunities of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, launches the "STEM Month" initiative every year in March with the aim of promoting these disciplines in schools of all levels and grade.

On the occasion of 8 March, International Women's Day, the STEM [competition : feminine plural is therefore launched](#), which intends to encourage a reflection on the presence of women in STEM disciplines, in order to encourage students equally to develop a critical reading prejudices and gender stereotypes regarding these subjects, as well as encouraging female students to study these subjects. The objective of the competition therefore falls within the priority field of respect education. For the school year 2023/24, the fifth edition of the competition, which sees a motivated and growing participation of schools, has integrated the acronym into STEAM, including the field of art, in order to better give the opportunity to youth creativity to express itself.

The Department for Equal Opportunities, during 2020-2021, funded 279 projects aimed at promoting STEM culture among girls and young women for a total amount of 4 million euros.

MOU to promote the culture of health and well-being in upper secondary schools.

A Memorandum of understanding between the Ministry of Education and Merit and the National Council of the Order of Psychologists - CNOP, signed on 20 March 2024 to promote the culture of health and well-being in upper secondary schools.

The agreement is aimed at preventing students' psycho-behavioral problems, strengthening project paths for the acquisition of personal skills for life and promoting psycho-relational well-being for all school subjects, as well as promoting the culture of respect for the person.

Territorial presidia of expert psychologist will be designed on an experimental basis to support schools in carrying out activities aimed at encouraging the overcoming of developmental fragilities, with particular reference to situations of social and cultural disadvantage which hinder the processes of socialization and participation in the life of the school community, with the aim also of preventing and combating violence and bullying. The set of activities envisaged by the memorandum of understanding also find solid references in the field of transversal teaching of civic education (law n. 92/2019 and Ministerial Decree n. 35/2020 containing the "Guidelines for teaching of civic education"), in particular in the aspects concerning the principles of solidarity, equality and respect for diversity as fundamental elements that support civil coexistence, the value of the rules of democratic life , as well as the concepts of legality and solidarity of individual and social action.

Relationship education – paths for schools' project, financed with 15 million euros from the POC funds for schools – skills and learning environments, i.e. of the PN "Schools and skills" 2021-2027.

The project offers secondary schools the opportunity, within their autonomy, to activate 30 hours of student discussion groups in extracurricular hours with the advice of psychologists belonging to the Order of Psychologists and with a referring teacher. The National Parents' Association Forum has the role of harmonizing the project with improving comments from parents. The project, which was born in the wake of the 2017 " *Respect Education Guidelines*", has an experimental nature and is dedicated to upper secondary schools. At other school levels, education on respect in relationships is part of civic education which is transversal and compulsory teaching (law n. 92 of 20 August 2019), of which one of the objectives of the curriculum is: *the student is aware that the principles of solidarity, equality and respect for diversity are the pillars that they support civil coexistence and favor the construction of a fair and sustainable future.*

(Text of Directive [here](#))

Development of social and civic competence in matters of citizenship:

The Safer Internet Center (SIC) – Connected Generations

The Safer Internet Center (SIC) - Connected Generations is the national center for promoting the safe and positive use of the web. The SIC is aimed at the younger generations, pupils and students, also actively involving teachers, parents, bodies, associations and companies to make the Internet a better environment with activities that offer (in)formative tools useful for promoting a positive and critical use of network and to prevent possible uncomfortable situations.

The reference portal for the project is <https://www.generazioniconnesse.it/>. Support materials for teachers and teachers responsible for combating bullying and cyberbullying identified at individual educational institutions are also published on the site.

The Safer Internet Center- Connected Generations project is co-financed by the European Commission and has been coordinated by the Ministry of Education and Merit since 2012, furthermore it is carried out in partnership with some of the main Italian companies dealing with online security: Guarantor Authority for Childhood and Adolescence, State Police, the Universities of Florence and 'La Sapienza' of Rome, Save the Children Italia, Telefono Azzurro, the EDI non-profit cooperative, Skuola.net, the Giffoni Experience Autonomous Body.

The Project includes listening and reporting lines for problems related to online activities. The Hotlines are directly connected to the Postal Police and it is also possible to make reports anonymously.

Online risks represent all those dangerous situations resulting from non-conscious and responsible use of digital technologies by users.

The Safer Internet Center includes 7 macro-actions, including awareness campaigns, *online training* for teachers, in-depth thematic meetings and seminars; it also provides support and help, online and by telephone, to students, parents and teachers who encounter difficulties in using digital technologies.

Among the most significant actions of the SIC it is worth mentioning the e-learning path aimed at teachers of all educational institutions for the creation of an internal institute ePolicy . This is a fundamental document for planning and/or updating digital citizenship activities (art.5 Law n. 92-2019), aimed at promoting online risk prevention skills, recognising, managing, reporting and monitoring episodes linked to incorrect use of digital technologies, as well as useful for identifying prevention actions for bullying and cyberbullying phenomena to be included in the PTOF (Three-Year Plan for Educational Offer) of schools.

Among the most common risks besides cyberbullying, we can mention hate speech, sexting, violation of privacy, gambling, internet addiction and the dangers associated with online video games (e.g. : improper contact with adults, violent and/or inappropriate content; uncontrolled purchases,

etc.).

The SIC - Generazioni Connesse project is also projected at the level of European cooperation in synergy with the other European *Safer Internet Centers* for the exchange of good practices, materials, educational and communication resources. The Italian *Safer Internet Center* was actively represented at all the meetings planned by the European Commission: *Safer Internet Forum* and *Insafe training meeting*, aimed at encouraging the exchange of good practices.

The Safer Internet Center has biennial editions.

As foreseen by [Commission Decision C\(2023\) 1862](#) with which the 2023 – 2024 work plan is adopted which aims to guarantee the continuity, evolution and sustainability of the actions launched within the Digital Europe programme, on 11 May 2023 the [Call for Proposals DIGITAL-2023-DEPLOY-04 - Accelerating the best use of technologies](#) was published on the *Funding & Tenders* website .

The EU's objectives in the field of digital transformation are defined in the communication ["2030 Digital Compass : The European way for the Digital Decade"](#) which establishes a governance framework and lists the digital objectives for 2030 based on four cardinal points: digital skills , digital infrastructures, digitalisation of businesses and public services. The EU is also committed to the journey towards digital economies and societies by accelerating the transition to digitalisation and the use of digital tools for work and life and to protecting the rights of children in the digital world through the *Better Internet strategy for Kids* as foreseen by communication [COM\(2012\) 196](#) .

The objective of the *Call for Proposals DIGITAL-2023-DEPLOY-04 - Accelerating the best use of technologies* is to continue to support the national Safer Internet Centers formed by government bodies and agencies, private third sector organizations, in providing information on online safety , educational resources, public awareness tools and consultancy and reporting services (through dedicated *helpline* and *hotline services*) for young people, teachers and parents.

Guidelines for preventing and combating bullying and cyberbullying

The Ministry of Education and Merit has been committed for years to the prevention of the phenomenon of bullying and cyberbullying (as provided for by law no. 71 of 29 May 2017 containing "Provisions for the protection of minors for the prevention and combating of the phenomenon of cyberbullying") and more generally, of any form of violence, activating various intervention strategies useful for curbing risky behavior determined, in many cases, by conditions of social hardship not attributable only to the school context.

In implementation of the law, the Ministry has adopted the "Guidelines for the prevention and combating of cyberbullying". The document aims to give continuity to the Guidelines already issued in April 2015, making the necessary additions and changes in line with recent regulatory interventions. With the issuing of the aforementioned guidelines and the "National Plan for the prevention of bullying and cyberbullying at school" presented in October 2016, the Ministry wanted to give a strong signal of resumption of activities for the prevention of the phenomenon of bullying and cyberbullying, making specific financial resources available to schools to implement national initiatives, with the aim of involving as many educational institutions as possible and creating a national network aimed at combating youth hardship.

[The Guidelines were further updated on 18 February 2021](#) for the following three years, incorporating the necessary additions and changes provided for by the regulatory interventions, with particular reference to the innovations introduced by the aforementioned law of 29 May 2017, n.17. The legislative provisions attribute very specific tasks and responsibilities to a plurality of subjects, reiterating the central role of the School which is called upon to carry out preventive actions which include: the training of school staff, the appointment and training of at least one contact person for the combating the phenomena of bullying and cyberbullying for any school autonomy, the promotion

of an active role for students, as well as former students who have already operated within the school in peer education activities, the provision of support and re-education of the minors involved.

Elisa Platform – Teacher training and monitoring of bullying and cyberbullying phenomena

Following the entry into force of Law no. 71 of 29 May 2017 and the issuing of the aforementioned guidelines for the prevention and combating of cyberbullying, the Ministry of Education and Merit has undertaken to implement a plan national training center for teachers responsible for combating bullying and cyberbullying. The MIM, in collaboration with the Department of Educational Sciences and Psychology of the University of Florence, has prepared, to starting from October 2018, the ELISA platform www.piattaforma Elisa.it (E-learning training for teachers on anti-bullying strategies), to equip schools with tools to intervene effectively on the issues of cyberbullying and bullying with two specific actions: an area dedicated to schools for online monitoring of bullying and cyberbullying and a section dedicated to teachers for training through e-learning modules aimed at teachers and school managers.

In addition to Action 1 - E-Learning training aimed at teachers and school managers, Action 2 - Monitoring of bullying and cyberbullying phenomena in Italian schools is implemented. The Ministry, through the scientific support of the University of Florence, has in fact prepared periodic national surveys to analyze the prevalence of bullying and cyberbullying phenomena in Italian schools. [Online](#) monitoring was launched for the first time in May [2021 and has also been proposed again for the 2021/20 22](#) and [2022/20 23](#) school years .

The monitoring, in addition to providing the Ministry of Education and Merit with a snapshot of the phenomena at a national level, for the first time under an internally coordinated action, offers the individual participating schools a personalized summary report that allows them to delve deeper into the situation with respect to the phenomena of bullying and cyberbullying.

Fund intended for the prevention and fight against the phenomenon of cyberbullying.

Through law 30 December 2021, n. 234 (article 1, paragraph 671) State budget forecast for the financial year 2022 and multi-year budget for the three-year period 2022-2024 , a specific fund has been established at the Ministry of Education and Merit for the prevention and combating the phenomenon of cyberbullying .

The resources allocated were used through an allocation to the Regional School Offices, using as criteria the number of pupils, the degree of school dropout and the number of total cases of bullying/cyberbullying deduced from the results of the monitoring carried out through the "Elisa Platform" in collaboration with the University of Florence.

The Regional School Offices provided the contributions, aimed at implementing the projects, through the issuing of specific notices to identify the beneficiary educational institutions.

The intent is to support local actions aimed at combating the phenomenon of cyberbullying and raising awareness of the conscious use of the internet, educating students to be aware, across the various curricular disciplines, of the rights and duties connected to cyberbullying. use of technologies With prot. Decree n. 1176 of 05/18/2022, the Administration has assigned to the Regional School Offices, to combat the phenomena of cyberbullying in schools, the sum of €2,000,000.00 following the provisions of art.1 paragraphs 671 and 672 of Law no. 234 of 30 December 2021.

With the law of 29 December 2022 n.197 refinancing of the aforementioned fund equal to 2 million euros for each of the years 2023 was envisaged State budget forecast for the financial year 2023 and multi-annual budget for the three-year period 2023-2025, the, 2024 and 2025.

We therefore proceeded to prepare a new departmental decree relating to the year 2023, issued with protocol. n. 513 of 26 April 2023 with which the overall financial resource, equal to € 2,000,000.00, was distributed to the Regional School Offices based on the following parameters:

- number of students, for 40% of the total amount;
- degree of dispersion for 20% of the total amount;
- of cyberbullying cases (at least one case in the last 2-3 months) reported to the Elisa platform for 40% of the total amount.

For the current year 2024, the [departmental decree](#) for the distribution of funds to the Regional School Offices was issued on 12.02.2024 prot.n.256. The criteria adopted for the distribution of resources are the same as the previous decrees.

Considering the structural nature of the financial intervention, it was deemed appropriate to prepare tools for collecting data and information at the conclusion of the activities, to allow a systematic reading and analysis of the main results of the actions undertaken.

MAY 17 - International Day Against Homophobia

With the resolution of the European Parliament of 26 April 2007, the European Union declared 17 May the International Day against homophobia and against any form of prejudicial attitude based on sexual orientation. The principles which inspire the day are those constitutive of both the European Union and the Italian Constitution: respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms , equality between all citizens and non-discrimination.

The school is constantly committed to achieving real inclusion within itself capable of enhancing individual personalities and has the task of educating the new generations to combat all forms of violence and discrimination.

In view of this day, schools of all levels, within the scope of their didactic and organizational autonomy, are invited to carry out an in-depth study on issues related to the fight against discrimination and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. For the school year 2022/2023 the Minister issued [note n. 74061 on 16 May 2023](#).

The **Department of Digital Transformation** of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers carried out different activities within the National Coalition for digital skills, which is part of the strategic and multi-stakeholder program Repubblica Digitale, including initiatives that promote concrete actions to challenge digital illiteracy and boost digital education. Among the initiatives included in the Coalition, many are those addressing women as main target, as the ones reported below. Moreover, in 2022 the National Award for Digital Skills was established. It takes place every two years and includes a specific section dedicated to the projects which aim at boosting women digital skills and closing the gender digital gap.

Coding Girls

In 2014, as part of the Italian Presidency of the EU Council and the EU Code Week, the Fondazione Mondo Digitale and the United States Embassy in Italy, in collaboration with the American Girls Who Code Association, launched the first edition of CodingGirls Rome-USA, which included eight days of events entirely dedicated to young women from primary to second-degree secondary school. The initiative was supported by the Italian Ministry of Education, University and Research, Roma Capitale, the Department of Computer Science at Sapienza University and Microsoft. The project has expanded over the various editions, becoming a year-long programme and giving rise to an association.

The objective of the Coding Girls Programme-Project is to accelerate the achievement of equal opportunities in the scientific and technological fields by acting on a range of fronts: (1) Fighting prejudice and stereotypes; (2) Peer training; (3) Positive models; (4) Transformative educational experiences.

Girls code it better

The initiative Girls Code It Better, carried on by Officina Futuro W-Group Foundation, is completely free and open to everyone. Its aims at boosting secondary school female students' interest towards digital and innovation related topics, encouraging them to choose educational paths which have always been mistakenly considered more suited to boys.

Girls Code It Better challenges and tackles gender disparities and stereotypes, through a course delivered during extracurricular afternoon classes, that takes between 35 and 45 hours in total. The programme involves 20 girls, trained by a teacher with ICT knowledge, and a coach with technical skills. Participants are free to pick a topic they would like to work on, and bring it to life by designing their own project.

Inspiring girls

It is an international project on social innovation for young generations, carried on in 30 countries. In Italy the initiative is managed by ValoreD, which brings to secondary schools the stories of female role models who work in different sectors of the job market, aiming at raising students' awareness of their talents. The goal is to overcome gender stereotypes which curb their ambitions, stressing the importance of gender equality and broadening their horizons. The project has already involved more than 550 schools and 60.000 students, allowing them to re-imagine their future.

Article 15: Training of professionals

With regards to the training of magistrates, it should be noted that **the Ministry of Justice**, on the occasion of the annual contribution to the drafting of the Programmatic Guidelines of the Scuola Superiore della Magistratura, proposed the expansion of training sessions on the topic of gender-based violence, enhancing the profile of sharing such moments with all those legal practitioners who, in various capacities, come into contact with the victim of violence.

There was a need for an experimental training model with particular reference to the provision of workshops with different experiences and knowledge being compared. It should be noted that the Strasbourg Workshops project, launched in 2022 by the SSM, is among the good practices mentioned in the Annual Report of the Committee of Ministers on the execution of judgments and decisions of the European Court of Human Rights.

The Scuola Superiore della Magistratura, the institution entrusted with the training of magistrates, is strongly committed to the topic of fundamental rights, which forms an integral part of the initial and ongoing training programs, representing the common thread of the School's course catalogue. In addition to lectures and in-depth studies included whenever the opportunity arises, specific courses are devoted to issues related to the protection of fundamental rights from a supranational perspective.

On the level of conventional law, the School is a member of the network of contact points of the European Human Rights Law Professionals Training Program (HELP) and has been using the Council of Europe's methodology and programs since 2012, continuing the work of the CSM. Specific initiatives have been taken and gradually enriched for the dissemination of the jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights.

Within the framework of the six-month Italian Presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, after the course on judicial ethics broadcast by streaming to all countries in the Council of Europe with English interpretation and included in the official program, the School decided to

experiment with a new approach to the topic of training on fundamental rights.

In particular, the idea was to build permanent training opportunities where magistrates from every district of Italy (Appeal Courts and the Court of Cassation) could discuss simultaneously and in a targeted manner controversial issues on the application of the European Convention on Human Rights and the protection of fundamental rights, in order to reach all the judicial realities of the territory, something that has been experimented so far mainly with the courses dedicated to trainee magistrates, and, above all, magistrates specifically involved in the issues under discussion.

This organizational scheme constituted an innovation with respect to the usual training models, which, as a rule, provide for participation in the School's courses open to all magistrates interested in the topics covered by the scheduled courses, at their specific request and regardless of their subject matter, with the clarification that refresher training constitutes a parameter for assessing the professionalism of Italian magistrates.

Through the 'Strasbourg Workshops' project, carried out in dialogue with the Permanent Representation of Italy to the Council of Europe, it was intended to add a further format for magistrates to work together, proposing in-depth thematic seminars in relation to controversial issues on the application of the ECHR.

The intention is to create an osmosis between the national and international dimensions, bringing out from the discussion useful elements, good practices, guidelines and other operational tools to overcome critical issues on the topics covered by the seminar and improve the justice response to the protection of fundamental rights. The broadest representation of the judicial offices in the territory is intended to ensure that the outcomes of the seminar are then reported by the participants within each district.

At the end of the workshop, a summary sheet is drawn up with the most significant elements that emerged from the debate and, above all, possible solutions.

Again, and in conclusion on this point, in order to highlight the attention paid by the Scuola Superiore della Magistratura to the issue of domestic and gender-based violence in the training of magistrates, the following training courses, organized for the year 2024 and denoting a clear focus on the awareness and professional updating of magistrates on the issues mentioned, are also worth mentioning, by way of example but not exhaustive:

- Course P24037 - Femicide, sexual offences, stalking and family abuse;
- Course P24042 - Child protection between civil and criminal justice;
- Course P24044 - The reform of the civil process for persons, minors and families: focus on mediation and assisted negotiation;
- Course P24064 - Preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence.

Several courses are in continuity with similar educational activities held in previous years, reflecting the persistent goal of dissemination and awareness-raising on the subject for practitioners in the judiciary, pursued by the institutional training body (SSM): in particular, course P23075 dedicated to Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (organized to coincide with the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, to emphasize full adherence to the contents and objectives of the international instruments of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women adopted by the General Assembly in December 1979 and of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, the so-called Istanbul Convention, opened for signature in May 2011) and that T23004 focused on The new procedural law of persons, minors and the family (for the topics of which please refer to the above excursus on the changes introduced by the so-called Cartabia reform for the civil process).

Regarding the training of the police, and in particular of the judicial police, this measure is considered fundamental, since the operators in question are often the first to come into contact with the victim of violence and, as such, are called upon to establish the climate of trust and acceptance necessary in the delicate phase of listening to the victim before verifying the facts reported.

On this point, it should be emphasized that Article 5 of Law No. 69/2019 provides for the obligatory nature of specific training courses in order to avoid the lack of homogeneity in the preparation of the operators involved on the territory. In particular, the activation of dedicated training courses is aimed at State Police, Carabinieri and Prison Police personnel: exercises public security and judicial police functions in relation to the prevention and prosecution of crimes of domestic and gender-based violence; intervenes in the prison treatment of persons convicted of crimes of domestic and gender-based violence. The planned activation is to be carried out by the training institutes of the various corps, within 12 months of the law coming into force, and on the basis of homogeneous contents to be identified by Presidential Decree, in agreement with the Ministers for Public Administration, the Interior, Justice and Defense.

In this regard, the Department of Prison Administration of the Ministry of Justice, in addition to the training courses already independently activated on the subject, has initiated the necessary dialogue with the Police Force Training School of the Ministry of the Interior in order to benefit from training modules dedicated to the subject in question.

It should be noted, as far as the Ministry of Justice is concerned, that three cycles of in-depth seminars were organized in 2021, dealing with topics of legal and investigative psychology, according to a module realized in cooperation with the Central Directorate of the Health Psychology Service, the Inspectorate of State Police Schools and the Central Directorate for the Fight against Crime, in which 700 operators from the crime divisions and mobile police or police headquarters participated.

The topics covered included the psychological characteristics and factors of victims and perpetrators of crimes against the person, the cycle of violence in family abuse situations, communication and relationship strategies with victims of crimes against the person when taking testimony or making a complaint, and finally, contact with child victims.

In March 2023, the 'first qualification course for operators in the field of preventing and combating gender-based violence' was held at the School of Training Agents in Caserta. Sixty operators working in the crime control divisions or in the general offices of prevention and public rescue and in the criminal police services of the police headquarters participated in the course.

With regard to awareness-raising initiatives on the subject, it should be noted that the State Police's 'This is not love' campaign, launched in 2016, has been running annually since 2017: the campaign, which is available on the institutional website www.poliziadistato.it and can be accessed from the home screen of the site itself, or with links to relevant international conventions, prevention and control tools and State Police initiatives.

This initiative involves the presence of a team composed of a doctor/psychologist from the national police or anti-violence centers, experienced operators and a representative of the local anti-violence network in public squares or other places, and aims to promote the emergence of critical situations through a caring and proactive approach towards victims of violence.

It should be added that on the occasion of the last 'International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women', 25 November 2022, the sixth edition of the booklet 'This is not love' was published, which contains information on the phenomenon of gender-based violence and related prevention and response measures. The brochure, which is distributed throughout the country and is also accompanied by local awareness-raising initiatives in cooperation with the police forces, can also be consulted on the above-mentioned website; in addition, the content of the information campaign on the subject has been periodically updated to coincide with International Women's Day (8 March).

The State Police website also features a box on 'Youpol', the app developed to facilitate, among other things, the reporting of incidents of domestic violence, which can be downloaded free of charge and is available for all iOS and Android devices.

On 12 May 2022, a memorandum of understanding was renewed between the FIPE-Confcommercio (trade association) Central Directorate for Combating Violence and Discrimination and the FIPE Women Entrepreneurs Group, through which the #Real Security campaign was launched with meetings, training and dissemination conferences in several Police Headquarters. On 3 November 2022, the aforementioned protocol was extended to EGP-FIPE (Esercente Giochi Pubblici).

Finally, in cooperation with the British Embassy in Rome, the Ministry of the Interior published the 'Guide for Victims of Sexual Violence 2022', thus ensuring continuity to the initiative launched during 2019; the guide was distributed on 23 December 2022 in a circular addressed to Prefectures and the Police Coordination and Planning Office.

It should be added that the National Strategic Plan on Male Violence against Women 2021-2023, in coherence and continuity with previous plans, recognizes training as a key value.

The planned actions also include:

- strengthening the knowledge and skills of the different figures contacting the victim for the recognition of revealing signs of violence against women and in the accompaniment towards exit paths (multidisciplinary classes with public workers/social workers, private and private, magistrates, law enforcement, criminal police, lawyers, psychologists, medical and health personnel, mediators/media);
- specific training actions for operators of the State Police, the Carabinieri Corps, organized in their respective training institutes, and the Penitentiary Police Corps, with particular reference to internal and external criminal execution operators, organized under the coordination of the competent Training Directorate;
- liaison with the Ministry of Education and measures in the field of education, which is also envisaged in the Gender Equality Strategy 2021-2026 in order to overcome the role vision and promote the internalization of social norms and the (overcoming) of gender stereotypes in the context of growth and education.

The **National Police**, through the Anti-Crime Central Directorate, is responsible for training personnel operating in the sector, organizing ad hoc cyclical training courses to keep investigators operating nationally up to date, including information on new legislation. Following the coming into force of Law no. 69/2019 (so-called "Red Code"), mandatory courses have been established to give specific training to criminal investigation officers. Since January 2020, in collaboration with the Schools Inspectorate, e-learning modules on gender-based violence have been created for refresher training for National Police personnel, available and usable on the SISFOR platform. In 2021 3 rounds of specialist seminars on the topics of juridical and investigative psychology were held for 700 members of staff of Police HQ (Questura) Specialist Offices - Anti-Crime Divisions and Mobile Units - looking among other things at the victimological and criminological approach to investigations and at the cycle of violence in situations of family ill-treatment. A Prime Ministerial Decree, pursuant to Article 5(2) of Law no. 69 of 19 July 2019, defines the macro-areas into which the contents of training courses for personnel exercising public security and criminal investigation functions for the prevention and prosecution of crimes pertaining to gender-based and domestic violence should be allotted, thanks in part to the contribution of the Anti-Crime Central Directorate. In March 2023 a level 2 training seminar will be held for the personnel of Police HQ Anti-Crime

Divisions and Mobile Units on "Gender-based violence in prevention and penal legislation and related procedures".

The **Carabinieri** (military police) force provides training courses and seminars on gender-based violence to Carabinieri officers of all ranks and positions, in particular:

- on all basic training courses, with ad hoc modules on the subject of gender-based violence and human rights;
- to Criminal Investigation Officers - Marshals and Brigadiers - that make up the "National Monitoring Network on the phenomenon of gender-based violence", working in territorial Commands at various levels, who have received specific training through a course on efforts to combat gender-based violence, lasting two weeks at the Higher Institute of Investigative Techniques (Istituto Superiore di Tecniche Investigative), which also provides other refresher courses. Since 2014 30 training courses have been given to approximately 635 Contact Persons;
- to the Commanders of Territorial Units at various levels (Commanders of Investigative Units, Companies, Operational Units and Stations) through meetings, congresses and conferences, in person and online. The Commanders are also responsible for providing regular training and instructions to personnel under their command.

The Carabinieri force, with the support of the Criminological Analysis Unit, has also provided training and information on the subject of gender-based violence, available to all personnel through the Leonardo Intranet site, in the form of special-theme Video Tutorials, Operational Handbook and reference instructions/circulars, as well as thematic FAQs on crimes related to gender-based violence, with self-assessment tests for escalation risk indicators ("Violenzometro" and "Bullizzometro"), which can be consulted by citizens via the Carabinieri.it website.

Women of all ranks and qualifications are deployed in all force branches, including operational bodies directly concerned with preventing and combating violence against women

The **National Research Council (CNR)**, the public research institution under the Research Ministry, carried out, with the cooperation of the National **Department of Equal Opportunity**, two editions of a data collection related to the Centres for men perpetrator of violence (with reference to 2017 and 2022) allowing the mapping of such centres and the analysis of their main characteristics.

The second national survey of perpetrator programs conducted by **CNR-IRPPS** in 2023 examined, among other things, the training activities carried out by perpetrator programs for their staff in 2022 (see **Annex 11**).

Table 1: Initial training (education or professional training) Professionals

Professionals	Number of professionals trained	Is this training mandatory?	Frequency	Training efforts supported by guidelines and protocols	Please describe the content and duration of the training
Perpetrators programs professionals (PPP)	251 PPP PPPs having received initial training	Mandatory in 57 out of 94 centers (61%)	Not available	Not available	Incoming training comprises an average

	/ Total PPPs = 251 out of 821 PPP (31%)	PPP having received mandatory initial training / PPPs attending initial training = 155 out of 251 (62%)			of 63 hours of theory and 58 hours of mentoring per centre
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Table 2: In-service training

Professionals	Number of professionals trained	Is this training mandatory?	Frequency	Training efforts supported by guidelines and protocols	Please describe the content and duration of the training
Perpetrators programs professionals (PPP)	501 PPP PPP having received in-service training / Total PPPs = 501 out of 821 PPP (61%)	This training is mandatory in 75 out of 94 centers (80%) PPP having received mandatory in-service training / PPP who attended in-service training = 464 out of 501 (93%)	Not available	Not available	On average, each centre provides 24 hours of in-service training

The **Ministry of Health** launched in January 2024 a new project on violence against women, funded by the National Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (CCM), carried out by the ISS, entitled "Violence against women: long-term health effects for precision prevention", with the overall objective of defining new strategies and models for the care of women who have suffered violence as well as of creating a territorial model that guarantees long-term care for women and minors, based on precision medicine. The project follows on from a previous ISS project called EpiWE (epigenetics of violence against women) and aims to increase knowledge of the epigenetic changes caused by the phenomenon of violence in order to prevent and establish early care pathways for violence-related diseases in the long term.

Article 16: Preventive intervention and treatment programmes

As already mentioned with reference to art. 7 Article 1 of Law no. 168/2023, entitled 'Strengthening

of measures on warning and information to victims', extended the scope of application of the prevention measure of the Questore's warning, both ex officio and at the request of the offended person.

The scope of applicability of the Questore's official warning has been expanded to include cases of commission of acts attributable to the crimes, consummated or attempted, of private violence (Article 610 of the Criminal Code), aggravated threat (Article 612, second paragraph, of the Criminal Code), persecutory acts (Article 612-bis of the Criminal Code), unlawful dissemination of sexually explicit images or videos (so-called "revenge porn," Article 612-ter of the Criminal Code), trespassing (Article 614 of the Criminal Code), and damage (Article 635 of the Criminal Code).

Penalties have been made more severe (increased by up to one third) for cases in which the act is committed, in the context of domestic violence, by a person who has already been cautioned, even if the offended person is different from the one for whose protection the caution was adopted, in relation to the aforementioned offences as well as to those of battery (Article 581 of the criminal code) and personal injury (Article 582 of the criminal code).

The definition of domestic violence has been extended to include 'witnessing violence', i.e. violence committed in the presence of minors, which can produce traumatic effects equal to those caused by direct violence.

In practice, the Questore warns the person involved against further engaging in harassment, threats, violence or interfering in other people's lives. The recipient of the warning is also **urged** to access counselling at specialized centres in order to become aware of his/her socially despicable and criminally punishable behaviour.

Provision has been made for the possibility of revoking the cautioning measure at the request of the cautioned person, not before three years have elapsed, after assessing his or her participation in **remedial courses and their outcomes**.

The minimum requirements for Centres for Men Perpetrators of Violence (CUAV) were defined by State-Regions Agreement of September 2022, taking as a parameter the Agreement on Minimum Requirements for Anti-Violence Centres and Shelter Homes. Moreover, in accordance with Article 18 of **Law No. 168/2023, the Minister of Justice and the Delegated Political Authority for Equal Opportunity will issue a joint decree**, defining the criteria and procedures for the recognition and accreditation of agencies and associations qualified to organize recovery paths for perpetrators of violence against women and domestic violence and adopt guidelines for the conduct of the activities of such agencies and associations.

In terms of funding, Decree-Law No. 104 of August 14, 2020, provided for resources of 1 million euros from 2020 onward, entirely by the department's budget. These resources were further increased by subsequent budget laws for a total of 9 million euros, which were allocated among the Regions. For the year 2023, the decree of November 23, 2023 allocated the sum of 1 million euros among the Regions, implementing Decree-Law 104/2020. Law No. 213 of December 30, 2023 (Budget Law 2024) increased resources by 4 million euros for each of the years 2024, 2025 and 2026. Therefore, the total resources for the Centres for men perpetrators of violence for the year 2024 were up to 5 million euros

The aforementioned second national survey of programs for perpetrators, carried out by the **CNR** in 2023 (in **Annex 11**), shows that, five years after the first survey, the number of centers has increased from 54 to 94.

This development has been accompanied by an increase in the capacity to intercept and receive perpetrators: 1.214 men attended a center in 2017, while this number more than tripled to 4.174 in 2022. On average, this represents an increase from 26.4 to 45.9 men per center.

The data testify to a gradual improvement in the capacity of the perpetrators programs to intercept ale perpetrators or potential perpetrators of violence over all the years between the first and second national surveys. In this respect, Table 3 distinguishes between the total number of men attending the centers and those who entered them during the year.

Total number of men in programs and new entrants during the year.

Years 2017 - 2022.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total men attending the Program during the year</i>	<i>Men who entered the centre during the year (new entries)</i>
<i>2017</i>	<i>1.214</i>	<i>573</i>
<i>2018</i>	<i>1.217</i>	<i>709</i>
<i>2019</i>	<i>1.848</i>	<i>907</i>
<i>2020</i>	<i>2.157</i>	<i>1.126</i>
<i>2021</i>	<i>2.874</i>	<i>1.748</i>
<i>2022</i>	<i>4.174</i>	<i>2.802</i>

The website viva.cnr.it publishes all the results of the second national survey on centers for perpetrators of violence.

On 14 September 2022, the Agreement between the Government, the Regions and the Autonomous Provinces on the minimum requirements for programs for perpetrators or potential perpetrators was signed. The agreement represents an important new step, as it defines the quality requirements that perpetrator programs must meet in order to receive public funding.

The **CNR** research group participated in this process with a double role:

- On the one hand, it informed the drafting process of the text, based on the desk studies carried out on the relevant international and national standards, as well as on the results of the quantitative-qualitative research on perpetrators programs carried out by the CNR since 2017;
- on the other hand, it played the role of observer, with the task of recording and analyzing the arguments underlying the choices made by the various actors involved in the iterative and incremental process by which the text was finalized.

The CNR has drawn up a report on the entire process of drafting the agreement between the State and the Regions, which is available on the website viva.cnr.it.

Among the requirements laid down in the Agreement between States and Regions, Article 6 refers to a number of procedures to be followed in order to guarantee the safety of victims. Some of these refer in particular to the contact phase with the partner, a procedure that is at the center of many reservations expressed by the national networks of specialized support services for victims of GBV. In the second national survey conducted on Perpetrators Programs by CNR-IRPPS in 2023, it was highlighted that 66% of the programs for perpetrators make use of this procedure.

Contacting the partner is mainly used when starting treatment and in situations where there is a particular risk to the woman's safety. Over half of centers that contact partners do so at the end of treatment, when treatment is interrupted or during treatment. Finally, just under half expect to contact partners during follow-up.

In 2022, partner contact is more often used to include the woman's voice in the risk assessment and to encourage more objective feedback about the man's behavior, whereas in the first national survey partner contact was mainly used to inform the woman about the features of the perpetrator program and to warn her about the risks of manipulation by the man.

men's safety can also be promoted on the basis of cooperation between perpetrator programs and specialist support services for victims. The second national survey showed that this cooperation is not rare, although it is not always constant: compared with 16% of perpetrator programs that do not cooperate, 36% usually cooperate and 47% occasionally or on the basis of specific needs. However, it should be noted that cooperation with specialized victim support services is mostly aimed at jointly developing primary prevention activities, i.e. raising awareness among the population or specific targets, while cooperation aimed at addressing the burden on men or other activities related to secondary and tertiary prevention is much less frequent.

At the national level, the CNR conducted the Second National Survey on Perpetrator Programs in 2023, 5 years after the First National Survey, highlighting the remarkable development of centers for perpetrators of violence and the increase in perpetrators served by the programs. Among the data collected in this survey, some allow us to verify the diffusion of some of the requirements required by the agreement between the State, the Regions and the Autonomous Provinces on centers for perpetrators of violence, and others allow us to reflect on some dimensions of fundamental importance for the evaluation of the effectiveness of the programs, such as the drop-out rate. However, it should be noted that the survey is designed to monitor and not to evaluate.

The same cognitive - and not evaluative - intention inspires the existing regional monitoring systems of centers for perpetrators of violence. The studies currently being carried out by the CNR reveal a picture that is still heterogeneous but dynamic. The development of the regional monitoring systems is influenced by the requirements contained in the 2022 Agreement between the State, the Region and the Autonomous Provinces on the programs for perpetrators, but also by the funds allocated for this purpose by the Prime Ministerial Decree of 26 September 2022. On the basis of current research activities, three situations can be distinguished:

- pioneer regions, such as Emilia Romagna, Tuscany, Piedmont and Veneto, which had already prepared specific tools for collecting data on perpetrators of violence before the Prime Ministerial Decree of 26 September 2022;
- the regions in the process of adaptation, such as Abruzzo, Basilicata, Calabria, Liguria, Lombardy, Marche, Puglia, Sardinia and Valle D'Aosta, which, with their own programming tools, have approved expenditure commitments for the destination of the funds provided by the Prime Ministerial Decree /2022 for the creation of systems for monitoring the flow of information on violent perpetrators;
- the regions such as Campania, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Lazio, Molise, P. A. Bolzano, P.A. Trento and Sicily, which have not yet adapted to the ministerial regulations.

The evaluation of program results is much less common than the monitoring of experiences. The

CNR paid particular attention to this issue in the Second National Survey of Perpetrator Programs. In particular, the quantitative data showed that 60% of the Perpetrators Programs carry out an evaluation activity. However, this is rarely an evaluation carried out by experts (15%), while self-evaluations are much more common (45%).

Based on the data collected in the second national survey, the CNR has identified the programs that have taken part in evaluation projects in 2022 and has therefore carried out a qualitative study. The study is based on in-depth interviews with evaluators and center practitioners. It focuses on the process of co-construction of evaluation projects, the definition of success, the techniques used to detect it, the difficulties encountered in carrying out evaluation studies and the lessons learned.

The treatment of male perpetrators of violence by the Article 16 of the Istanbul Convention, is explicitly provided for with Law No. 69 of July 19, 2019 (so-called "Red Code"), which extended the scope of psychological treatment having the purpose of recovery and support, including for the purpose of granting prison benefits, to those convicted of the crimes of mistreatment against family members and cohabitants. However, Law No. 69/2019 did not provide regulations for the recognition and accreditation of institutions and associations that can provide such recovery paths. To this end, the minimum requirements of Centres for Men Perpetrators of Violence (CUAV) were defined by State-Regions Agreement of September 2022, taking as a parameter the Agreement on Minimum Requirements for Anti-Violence Centres and Shelter Homes. As stated above, article 18 of Law No. 168/2023, prescribes that the Minister of Justice and the Delegated Political Authority for Equal Opportunity shall establish, by their own decree, the criteria and procedures for the recognition and accreditation of agencies and associations qualified to organize recovery paths for perpetrators of violence against women and domestic violence and adopt guidelines for the conduct of the activities of such agencies and associations.

As far as the **Ministry of Health** is concerned, with the Prime Minister's Decree of 24 July 2017, "guidelines are established at national level for health and hospital authorities on the subject of rescue and social health care for women who are victims of violence, called PATH FOR WOMEN SUBJECTED TO VIOLENCE.

The aim of the National Guidelines is to provide an adequate and integrated intervention in the treatment of the physical and psychological consequences of male violence on women's health. The pathway for women who have suffered violence must guarantee a timely and adequate reception of women, from triage to accompaniment/counselling, if they agree, to the specialised public and private services present in the reference area, in order to work out with them a personalised project of support and listening to help them escape from the experience of violence they have suffered".

As part of the monitoring and evaluation of the results, the Ministry of Health carried out a survey throughout the national territory in order to verify the implementation of the processes related to the creation of a specific pathway for women victims of violence within the health facilities that deal with this issue.

Article 18: General obligations

As already mentioned, in order to provide an effective and structured contribution to the national bodies, based on the conviction that the degree of effectiveness of the regulations on combating gender-based violence is strictly dependent on their implementation, it was deemed necessary to set up a **permanent Observatory** within the **Ministry of Justice**, the Permanent Monitoring Centre on the Effectiveness of Regulations on Gender and Domestic Violence'.

The central objective of the monitoring centre, as stated in its founding decree (**in Annex 4**), is to set up a permanent working group for the purpose of constant dialogue with judicial offices and monitoring the phenomenon of gender-based violence, through the collection of good organisational measures.

In the preamble to the founding decree, reference is made, alongside the sources of European and international law, to national regulations, from the Istanbul Convention to the 'Cartabia Reforms' that have also affected civil justice, strengthening its effectiveness in a crucial sector, elected by our Constitutional Charter, in Article 24, as the primary place for the protection of personal rights. In addition, the statistical survey facilitates the collection of useful information to intervene with technical solutions or formulate possible regulatory proposals.

Inter-institutional dialogue with the Superior Council of the Magistracy is considered of paramount importance, both to assess lines of action within their respective competences and to collect shared monitoring data.

Real evidence of this intention has already been realised through the liaison between the working groups active on the subject at the SCM and the Ministry, which have formalised the willingness of continuous exchanges for comparison with the judicial offices.

Of particular interest is the establishment of sub-working groups with specific implementation tasks, which are explained below.

Good judicial practices

A. Identification and detection of organisational practices - in civil and criminal law - tested in judicial offices that have produced positive results in terms of effectiveness of judicial activity in the area of protection of victims of gender and domestic violence, also with reference to:

- organisational practices relating to prosecutor's offices, aimed at favouring specialisation, timeliness, uniformity of intervention, quality of work in relation to the burdensome nature in terms of number and quality of investigations related to gender crimes, customisation of the file;
- organisational practices relating to the GIP/GUP offices, which enhance specialisation and training, also within the same office, especially with reference to criteria for assessing the risk of escalation of violence and which allow an equalisation of the load of roles in order to ensure timeliness and quality of intervention;
- organisational practices relating to trial offices, aimed at favouring specialisation and equalising case-loads in relation to the subject matter, in order to ensure the quality and adequacy of the judicial response;
- organisational practices relating to probation offices aimed at favouring specialisation, completeness of investigation in the assessment of sentenced persons' applications and victim protection;
- organisational measures adopted at the General Prosecution Offices at the Courts of Appeal as well as at the territorial courts aimed at an efficient, timely and specialised management of proceedings;
- monitoring of the main issues that have arisen in the implementation of the legislation set out in Law No. 69 of 2019, the number and outcome of proceedings and any precautionary measures applied, with a view to the dissemination of good practices among the offices of the same district and common training;
- organisational practices in the civil sections of the Courts and the Courts of Appeal aimed at fostering specialisation and the timely handling of proceedings as well as coordination with the criminal justice authorities.

B. Formulation of proposals aimed at a better and more immediate circulation and knowledge of the virtuous practices experimented in the judicial offices, so as to make them a common heritage

in the individual districts and on the national territory, fostering the adoption of uniform organisational models geared to the size and resources of the offices;

- C. Meetings in the regions with representatives of the categories concerned, aimed at:
- to foster the emergence of gender-based violence and abuse against vulnerable offenders (e.g. minors, disabled, elderly);
 - promote proper case management (e.g. by providing for memoranda of understanding with ASLs, school departments, counselling centres, family doctors, social services, police forces in the area);
 - supporting victims by providing them with adequate information on their rights and by adequately managing the post-report phase to avoid secondary victimisation, underestimation, and subjecting the victim to risks resulting from the emergence of the case both in the family and in society;
 - specialised training of all professional categories involved in the management of the phenomenon;
 - the promotion in the school sector of pathways aimed at fostering: the creation of healthy relationships under the banner of respect for gender diversity; the management of power relations.

The Italian legislative framework has been reinforcing after Italy's ratification of the Council of Europe Istanbul Convention. The local anti-violence networks are fully operational and supported by the State. Notwithstanding this, the yearly number of women victims of violence is still high. As already mentioned in reference to art. 8 a territorial network of Anti-Violence Centres and Shelter Houses takes care of women victims of violence, providing specialized services based on a gender approach and the principles of the Istanbul Convention. A special Working Table, composed of representatives from the Department of Equal Opportunity and the regions, was established to define funding requirements.

The 10 largest NGOs are present in the Observatory on the Phenomenon of Violence directly participating in the work of this body. As mentioned above the Department of Equal Opportunity provides the funding allocated to Anti-Violence Centres and Shelter Houses through the regions: the services are managed by the associations operating locally.

The Italian Government is firmly convinced that an adequate knowledge of the violence against women is crucial and that this knowledge can be enhanced first and foremost through the collection and statistical elaboration of data. Therefore, in 2022 as already mentioned, Italy has adopted a specific law (Law No. 53/2022) aimed at ensuring a structured and steady information flow on violence against women, coordinated by the **Department for Equal Opportunities**, allowing decision-makers to devise adequate policies for the prevention and fight against violence and guarantee the concrete monitoring on their efficacy. In particular, the law establishes an integrated information system for the collection of data on crimes linked to violence against women, especially data allowing to discover the relationship between victims and perpetrators, as well as their age and sex, and the circumstances in which the crime was committed. Moreover, the law introduces the obligation for the public healthcare structures to provide data and information on violence against women.

As described in details, an important government bill was adopted by the Parliament on 22 November 2023. Law No. 168/2023 that establishes new measures to combat violence against women and domestic violence. The new law is aimed, inter alia, at strengthening the protection of victims while increasing the focus on preventive actions and provides for the specialized training of judges and a form of compensation for victims. The Italian Government significantly increased the

number of resources dedicated to combating violence against women while also introducing specific measures against economic violence. The so-called “freedom income” was therefore re-financed and finally adopted as a structural measure for the economic support to victims. Various forms of microcredit are also being promoted to help victims start their own business by valuing on their talents.

The Freedom income: this measure was established by the art. 105-bis of the Decree n. 34/2020, converted into the Law n. 77/2020. The definition of the criteria for the distribution of the resources from the Freedom Income, amounting to 3 million euros, with a monthly contribution, disbursed by INPS (the National Welfare Institute), in the maximum amount of 400 euros per capita for a maximum period of twelve months in favour of women victims of violence who have embarked on a path out of violence. The resources allocated to the “Freedom Income Fund for Women Victims of Violence” for the two-year period 2021-2022, amounted to a total of 9 million euros, allocated according to the criteria established by the Prime Minister's Decree of June 2022, confirming the measure as already determined by the Prime Minister's Decree of December 2020.

In addition, in the Budget Law 2023, the measure of Freedom Income has been refinanced with the amount of 1,850,000 euros for the year 2023. Budget Law 2024 provides for the Fund to be increased by 10 million euros for each of the years 2024, 2025 and 2026 and by 6 million euros annually from the year 2027.

The Freedom Microcredit project: In 2020, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Presidency of the Council of Ministers - Minister for Equal Opportunities and Family, the Italian Banking Association (ABI), the Italian Federation of Cooperative Credit Banks and Rural Banks (Federcasse) the Ente nazionale per il microcredito (ENM) and Caritas, to launch the “Microcredito di libertà” project, a measure to support women victims of violence who intend to embark on a path of emancipation, including economic emancipation, by accessing business microcredit or social microcredit. For the intervention, the aforementioned Protocol provided for the creation of an ad hoc Fund of the consistency of 3 million euros from the budget of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers - Department for Equal Opportunities. The project is still ongoing.

Measures for the empowerment of women victims of violence entrusted to the regions

The Fund for policies related to rights and equal opportunities” provided, in line with the objectives of the PNRR, the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021-2026, as well as the National Strategic Plan on Male Violence Against Women 2021-2023, the allocation of resources from the “Fund for policies related to rights and equal opportunities” - in the amount of 9.000.000.00 - to initiatives aimed at supporting women's empowerment, reintegration into employment, economic and social recovery of women in particular in their path out of violence and women at risk of expectation.

It is important to mention another instrument to support women victims of violence: with Law No. 213/2023 (Budget Law 2024), a social security exemption was introduced for the hiring of women victims of violence. Resources were allocated for the period 2024- 2028 (EUR 1.5 million for 2024, 4 million for 2025, 3.8 million for 2026, 2.5 million for 2027 and 0.7 million for 2028,) for private employers who, in the three-year period 2024-2026, will hire unemployed women victims of violence and beneficiaries of the Freedom Income measure (including women who benefited from the measure in the year 2023). A 100% exemption from the payment of social security contributions is envisaged. In case of the transformation of the employment contract into an open-ended contract, an extension of the exemption is established until the eighteenth month from the date of the fixed-term employment.

We can conclude this review on the Protection axis by mentioning the so called 'Decreto Lavoro 2023' (Decree-Law No. 48 of 4 May 2023, converted with amendments into Law No. 85 of 3 July 2023), which instituted, among other things, the 'Assegno di inclusione' (Inclusion Allowance), the recipients of which, under certain conditions, also include 'persons who are victims of gender-based violence in social or socio-sanitary services.

The regions are the competent bodies to develop and finance programmes on housing and economic support including the empowerment of women. As already mentioned, the Ministerial Decree of 16 November 2023 allocate the resources of the 'Fund for policies relating to rights and equal opportunities' provided, in line with the objectives of the PNRR, the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021-2026, and the National Strategic Plan on Male Violence against Women 2021-2023 - in the amount of 9.000,000.00 - to initiatives aimed at supporting women's empowerment, work reintegration, economic and social recovery of women in particular in their path out of violence and of women at risk of leave (with reference to the compensated leave for women victims of gender-based violence), as well as for housing support interventions.

The minimum requirements for for Anti-Violence Centers and Shelter Homes were defined by State-Regions Agreement of 2022 mentioned above.

Anti-violence centres together with the social services of their municipality are the reference points providing the relevant protection and support services to victims.

A first national mapping of territorial anti-violence networks was carried out by **CNR IRPPS** as part of the studies carried out under the cooperation agreement between the DPO and the CNR from 2017. Through this activity, it was possible to have a snapshot of the networks active on the national territory on 31 December 2017 and to describe: the territorial diffusion of the networks, the typology of the subjects involved and of the entities in charge, the typology of the specialized and general services that were part of them. The analyses highlighted the heterogeneity of the networks as regards composition and objectives. The critical nodes identified are made up of services in the field of justice (present in 65% of the networks mapped) and trade union organizations, professional associations and civil society (present in 62% of the networks mapped).

With regard to perpetrator programs, the second national survey carried out by the CNR (see **Annex 11**) highlighted their increasing tendency to work in an integrated way in the territory. In particular, both as part of a territorial network against violence and through other forms of cooperation, the majority of programs (58%) have activated relations with other territorial bodies. A significant proportion of programs have only activated bilateral cooperation with other territorial actors (30%), even though they are not part of a territorial anti-violence network, while the opposite is less common, i.e. programs that only cooperate within territorial anti-violence networks (10%). Only very few programs do not co-operate with other actors in the territory (2%). In terms of relationships within and outside the territorial anti-violence networks, perpetrator programs collaborate more frequently with specialist support services for victims (84%), police stations (77%), local health authorities (70%), municipalities (69%) and external law enforcement agencies (68%). As in the case of support services for victims, programs for perpetrators have developed a detailed knowledge of gender-based violence, which informs the awareness-raising and training activities carried out in this field. The role they can play in this respect is confirmed by the data collected:

- firstly, in 2022, 70% of Perpetrators' Programs participated in tables aimed at contributing to the planning of policies against male violence against women: 42% participated in technical tables at local level, 53% at regional level and 11% at national level;
- moreover, the majority of perpetrators programs (71%) organized training activities on male

violence against women during the year, mainly for social workers, health workers and lawyers.

Article 20: General support services

Economic independence plays a fundamental role both in the prevention of gender-based violence and as a tool to escape the circle of violence, which too often continues to feed on relationships of economic dependence on the violent partner. Therefore, within the framework of the initiatives foreseen under the Memorandum of Understanding for preventing and combating gender-based violence against women, signed by the **Minister for Family, Birth and Equal Opportunities** with the Italian Banking Association (Abi) and the Foundation for Financial and Savings Education (FEduF), a guidebook was issued and presented on 7th of March 2024 in Milan. The guidebook explores the main aspects of economic violence in order to help women who suffer from it and also to support citizens in understanding and recognizing the phenomenon. As mentioned above, with reference to art.18, the same MoU established the "Microcredito di libertà" project, starting in 2020, in order to support women victims of violence who intend to embark on a path of emancipation, including economic emancipation, by accessing business microcredit or social microcredit. Moreover, in this field the Freedom Income, amounting to 3 million euros, provides a monthly contribution, disbursed by INPS (the National Welfare Institute), in the maximum amount of 400 euros per capita for a maximum period of twelve months in favour of women victims of violence who have embarked on a path out of violence.

With reference to the **Ministry of Health**, as already mentioned, the Prime Minister's Decree of 24 July 2017 adopted the "National Guidelines for Health Authorities and Hospital Authorities on the subject of relief and social health care for women victims of violence" ([Trova Norme & Concorsi - Normativa Sanitaria \(salute.gov.it\)](#)), with the name "Path for women suffering violence", in accordance with Article 1, paragraphs 790 and 791 of Law No. 208 of 28 December 2015, containing "Dispositions for the formation of the annual and multiannual State budget" (the so-called 2016 Stability Law)".

The survey carried out by the Ministry of Health showed that almost all hospital institutions have established a path dedicated to the care of women victims of violence.

One initiative that should certainly be recalled is the Survey on the state of implementation of the National Guidelines for Health Authorities and Hospital Authorities on the subject of assistance and social health care for women victims of violence, annexed to the Decree of the President of the Council of Ministers of 24 November 2017 (GU n.24 of 30-1-2018). These national guidelines provide guidance on the theme of appropriate and integrated intervention in the treatment of the physical and psychological consequences of male violence on women's health. The path for women who have suffered violence, outlined in these guidelines, is aimed to ensure "a timely and appropriate consideration of women, from triage to their accompaniment/guidance, if they agree, with public and private specialised services present in the reference area, in order to elaborate with them a personalised project of support and listening to escape the experience of violence suffered". The Prime Ministerial Decree of 24 November 2017 stipulates that these national guidelines "shall be implemented by the health authorities and the hospital authorities that have an emergency room within them, without prejudice to primary legislation and special and regional legislation in force". Specifically, the survey was carried out as part of the activities of the Working Group to Combat Violence against Women, established at the Cabinet Office in March 2023, with the collaboration, for some specific activities, of the Network of and Regional Focal Points on Gender Violence.

The survey involved the General Directorates of Health of the Regions and Autonomous Provinces. In the course of the survey, constant reference was made to the regional Focal Points in order to obtain the greatest possible response from all the health institutions involved throughout the national territory.

The results of the Survey collected the responses of 80% of the Emergency Rooms, level I and II The Emergency Urgency and Acceptance Department and paediatric ER in Italy, with an extraordinary and capillary collection of data from all the regions and autonomous provinces. The survey has therefore provided a highly representative snapshot of the current state of application of the Guidelines i.e. a specific knowledge of how each reality on the Italian territory, from the big cities to the peripheral hospitals, has been able to comply with the indications contained therein, but above all, has been able to concretely implement the accompanying path for women suffering violence.

Among the most significant results, about 4/5 of the (Italian) PSs (Emergency Rooms) apply the Guidelines, through an official act or local implementation protocols. Furthermore, the survey showed that in most of the ERs there is a multidisciplinary team with the support of cultural mediators. In almost all facilities, the woman is informed of the existence of anti-violence centres, of specific public and private services in the area, and of the possibility of lodging a complaint and the timeframe for doing so, including by contacting the Law Enforcement (FFOO) directly. However, only a little more than half have a system in place to accompany the woman and any children to an external shelter, with numerous difficulties that were explicitly mentioned during the meeting with the contact persons. Critical issues remain in relation to 24-hour social care and the modalities of protected discharge.

The "National Guidelines for Health Authorities and Hospital Authorities on the subject of relief and social health care for women victims of violence set out all the activities envisaged in the context of taking charge of women who are victims of violence within the health facility, in particular:

The nursing personnel responsible for triage, with appropriate professional training, shall promptly acknowledge any sign of violence, even when not declared. The woman in charge must be guaranteed the assistance and protection required by the specific case.

The operator/operator in charge of the woman shall:

- Use a correct communication with a simple language, understandable and accessible also to the women affected by sensory, cognitive or relational disabilities;
- Ensure an empathetic and non-judgmental approach and listening;
- Establish a relationship with women based on trust, so as to facilitate the possible transition to the next stage of taking charge, in full respect of freedom of choice and self-determination of the same;
- The operator/health worker/male or female has always the obligation to inform the woman about the possibility of contacting the local anti-violence centres, the public and private services of the local network and, whenever the woman consents, activates the territorial anti-violence network, alerting the actors involved in formalized protocols.

In the so-called "Path" might be involved also the possible minor daughters/sons of the woman, witnesses or victims of violence, taking into account the legislation concerning minors and the current procedures for taking over the social and health care of minors.

As regards the collection of evidence and forensic documentation, the DPCM of 24 July 2017, within the guidelines, makes specific reference to Annex C) Guidelines for the detection of biological traces for forensic genetic analysis in the care path of victims of sexual violence and/ or abuse, by the Scientific Association of Italian Forensic Geneticists (Ge.F.I.), which forms an integral part of the decree.

In Annex C) of the Guidelines for the detection of biological traces for the analysis of forensic genetics in the care of victims of sexual violence and/ or mistreatment, by the Italian Scientific Association of Forensic Geneticists (Ge.F.I.) as an integral part of the decree, all the measures and indications that operators must follow during the reporting phase are explained.

The objectives and scope of application to be followed by operators and the material to be found and the methods of detection are set out in the cited Annex.

According to Article 4 of Law No. 7 of 9 January 2006 on "Provisions for the prevention and prohibition of the practice of female genital mutilation", which concerns the training of health personnel, the Ministry of Health, by Ministerial Decree of 17 December 2007, issued guidelines for professionals working with immigrant communities from countries where female genital mutilation is practised, in order to carry out prevention, assistance and rehabilitation activities for women and girls who have already been subjected to this practice.

In fact, an important element of the law is the provision (article 4, paragraph 2) of financial resources dedicated to the training of health personnel, in order to increase knowledge of the right to health and of transcultural medicine, as well as the sensitivity of the approach to the sexuality of foreign women, their bodies, maternity and health in general. These funds are allocated annually by the Ministry of Health to the regions on the basis of a mixed criterion defined by the Conference of States and Regions (agreement of 29 November 2009), which provides for the allocation of 70% of the funds in relation to the resident population and 30% in relation to the number of immigrant women with a residence permit who are entitled to health insurance in the region and from countries with a tradition of excision.

The regions will thus have more resources at their disposal to deal adequately with the several problems posed by the issue of FGM in its various aspects, with the main objective of maintaining an adequate standard of intervention, overcoming the critical problems identified and increasing the capacity of Italian health professionals to interact with women who have undergone this practice and to promote their rehabilitation.

The Ministry of Health periodically reviews the use of the funds in question and the activities carried out by the Regions and the Autonomous Provinces to implement Law No. 7 of 2006.

In 2023, the Monitoring of Regions and Autonomous Provinces of the activities related to preventing and combating the phenomenon of female genital mutilation (Law No. 7 of 9 January 2006) was launched. It considered the activities carried out in the period from 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2022 by the Regions and Autonomous Provinces, both with the funds received annually from the Ministry of Health and with other funds. This analysis shows, as in previous ones, a mixed picture in the description of actions to prevent and combat FGM, with a particular focus on training activities for health personnel and communication with communities at risk.

Despite the absence of the three regions of Lombardy, Apulia and Sicily, which are very representative and have a large number of realities, which means that the data is not evenly distributed, the participation of 18 of the 21 realities shows a significant level of participation, highlighting an evolving and orientated framework of action, knowledge and ownership of the phenomenon. The collected forms show that some realities are very active, while in others there is room for improvement. It is hoped that the various local realities will develop in a coherent way, also encouraging cooperation and exchanges within the network of contacts at national level.

Finally, in this monitoring exercise, as in the previous one, in order to standardise the methods of coding the clinical information obtained during episodes of care in the presence of FGM, the regions were given instructions on the use of the ICD9-CM diagnosis and procedure codes, in particular on the hospital discharge forms (SDO) in the case of hospitalisation. The correct and uniform use of these codes throughout the country, especially in the regional centres of reference for FGM, is

considered essential for the correct detection of the phenomenon.

Below there are links to the Ministry of Health's website to refer to on the phenomenon of FGM.

https://www.salute.gov.it/portale/temi/p2_6.jsp?lingua=italiano&id=1925&area=saluteBambino&menu=nascita

<https://www.salute.gov.it/portale/donna/dettaglioContenutiDonna.jsp?lingua=italiano&id=4499&area=Salute%20donna&menu=societa>

Within the abovementioned Guidelines there are references to the specific categories mentioned in this point. In particular, the Guidelines refer to the need to adopt a multidisciplinary intervention that includes the help of intercultural mediation.

Furthermore, in relation to this point, we report the intensive work of the Ministry of Health, in drafting and supporting two important documents aimed at reducing the gap in access to services by the above-mentioned categories:

- **The NIP 2022-2024**

The National Integration Plan (NIP) for beneficiaries of international protection 2022-2024 is a key document drawn up by the Ministry of the Interior in close collaboration with all the administrations, organisations and associations involved in its implementation and maximum dissemination. The Directorate General of the Ministry of Health was involved from the early brainstorming stages to the official presentation. In particular, the Ministry of Health contributed to the drafting of 3 paragraphs on mental health, other vulnerabilities and specific needs, on victims of torture and to the right to health and access to health care.

- **The Vademecum of Vulnerabilities**

The Vademecum for the identification, referral and taking charge of vulnerable persons arriving on the territory and included in the protection and reception system is an operational guideline document drawn up by all the administrations involved by competence, under the leadership of the Ministry of the Interior, Central Directorate of Civil Services for Immigration and Asylum of the Department of Civil Liberties and Immigration (DLCI), with the important collaboration of UNHCR. The document required a long drafting process (over 2 years) by the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Vulnerability of Migrants. Since its publication and wide dissemination through prefectural channels in June 2023, it has continued as a working group for the application of the training course, remote dissemination (webinars) and pilot actions in some particularly exemplary areas of the national territory, for implementation and compliance on the ground and at local level. These activities had significant programme value at central level and good recognition at local level.

The **Department for Equal Opportunities** underlined the importance of coordinated work, such as in the case of the Pink Code established in 2010 in the Grosseto Local Health Unit 9 as a pilot project with the aim of ensuring more effective coordination between the various institutions and competences to provide an effective response as soon as the victim of violence arrives at the emergency room. The Pink Code is a privileged access to First Aid Station reserved to women, children and vulnerable people. When it is addressed to women who suffer gender-based violence, it is called the "Pathway for women who suffer violence", the so-called 'Percorso Donna', while for victims of violence caused by vulnerability or discrimination it is the so-called "Pathway for Victims of Hate Crimes". It works in synergy with agencies, institutions and with the local network of Anti-Violence Centres, in line with national and international directives.

In 2011, with the signing of the memorandum of understanding between the Region of Tuscany and the Florence Public Prosecutor's Office, it became a regional project. The "Codice Rosa" regional

project provides gender-sensitive paths of reception, care and protection for victims of violence and abuse.

Later, in 2016 it was established the Pink Code Regional Network for interventions in favour of adults and minors who are victims of violence and/or abuse. The Pink Code regional network is characterised as a time-dependent network, i.e. a system capable of activating timely and effective connections to provide immediate answers to the needs of people. The objectives of the network are:

- promote the early recognition of cases of violence by ensuring effective dedicated pathways;
- coordinate and network the different institutions and skills, to provide an effective response as soon as the victim arrives at the first aid station;
- give continuity to the actions following the moment of treatment provided in the first-aid facilities, on the basis of the assessment of the victims' protection and safeguard needs;
- ensure homogeneity of intervention throughout the regional territory.

The training activity must be multi-professional, interdisciplinary and continuous and designed on specific topics, consistent with the organisational and planning aspects, it is ensured with continuity at a regional and corporate level and is addressed to the staff of the operational groups and to the sentinels present at the facilities and is carried out in cooperation with Bodies, Institutions and Anti-Violence Centres of the territorial network.

In addition, it is essential to ensure a constant relationship with educators and students on the topic of violence and the multiple implications of gender relations.

In accordance to the quote by the **Minister for Disabilities** of July 2023 "It is therefore essential to also focus on the issue of training professionals and law enforcement officers who find themselves listening to people with modes of communication that are often more difficult to interpret, but who need to be understood and reassured." the Istat survey "The protection system for women victims of violence" of August 2023 indicates (on page 11) that during 2021 30.9% of CAVs carried out a training/refresher course on the reception of women with disabilities; while in the same Istat survey there are no courses by the Shelter Houses.

With regard to the accessibility of CAVs and Shelter Houses, the following should be noted.

The criteria for authorization to operate and accreditation follow the regional regulations, also considering that the Regions have exclusive legislative competence in social matters.

However, with Legislative Decree No. 222/2023 (in force since 13 January 2024) it was established that:

"Public administrations that provide services and concessionaires of public services (such as CAVs and Shelter Houses) are required to indicate in the service charter the levels of quality of the service provided in relation to the effective accessibility of services for people with disabilities, highlighting the provisions of the legislation in force in the specific sector of reference, clearly indicating and in an accessible manner for the various disabilities the rights, including those of a compensatory nature, that users can claim from the managers of the service and the infrastructure and the ways in which to claim them, including through the bodies or supervisory authorities in charge."

Among other things, "accessibility" in this legislative decree means "access to and usability, on an equal basis with others, of the physical environment, public services, including electronic and emergency services, information and communication, including information systems and information technologies in Braille and in easily readable and comprehensible formats, including through the adoption of disability-specific measures or assistance mechanisms or reasonable accommodations."

This is also in compliance with the provisions of the "Protection and Support" Axis of the National Strategic Plan on male violence against women 2021-2023, Priority 2.4 "Strengthening of the 24-

hour national anti-violence hotline 1522, through the implementation of collaboration between 1522, Cav, CR, territorial networks, law enforcement and the judicial system", where "targeted and specific communication campaigns for 1522, e.g. for: regular and irregular migrant women, women with disabilities, older women, young people, men, on economic violence, cyber violence;"

In this sense, the provisions of point 27.e of the Basic Evaluation Report conducted by GREVIO are being progressively responded to

The National Office against Discrimination (UNAR) has drafted the National LGBT+ Strategy 2022-2025, in coherence with the European Strategy for LGBTIQ Equality 2020-2025, envisaged a stable confrontation with LGBT associations, through the establishment of the Permanent Consultation Table for the Protection of LGBT Rights established by the Political Authority's decree of 13 May 2020, made up of 66 sector associations. Article 105-quater of Decree-Law No. 34 of 12 May 2020, converted with amendments by Law No. 77 of 17 July 2020, as amended by Article 38-bis, paragraph 1, of Decree-Law No. 104 of 14 August 2020,

No. 104 converted by Law No. 126 of 13 October 2020, provides for the establishment throughout the country of centres against discrimination motivated by sexual orientation and gender identity. The Centres guarantee adequate legal, health, psychological and social mediation assistance and, where necessary, adequate accommodation and food to victims of discrimination or violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity or who are in a vulnerable condition, due to the social and family context of reference, operating in an integrated manner with the relevant territorial services. They can be managed by local authorities, in individual or associated form, as well as by sectoral associations. The law provides annual resources of 4 million euro, starting in 2020, to finance policies to prevent and combat violence on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity and to support victims. Following the publication in 2021 of a public notice aimed at selecting projects to set up and run Anti-Discrimination Centres/Houses for LGBT victims of discrimination or violence, 37 Centres were financed with ordinary funds; a further 9 projects were financed with NOP Inclusion resources. This is a far-reaching intervention that may lead to the creation of a national network of LGBT centres and homes. In consideration of the need to ensure the continuity of the centres already established and operational, without dispersing the experience gained to date in providing assistance to victims of discrimination or violence and to acquire, at the same time, further useful data to constitute a consolidated statistical base on the needs that have emerged and the interventions implemented, the Decree of the Minister for the Family, Birth and Equal Opportunities of 23 May 2023 provides for the refinancing of the 46 Centres against Discrimination for a further 12 months through the renewal of the previous agreements.

Moreover, in cooperation with the National Institute of Health has been realised the first institutional information portal dedicated to the issue of gender identity www.infotrans.it, also available in English, financed with the resources of the 2014-2020 PON Inclusion, aimed at both transgender people and all citizens. The portal contains information including service mapping, glossary and good practices. The project also included a study on the health status of transgender people.

With regards to the **Ministry of Health**, the effectiveness of public health interventions against violence requires a multidisciplinary approach, which is all the more essential when the issue of multiple vulnerabilities is introduced (as may be the case when a woman is a survivor of violence, a minor, a foreigner or has a disability).

The Istanbul Convention refers to practices that reflect specific forms of violence faced by women with disabilities (e.g. forced sterilisation or abortion against their will) and provides tools to combat such practices and ways to support victims with disabilities. Persons with psychosocial disabilities are particularly vulnerable, especially when they are detained and/or segregated in institutions.

According to the European Disability Forum (EDF), "women and girls with disabilities are on average 2 to 5 times more likely to experience violence". The EDF points to a very important related issue, which is access to justice, due to the existence of legal and/or bureaucratic barriers for those providing support and protection services to women and girls with disabilities, as they may, for example, be deprived of their legal capacity (institutionalised) or not receive assistance from available victim support services because they are not accessible to them.

In the National Guidelines for Health and Hospital Authorities on Rescue and Social Health Care for Women Victims of Violence, annexed to the Decree of the President of the Council of Ministers of 24 November 2017, the issue of disability is mentioned six times.

In the instructions in PART SECOND, Access to the Emergency Department and Triage, we read:

- The worker/operator in charge of the woman should: Use correct communication in simple language that is understandable and accessible also to women with sensory, cognitive or relational disabilities [...].
- And below: Activate, where necessary, the presence of support figures for women with disabilities.

The above-mentioned Survey on the state of implementation of the National Guidelines, carried out by the Ministry of Health among the structures of Level I The Emergency Urgency and Acceptance Departments, Level II, Accident and Emergency Departments and Paediatric Accident and Emergency Departments [first and second level Emergency and Admission Departments] belonging to the National Health Service, also investigated this point.

In this respect, one question in particular explored the organisation of the facilities in terms of 'support staff' and showed that 39% of the facilities provided such support staff for women with disabilities. This element shows that women with disabilities who are victims of violence need more protection, especially in social and health care.

As far the **Ministry of Disabilities** is concerned, the legislative Decree No. 20/2024 established the "National Authority for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities" to combat the phenomena of direct or indirect discrimination or harassment on the basis of their disability, including through visits to places that welcome, even but not exclusively, people with disabilities. In fact, the Garante (Independent Authority), pursuant to Article 4, paragraph 1, "... (n) visit, with unrestricted access to the premises, without prejudice to the exclusive application of the rules referred to in letter o) for the establishments referred to in Law No 354 of 26 July 1975, availing themselves, where necessary, of the collaboration of other State bodies, the structures providing essential public services referred to in Law No 146 of 12 June 1990 and Article 89, Paragraph 2-bis, of Decree-Law No. 34 of 19 May 2020, converted, with amendments, by Law No. 77 of 17 July 2020. During the visits, the Garante may have confidential interviews, without witnesses, with persons with disabilities and with any other person who may provide information relevant to the exercise of the functions referred to in this article; authorization is also not required for those who accompany the Garante for reasons of their office, as experts (editor's note: with a paid assignment) pursuant to Article 3, paragraph 5, or as consultants free of charge; o) carries out visits pursuant to articles 67 and 67-bis of Law no. 354 of 1975 (editor's note: therefore also in penitentiary institutions and security rooms).

It should be noted that the Garante is absolutely independent, thus overcoming the remarks expressed by GREVIO in paragraph 24 of the Basic Evaluation Report.

The **Ministry of Education and Merit** signed a specific [Protocol between the MIM and the Ministry of Health renewed on 19/01/2022, prot. n. 0000001 "Protection of the right to health, study and inclusion"](#) which includes among the areas of intervention identified the "prevention of communicable diseases [...] through structural training activities; the promotion of psycho-physical

well-being, also through interventions on the issues of reproductive health, affectivity and global education on relationships; prevention activities of the phenomenon of cyberbullying, against all forms of violence and discrimination”.

The **national Office against Discrimination (UNAR)** is the National Focal Point for the implementation of the National Strategy for Equality, Inclusion and Participation of Roma and Sinti 2021- 2030, approved on 23 May 2022, in implementation of the Recommendation of the Council of the European Union of 12 March 2021 (2021/C 93/01) on equality, inclusion and participation of Roma and Sinti. In the new Strategy 2021-2030, gender issues are included in the introduction with a particular consideration of the phenomenon of intersectional discrimination and the needs of certain groups and targets (e.g. women, minors, LGBTI+ persons, persons with disabilities, persons at risk of statelessness), strengthening victim support measures. In the two-year period 2022-2023, following the approval of the Strategy, UNAR promoted specific projects with elements of interest on Roma and Sinti women's participation and anti-discrimination paying special attention to the social and health issues of the most marginalized segments of the minority. In the period 2021-2023 UNAR implemented with the resources of the PON Inclusion 2014-2020 a health promotion project in cooperation with the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore. This project envisaged the publication of a Portal ([infosaluteromesinti.it](https://www.infosaluteromesinti.it)) and Social Media dedicated to them, as useful information tools to safeguard the health of Roma and Sinti, to improve the wellbeing of the people in the community who live in conditions of health, housing, economic and social fragility. Within the Portal, there is a specific section on pregnancy <https://www.infosaluteromesinti.it>

Article 22: Specialist support services

With regards to the **Ministry of Health**, an integral part of the guidelines established by the DPCM of 24 July 2017 is Annex A relating to diagnostic and therapeutic treatment. The document describes the specific procedures to be followed in some specific cases, such as sexual violence, as well as the stages of the medical examination of the victim of violence.

The medical examination is carried out according to a predetermined procedure that provides for the reception, the acquisition of informed consent to data processing and the acquisition of judicial evidence, the history, the execution of instrumental and laboratory investigations. In this context *"The medical examination is a unique opportunity to ensure adequate assistance to the psychological and health needs of women. At the same time, a subsequent psychological assistance will be provided, if the woman wishes, which can be carried out by the hospital psychologist, if present, or by a professional of the territorial anti-violence network"*. The health operator has always the obligation to inform the woman of the possibility of contacting the anti-violence centres on the territory, public and private services of the local network and, whenever the woman agrees, activates the territorial anti-violence network, alerting the actors involved in formalized protocols.

Among the public and private actors working in various ways to prevent and combat violence against women, in addition to the anti-violence centres, there are also Shelter Homes, which provide protection for women and children who are victims of violence, ensuring complete anonymity and making use of psychologists and other support figures present on site. In addition, the woman is always informed about the *"possibility of lodging a complaint or complaint, also by contacting the Law Enforcement directly if required by law"*.

In the case of sexual violence, the procedure provided for shall pay particular attention to the collection of data and information relating to the event, the objective examination, the photographic collection and the research and retrieval of biological material.

Women victims of violence can also avail themselves of telephone assistance through a dedicated public utility number (1522), a 24-hour telephone line with specialized operators to receive requests for help and support from victims.

With regard to possible minor children of the woman, witnesses or victims of violence, a preliminary processing of the results the above-mentioned Survey by the Ministry of Health on the state of implementation of the National Guidelines (in reference to art.20) showed that:

- in 94% of the responding structures, if there are minor children, they can stay with the mother and be involved in the same process as her;
- in 72% of the responding structures, the operational protocols of the territorial anti-violence network (if they exist and are signed by the structure) take into account the possible need to manage the presence of minors
- in 62% of the responding structures, in case of access by minors, there is a way to take charge of domestic violence, either directly or with assistance.

The treatment of minors, witnesses of the violence inflicted on mothers and therefore indirect victims, is included in the context of taking charge of the mother. In particular, the guidelines specify that, during take-over which must be guaranteed H24, the actions taken must be "to ensure the continuity of the protection of the Emergency Room for women and children until the activation of the territorial services".

It is worth recalling to the intensive work of the Ministry of Health described previously, in drafting and supporting two important documents aimed at reducing the gap in access to services by the above-mentioned categories:

- The NIP 2022-2024
- The Vademecum of Vulnerabilities

In the guidelines provided for by the DPCM of 24 July 2017, in the field of therapeutic/ diagnostic treatment the actions of operators against women victims of violence are explained; the operator who takes charge of the victim of violence must follow a series of procedures that, in the case of foreign women, ethnic minorities, women with disabilities, provide specific indications such as:

Use correct communication with a simple language, understandable and accessible even to women with sensory, cognitive or relational disabilities; Ensure an empathic and non-judgmental approach and listening; Establish a relationship with women based on trust, so as to facilitate the possible transition to the next stage of taking charge, in full respect of the freedom' of choice and self-determination thereof; Activate for foreign women, where necessary, the presence of cultural and linguistic mediators; Enable for women affected by disabling, where necessary, the presence of supporting figures.

The national helpline 1522 against violence and stalking, made available by the **Department for Equal Opportunities** of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, represents a great support tool for victims of violence. In the national discipline, the reference regulation is Article 12 of Decree-Law no. 11 of 23 February 2009, converted with amendments into Law no. 38 of 23 April 2009. The 1522 also responds to the provisions of the Istanbul Convention, which, in Article 24, provides for the establishment 'at the national level of free continuous assistance telephone lines, operating 24 hours a day, seven days a week, intended to provide telephone callers, confidentially or anonymously, with advice on all forms of violence covered by this Convention'. In the new call for tenders, currently under way for the awarding of the management service, has been envisaged, a significant strengthening of both the service and the activities for the promotion and dissemination

of knowledge of the service itself. The Department for Equal Opportunities is about to implement a Communication Plan for the dissemination, through communication campaigns, of the regulatory tools and operational interventions in support of women victims of male violence. We would like to recall the Prime Ministerial Decree of 30 October 2020 on 'Models of signs, contents, languages to be used, as well as modalities and timeframes for the display of the toll-free number', which implemented the provisions of the 2020 Budget Law on the obligation to display a sign with the public utility toll-free number 1522 on the premises of public administrations where services are provided to users. A new model of the sign, approved by a Prime Ministerial Decree currently in the process of being registered, will be published in the coming weeks.

As of 2022 in Italy there are 385 Anti-violence centers and 450 Shelter homes.

As afore-mentioned, Law No. 168/2023 establishes new measures to combat violence against women and domestic violence. The Italian Government significantly increased the number of resources dedicated to combating violence against women while also introducing specific measures against economic violence. The so-called "freedom income" was therefore re-financed and finally adopted as a structural measure for the economic support to victims. Various forms of microcredit are also being promoted to help victims start their own business by valuing on their talents, as detailed in reference to art.18.

A Communication Plan was prepared in December 2023 to disseminate, through communication campaigns, the regulatory tools and operational interventions in support of women victims of male violence. Within the Communication Plan, foreign, migrant/asylum-seeking women are also identified as a target audience. In this communication context, strengthening multilingual information campaigns that take into consideration the different cultural backgrounds of migrant and refugee women and girls and that aim to promote awareness of and ways to access gender-based violence response services, including the national anti-violence and anti-stalking number 1522, with a specific focus on the target audience of young foreign and migrant women, is considered a priority. In the Integrated Communication Plan, one line is dedicated to the revision of the 1522 website, including the part translated into other languages, in order to provide complete information on services dedicated to women victims of violence, including foreign women.

Article 25: Support to victims of sexual violence

In Italy the specialized support services for women survivors of violence welcome women and girls victim of all forms of violence, including rape. According to **ISTAT** data collection, such services count for 385 Anti-violence centers and 450 Shelter homes in 2022, accounting for 0.13 Centers and 0.15 Shelters for every 10 thousand women. Over the years, the number of both services has grown: compared to 2017, the first year of the survey, there is a 37 percent increase for Centers and a 97 percent increase for Shelters. However, the territorial distribution of services to combat gender-based violence is uneven. There are 121 Centers in the South, with an above-average rate of 0.18 per 10 thousand women. The rates are lower in the North, 0.11 for the Northwest and 0.10 in the Northeast, respectively. Shelters are more in the Northwest where they are 0.21 per 10 thousand women, followed by the Northeast and Islands with 0.18. South and Center are at a lower level of 0.10 and 0.09 per 10 thousand women, respectively.

There were 60,751 women who contacted Centers at least once in 2022, up 7.8 percent from 2021.

Women hosted by Shelters were 2,698, about 11.3 percent more than the previous year (2,423); in more than half of the cases (64.1 percent, or 1,730 women) they are foreigners.

In the field of support for victims of crime, the **Ministry of Justice** through the Department for Justice Affairs promotes the implementation of generalist assistance instruments in favor of all victims of crime, within the framework of rights and protections enshrined in Directive (EU) 2012/29/EU (of the European Parliament and of the Council, establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime and replacing Framework Decision 2001/220/JHA), in coherence with the Strategy for Victims' Rights 2020-2025, presented on 24.6.2020 by the European Commission.

The aim is to disseminate nationwide targeted and capillary forms of assistance in favor of victims, also to ensure their rights to information and emotional-psychological support, and to prevent secondary victimization, through the annual publication, on the basis of permanent resources (allocated by the budget law), of public funding notices addressed to the Regions (in the framework of non-competitive open procedures aimed at maximum coverage and homogeneity of the initiative): the aim is to create a national network of support services that is independent of the type of crime or the type of victim (as opposed to the specialist services already operating in Italy) and provides multidisciplinary and comprehensive support to victims from the stage of their first contact with the authorities (except for subsequent redirection to specialist services e.g. legal, psychological, health), as well as during criminal proceedings and after their conclusion. of a legal, psychological, health nature), as well as during the criminal trial and after its conclusion; the DAG initiative started in 2021 pursues, in particular, the implementation of regional projects aimed at building on their territories assistance interventions that, despite the 'generalist' mould enshrined in Directive 2012/29/EU, are well suited to also accommodate support measures for women victims of violence, and (starting from the 2022 edition), programmes or experiences of restorative justice. Interventions supported under the above-mentioned public notices must provide for a network service configuration structured in such a way as to:

A. provide assistance and support to victims of any type of crime prosecuted by the Italian legal system, without distinction of gender, age, nationality, ethnicity, religion, socio-economic and health status, or in any case based on the subjective quality of the victim, the nature of the crime or other personal or objective characteristics, in line with the relevant EU and international legislation;

B. to promote and develop restorative justice programmes through expert mediators and/or organizations operating in the third sector, who have at least three years' experience in the field and have previously practiced in this area under protocols of understanding with judicial offices or other public bodies, also in order to guarantee the provision of services according to homogeneous criteria (omissis).

In the framework of the first edition (2021), EUR 1,914,969.90 were disbursed to the 11 participating regions (Abruzzo, Calabria, Campania, Emilia-Romagna, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Lazio, Lombardy, Piedmont, Apulia, Tuscany, Veneto), for whose projects specific monitoring and reporting obligations are foreseen for the successful progress of the interventions and facilities planned on the territory for the benefit of crime victims.

Within the framework of the second public notice (2022) - also aimed at building or strengthening the assistance network for victims of any type of crime and at fostering restorative justice programmes or experiences, also in a complementary and/or integrated form with what is already deployed in the sector, the agreements were finalized with 14 Regions that expressed interest (Abruzzo, Campania, Calabria, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Liguria, Lazio, Lombardy, Marche, Piedmont, Apulia, Veneto, Tuscany, Sicily, Umbria), for a total subsidized amount of EUR 1,508,503.01.

Similarly, it was a matter of implementing assistance projects of a 'generalist' nature, regardless of the type of crime or the type of victim (as opposed to the specialized protection services already operating in Italy), within a procedure that was neither competitive nor implying any obligation for the beneficiary organizations to participate.

Among the peculiarities of the second 'edition', also to account for the strong territorial rootedness of the assistance objectives, the transversal nature of the interventions and the projection on all the services functional to the informative protection and specialized support to the victim (also on the legal/judicial front and access to justice), we would like to point out the focus on the restorative justice experiences in implementation of the 2012 Directive, in the wake of the recent systematization of the institute, brought by the legislative decree 150/2022, as well as the enhancement of the involvement of judicial offices, external penal enforcement offices, Regional Penitentiary Administration Offices, Juvenile Justice Centers, Police Forces, Health Authorities as 'partner' entities for the implementation of regional projects. On the questions at hand, we would like to specifically point out that:

- the interventions subsidized within the framework of these public notices aim to create a synergy between the public and the private social sector, in which training, dissemination and awareness-raising interventions aimed at the many operators in the social-welfare sector, but also at all the institutional actors, already engaged in the front line in the prevention of and fight against offences, including the fight against the phenomena of violence highlighted here, can find a place: the project proposals of the Regions take the form, in several cases, also of seminars/workshops aimed at law enforcement authorities, health professionals, the various specialist figures in charge at local authorities, as well as third-sector figures operating at the assistance structures created or strengthened in the beneficiary Regions, with a view to an effective dialogue between all the stakeholders involved in supporting victims and the further dissemination and projection of the generalist support network throughout the territory a key concept of Directive 2012/29/EU is, indeed, the professional, but also free and confidential nature of the services to be provided to the victim of (any type of) crime, before, during and for an appropriate period of time after criminal proceedings, with an appropriate focus on information functional to the exercise of the victim's defense rights;
- many regional projects pursue structured collaborations between territorial services with a view to a virtuous connection between law enforcement agencies, judicial offices, the health area and other relevant operators, to foster an integrated approach to the problem and homogeneous and effective intervention procedures at every stage, throughout the entire regional territory, while respecting reciprocal competences; where they exist, there are also appropriate actions of connection with the local Anti-Violence Centers in view of more incisive and calibrated collaboration procedures and, in general, of an effective coordination with multidisciplinary teams, in a constant dialogue leading to good practices and growth of skills, thanks also to the monitoring of the taking charge paths: in this sense, the assistance paths (which emerge from the periodic 'monitoring' that the Regions receiving funding must comply with) support paths for victims falling into 'vulnerable' groups with professional and targeted reception activities and the activation, in parallel, of training activities dedicated to professionals, since - despite the 'generalist' matrix that permeates the objectives of Directive 2012/29/EU, the same EU source makes it clear that 'persons who are particularly vulnerable or in situations which expose them to a high risk of harm, such as victims of repeated violence in close relationships, victims of gender-based violence or victims of other forms of crime in a Member State of which they are not nationals or in which they do not reside should be provided with specialist assistance and legal protection. Specialized

support services should be based on an integrated and targeted approach that takes into account, in particular, the specific needs of victims, the severity of the harm suffered as a result of the crime, and the relationship between victims, offenders, children and their extended social environment (see recital No. 38, *ibid.* and recital no. 58 on appropriate preventive measures during criminal proceedings, for victims identified as 'vulnerable').

The promotion of similar forms of projects (subsidized with budget resources, allocated to an expenditure chapter of the DAG), in compliance with the provisions of Directive 2012/29/EU, continued during 2023 by means of public invitations, addressed to the Italian Regions for the development of information and generalist assistance paths for victims, in the wake of the previous interventions, also to enhance the activities already undertaken in the sector, taking into account the priority of the information and multidisciplinary support aspects in the framework of the aforementioned Directive (see recital 21). In this edition, the focus on the crime victim's rights to information and to be listened to appears to be a fundamental junction for access to justice, as information itself is a primary form of assistance, to be ensured within the framework of the Euro-EU protections. Specifically, 16 financing agreements were signed with as many adhering Regions, for a total disbursed of EUR 1,553,600.00 (Puglia, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Veneto, Liguria Campania, Sicily, Lombardy, Basilicata, Piedmont, Emilia-Romagna, Lazio, Calabria, Tuscany Abruzzo, Valle d'Aosta, Marche).

The objectives pursued in the last edition tend towards the realization of a widespread and integrated network (also in terms of cooperation between public and third sector/social private actors) as homogeneous as possible on a national scale, of services, including the creation and/or strengthening (where already existing) of information desks composed of multidisciplinary staff to help users/victims, according to their 'right to understand and be understood' (see Article 3, Directive mentioned above).

Central appears to be the establishment or strengthening of first access points on the territory - understood as a free, confidential, professional listening and reception space (according to the requirements of Directive 2012/29/EU) in order to provide information, assistance and support to the victims of any type of crime prosecuted by the Italian legal system, without distinction of gender, age, nationality, ethnicity, religion, socio-economic condition or health, or in any case based on the subjective quality of the victim, the nature of the crime or other personal or objective characteristics, also in partnership with other institutional subjects (judicial offices, other public bodies or the third sector) and to supplement or support what has already been implemented in the same area.

Also in this scenario, the importance is reaffirmed - throughout the period preceding but also contextual and subsequent to the criminal proceedings, for an adequate period of time - of listening to and understanding the needs of the victim as they are also functional to the exercise of his or her rights of defense, including access to forms of judicial protection, and the appropriate attention paid to the fight against secondary victimization, in the spirit of Article 9 of the directive. It is also evident that, despite the 'generalist' nature of the protection, people who are particularly vulnerable or exposed to high risk of harm, such as victims of gender-based violence or repeated violence 'in close relationships', can also benefit from the initiatives.

Lastly, it should be noted that in the implementation of regional projects subsidized by the Ministry, the training of personnel in charge of assisting and interacting with crime victims and initiatives to raise the awareness of the entire community on the issue also play a primary role, as a further driver for individual and collective empowerment and the sharing of socially significant issues such as the prevention of violence and the reduction of victim isolation.

Work is also underway to develop the construction phases of the First Institutional Portal for Victims of Crime with the objective of supporting victims in building awareness of their rights and identifying the most appropriate ways to access justice and related services.

The project just described started with the preliminary activities identifiable in the naming, logo and visual identity of the portal jointly carried out by the Departmental Portal Editorial Committee.

The Portal in question (which will be available from the first year in Italian and English, and later on, also in French, Spanish and, if possible, Arabic), intends to offer Italian and foreign crime victims a quick reference for emergency situations, clear and punctual paths on the current assistance system operating in Italy and clear and facilitated information sheets on the subject, in order to improve their awareness of their rights and identify the most appropriate ways to access justice and related services.

Within this framework, the Ministry pursues correct, transparent, reliable and accessible information on victims' rights and support services that make up the territorial victim support networks. This is a site outside the justice domain but with an institutional value, aimed at reassuring the user of the reliability and certainty of the information provided.

The information paths for victims will be differentiated and based on the user's level of awareness of their victimization experience, with sections on: a) emergency (user needing immediate contact with authorities and services) b) assistance and support (user needing information on the network of support organizations in the area) 3) information (less aware user needing initial guidance and support in understanding their situation).

Article 31: Custody, visitation rights and safety

In the framework of the Cartabia reform, in force since 28 February 2023 (see Legislative Decree No. 149 of 10 October 2022, the new Title IV-bis Book II of the Code of Civil Procedure: single Procedure in matters of persons, minors and family), implementing precise delegation principles, the **Ministry of Justice** highlights how the new Article 473-bis.25 of the Code of Civil Procedure has regulated the subject matter of technical consultancy by specifying its areas of application and setting the framework within which the consultant's investigations must be conducted: the judge, in the decision instructing the consultancy, indicates the subject matter of the assignment and the consultant, in drawing up the report, shall distinguish each segment of the investigation by specifying the facts directly observed and the statements made by the parties and third parties, in order to arrive at the assessments by supporting them with scientific evidence or in any event by indicating the parameters on which they are based. The report must then conclude with concrete proposals for intervention to support the family unit and children. A specific space is devoted by the rule to the assessments on parental competence that, in the light of the critical remarks highlighted by the recent jurisprudence of legitimacy (see in this regard the remarks formulated in the Order of the Supreme Court of Cassation No. 9691/2022), must always be referred to the court expert by means of a reasoned decision, who shall express an assessment of the personality of the parents only if this is relevant for the purposes of verifying their parental capacity, and shall support the technical judgments expressed with a precise indication of both the methodologies followed and the parameters recognized by the scientific community. The aim pursued by the delegated legislature is to define the perimeter and the purposes of the investigative means, aimed exclusively at providing the judge with technical and scientific instruments and information that enable him, together with further investigative elements, to formulate assessments and adopt solutions that are as appropriate as possible to satisfy and protect the rights of the parties and the minors (see Court of Cassation, 23804/2021 as well as the explanatory report to the text of the law of the so-called Cartabia Reform on Civil Procedure).

In the same vein is the new Article 473-bis.26 of the Code of Civil Procedure. (implementing the delegation criterion contained in Article 1(23)(ee), l. 206/2021): inspired by good practices present in some courts, the rule empowers the judge to appoint under Article 68 of the Code of Civil

Procedure as an auxiliary a professional, chosen from among those registered in the register of OTCs (or even outside the register if the parties so request) also to carry out specific activities, expressly entrusted to him, where necessary for the resolution of the family conflict or for the purpose of aiding or supporting the parent-child relationship.

Furthermore, with reference to the attention paid to the role, in the abstract, that can be played by social services, again in the framework of the reform under legislative decree 149/2022 there is room for rules aimed at regulating the intervention of the social welfare or health services, in the function of monitoring, control and ascertainment with specific indications of connection with the adjudicating body (which has decided to have these services intervene in the family conflict, whose task - as pointed out in the illustrative report on the legislative decree - is destined to unfold over a period of time that often cannot be defined *ex ante* and in any case beyond the final moment of the judgment): In particular, Article 473-bis.27 of the Code of Civil Procedure provides, from an organizational point of view, that whenever the judge orders the intervention of the social or health services, he must delimit the activity entrusted to them (i.e. the boundaries of the services, in order to avoid undue interest and failures to perform the tasks entrusted to them), setting the deadlines within which the said services must file a periodic report on the activity carried out and those within which the parties may file pleadings.

Lastly, the new Article 473-bis.44 of the Code of Civil Procedure regulating the preliminary investigation in the presence of allegations of domestic violence or abuse, whose declared rationale is to anticipate the ascertainment of the validity or otherwise of the allegations of violence to the preliminary stages of the proceedings, in order to ensure that the adoption of measures, even provisional ones, takes place on the basis of findings, albeit summary. The second paragraph of the provision then lays down specific rules in the case of the appointment of the OTC or of the assignment to the social-welfare or health services in proceedings involving allegations of violence or abuse, expressly providing that when the judge appoints the OTC (to be chosen from among those with specific competence in the matter) or the assignment to the services, he must indicate in the order the presence of allegations of violence or abuse. This clarification is necessary because of the nature of the investigations that can be entrusted to the technical advisor or to the heads of the service must be made aware of any allegations of violence, in order to prevent these proceedings, characterized by elements of specialty, from being treated in the same way as those characterized by mere conflict. In accordance with the well-established orientation of the Court of Cassation according to which methodologies that are not approved by the international scientific community cannot be used as a basis for the OTC's evaluations, the OTC must expressly indicate which of these he intends to refer to, with the clarification that evaluations on personality characteristics and profiles must be based on the parameters taken as reference.

Article 48: Prohibition of mandatory alternative dispute resolution processes or sentencing

In relation to the above-mentioned issue, the **Ministry of Justice** refers to what has been described above in terms of the regulatory interventions in criminal and civil matters.

With specific regard to civil proceedings, it should be noted here that, pursuant to Article 473-bis.43 of the Code of Civil Procedure (as amended by Legislative Decree no. 149/2022 implementing the delegated principles of law no. 206 of 26 November 2021) - entitled 'family mediation', in force as from 28 February 2023 - it is forbidden to start the family mediation process when a conviction or sentence has been pronounced, even at first instance, or when criminal proceedings are pending at a stage subsequent to the terms set out in Article 415 bis of the Code of Criminal Procedure for

the conduct referred to in Article 473 bis 40, as well as when such conduct is alleged or in any case emerges in the course of the proceedings. The mediator will immediately discontinue the family mediation process undertaken if there are reports of abuse or violence during the process. The term refers to cases of proceedings in which there are allegations of family abuse or conduct of domestic or gender-based violence by one party against the other or their minor children, and its genesis is also and specifically to be found in Article 48 of the Istanbul Convention.

Articles 49 and 50: General obligations and immediate response, prevention and protection

Within the **Ministry of Justice**, is carried out the collection of civil and criminal court decisions, with particular regard to those already the subject of public debate, as well as press articles on gender-based and domestic violence, aimed at examining the language used, both because of its impact on cultural education in the field of combating gender-based violence and because of its potential to create situations of secondary victimization. Evaluation and analysis of the ECHR judgments on this issue.

With regard to gender-based violence, harmful and violent conduct is often the result of an escalation of the risk situation. Being duly aware that protection of the victim is not limited to law enforcement, the Italian Legislator has introduced a legal-administrative instrument centering on prompt protection against the risk of victimization: a warning from the Chief of Police, pursuant to Article 8 of Legislative Decree no. 11/2009 (converted into Law no. 38/2009), against those responsible for stalking. This instrument of protection is available to the victim as an alternative to legal action.

Article 3 of Law no. 119 of 15 October 2013 (Measures to combat gender-based violence) introduces the warning instrument for perpetrators of acts of domestic violence in order to strengthen the tools in place to discourage harassment perpetrated in the family setting or in emotional relationships, and encourage the reporting to the competent authority of acts of violence that are not legally punishable (e.g. beatings and minor injuries), but can become a regular occurrence or be a precursor to more serious events. Unlike the warning for stalking, in which only the party undergoing harassment can file a complaint, in the case of a warning pursuant to Article 3 of Law no. 119/2013, anyone - a friend, relative, neighbor, family doctor, etc. - can report to the law enforcement authority so-called "sentinel crimes", an alarm call in a situation of likely domestic violence.

As well as informing the victim about the presence of anti-violence centers and putting them in touch with them, in the case of both stalking and domestic violence the Chief of Police must inform the person that has received the warning that he may be put on a prevention/treatment programme organized by local social/welfare services.

Following the coming into force of Law no. 69/2019, additional protection measures such as tags are now available. Another legislative change came with Law no. 134/2021 and the relative amendment of the code of criminal procedure, meaning that the perpetrator can be arrested for breaching precautionary measures ordered by legal authorities.

Within the **Ministry of Interior**, so-called particularly vulnerable persons receive ad hoc forms of protection, provided by the legal system. Reporting must be carried out in a protected manner, with the help of an expert in child psychology or psychiatry, or in a suitable setting, with audio and video recording of statements, in order to avoid so-called "secondary victimization".

For the **National Police** in 1988 the Public Security Department recommended, in a circular to Police HQs, that teams of qualified personnel and suitable premises be dedicated to receiving reports from alleged victims of sexual violence, in order to prevent the possibility of secondary victimization.

Over time, several rooms for protected listening were created at Police HQs, working in collaboration with Associations such as "Soroptimist Italia", with which the Chief of Police, the Public Security Director General, signed a Memorandum of Understanding for the Project "A room all to oneself" (Una stanza tutta per sé). A total of 92 rooms are currently available in 72 HQ stations and in some local police stations.

The **Carabinieri** force pays greater attention to the needs of particularly vulnerable victims, adopting an approach, right from the first contact, that takes into account the traits of single victim categories and their personal experiences. This has resulted in "fast lanes" being created in police stations for the reception of reports/complaints, leading to ad hoc "neutral" rooms, helping to create a relationship of trust between the victim and the officer in the protected listening phase, with audio and video recording serving to protect the victim.

In recent years legislation has evolved considerably in the sphere of "gender-based violence". A growing role has been given to the methods used to interview victims, in order to ensure the reliability of statements made and preserve the psychological integrity of the persons reporting the violence, thus avoiding secondary victimization. Of relevance in this regard is the amendment to Article 351(1 ter) of the Code of Criminal Procedure, requiring the so-called "protected interview" (with the aid of an expert in psychology or child psychiatry, appointed by the public prosecutor) of victims deemed to be in a vulnerable condition. Finally, the same provision requires the reporting party not to have contact with the person under investigation, and not to be asked to make further statements.

In addition, in order to avoid delays in the procedural phase, ensure the immediate gathering of evidence and speed up the adoption of precautionary measures, Law no. 69/2019, known as "Red Code", has brought changes to the code of criminal procedure, speeding up both the communication of reported offences to legal authorities (this must be immediate), and the performance of subsequent delegated activities, with specific reference to the interview with the victim (within three days of the communication). The court may order, in addition to a ban on going near to places frequented by the victim, the use of electronic means, such as a tag. The abuse of family members and cohabitants is one of the offences for which preventive measures can be applied. Changes have also been introduced by the so-called "Cartabia reform", which has modified admissibility conditions for some offences relating to gender-based violence (personal injury, private violence and threat). This now makes it possible to automatically prosecute if the victim is a minor, incapacitated or infirm. With regard to the interview, it is now possible to audio-video record the statements of informed witnesses, and is mandatory in the case of specific crimes, including sexual violence. Finally, if the reporting victim is a minor, mentally ill or in a particularly vulnerable condition, audiovisual or phonographic recording is mandatory.

Within the **National Police** In compliance with current provisions in force, the interview must take place in specific rooms set up for this purpose in all Police HQs, a comfortable setting that is equipped with an audio-video recording system.

As part of the agreement with the Department for Equal Opportunities of the Prime Minister's Office in efforts to combat gender-based violence, in 2020 the **Carabinieri** force provided a specific kit for

audio and video recording to all Provincial Commands/Territorial Units/Groups around the country, and to Units endowed with "A room all to oneself" or an ad hoc protected room not endowed with a recording system, to be used in the initial delicate contact phase when receiving the reports of particularly vulnerable victims of gender-based/domestic violence.

Memorandum of understanding have also been entered into all over the country among representatives of the various professions competent in this specific sphere (law enforcement agencies, magistrates, physicians and healthcare professionals, anti-violence centers, lawyers, associations) to protect and support victims, defining approaches and operational methods in single areas of competence, constructing an action plan and appointing qualified contact persons that can handle any circumstance, uncover hidden cases and minimize the risk of error that may have an effect on the need to protect the victim, also from a legal perspective.

For the **National Police**, the circulars issued, in particular by the Anti-Crime Central Directorate, have invited officials looking into cases of domestic violence to focus on some aspects that are crucial for the future adoption of additional measures, be they criminal law or administrative. In all cases of domestic violence, an investigative approach should take into account those circumstances in which women require support, even when, after reporting abuses to law enforcement Forces, they decide to withdraw the complaint.

The basic aim of new directives is to focus on the ill-treated woman, providing her with everything she needs to exit the state of isolation and relational void that this type of victim often suffers from, and to make the best use of enforcement tools provided by the legal system. In the medium to long term, it is hoped that these measures will be more effective in avoiding repeated abusive behavior and giving women greater confidence to contact police forces and report incidents of violence, as well as allowing the monitoring of "grey areas", those situations in which the victim is still undecided as to whether or not to bring a legal or administrative action.

The aforementioned Anti-Crime Central Directorate of the National Police has also looked more deeply at operational tools that can uncover situations of violence through so-called "Initial Intervention" activities. These can be useful in giving impetus to subsequent investigations, aimed at preventing the escalation of violence. Since 2018 initial intervention procedures have been put in place for episodes of gender-based violence, described in a "processing card" disseminated throughout the country and updated in 2019 in light of changes made by Law no. 69/2019 ("Red Code").

On 27 March 2020 the YOUNPOL APP - already in existence since 2017 for reports of bullying and drug dealing - was updated to allow a direct request for assistance from Police HQs in cases of gender-based violence. The app can be used on smartphones, tablets and computers, and allows messages (including multimedia) to be sent to the Operations Room. Reports are automatically georeferenced and, those not wishing to register and provide their data can file anonymous reports.

The protection of victims of gender-based violence is a strategic issue for prevention and law enforcement policies implemented by the **Carabinieri** force, whose daily activities follow the so-called "4 Ps" of the Istanbul Convention, aimed at: 1) preventing crime through community awareness, information provided to victims and continuous training of personnel; 2) prosecuting the perpetrators of crimes by bringing them to justice; 3) protecting victims and taking appropriate steps for their safety; 4) contributing to Integrated Policies by networking at central and local levels. Over time, the Carabinieri force has equipped itself with tools to support the Territorial Units operating all over the country in order to improve responses, provide prompt and adequate action and strengthen strategies to prevent and combat gender-based violence. In greater detail:

- the Stalking Section, established in 2009, with national competence for gender-based and

domestic violence offences against particularly vulnerable victims, made up of psychology, criminology and computer science experts, carries out at a national level the following activities: 1) analysis and monitoring of information received on cases of gender-based violence; 2) specialist operational support to local forces and competent legal authorities; 3) training in the specific sector for Carabinieri personnel; 4) cooperation on several projects with the Equal Opportunities Department ; 5) awareness-building within civil society.

- the national network monitoring the phenomenon of gender-based violence, established in 2014, made up of criminal investigation officers of both sexes, namely Marshals and Brigadiers, distributed over territorial Commands at various levels, specially trained at the Carabinieri Institute of Investigative Techniques. Military officials forming part of the Investigative Units of Provincial Commands have the role of "Contact persons" on the question of gender-based violence, and act as: gender-based violence experts for Commanders; facilitators in forging relationships with other local actors; receptors of developing trends or worsening of phenomena under observation, subsequently reported to analyze cases more precisely; promoters of calls for specialist help in more serious cases.
- the Operational Handbook for crimes relating to gender-based violence and vulnerable victims provides all officers with operational guidelines, summarizing best practices in the specific sphere, and a single protocol for all Carabinieri who, in their various capacities, come into direct contact with victims of gender-based violence.

Many **National Police** HQs have taken steps to guide the cautioned person towards re-education paths, with specialist centers "taking on" the admonished person. The protocols require a special synergy between Police HQ officers and Specialist Centers performing the prevention action. The Chief of Police will "formally invite" the admonished person to contact one of the Centers in question to attend a free course reflecting on his behavior, for example learning to control anger.

68 police HQs have already signed agreements, started committee work, and renewed previous agreements or prepared draft agreements to be sent by specialist centers to admonished persons. Police HQs will monitor the behavior of persons who, despite being warned and even interviewed, continue to exhibit violent behavior. More stringent prevention measures can be taken against them, such as Special Surveillance.

A number of Circulars addressed to Chiefs of Police have recently been sent out, containing pointers in this regard. In 2022 and January 2023, further circulars were issued underlining the importance of the warning as an instrument that aims to prevent conduct that might degenerate and lead to serious offences in family and sentimental contexts.

The notification of the measure by the Chief of Police or the delegated National Police Officer is a key phase, and not a formality, since it is aimed at making the admonished person aware of the negative social value of his conduct, inviting him to cease harassment or violent conduct and informing him about the possibility of undergoing a personalized "treatment path".

Chiefs of Police have been invited to look into the possibility of organizing training, including inter-force training, in concert with the Offices/Commands of other Police Forces, on this specific subject, and to promote Memoranda of Understanding with Local Administrations, Local Health Authorities, Anti-Violence Centers and Associations dealing with the protection of women and treatment of the abuser, also reporting any needs in the Provincial Public Order and Security Committee.

To make the protection network more effective for the victim, the warning notification will also be communicated to all the police forces present in the territories where both the admonished person and the victim to be protected reside. Further indications have been given so that, in the ways

deemed most appropriate for individual cases, contact is maintained with the complainant or with the victim of domestic violence even after the warning is served, in order to prevent any repetition of harassment.

In the **Carabinieri force**, tools such as the Operational Handbook for crimes related to gender-based violence against particularly vulnerable victims have been created, describing action protocols designed to standardize operational procedures, avoid secondary victimization, detect and report to legal authorities the presence of risk factors in individual cases, ensure prompt action and implement the preventive protection of the victim, possibly through General Surveillance using a radio network, in cases where there is an obvious risk of escalation.

As part of **inter-force** (Carabinieri and National Police) coordination activities, the Criminal Police Central Directorate of the National Police Department has created an investigation system called SCUDO, a database used to record, search for and use information about persons involved in cases of gender-based and domestic violence. This tool is available to personnel operating throughout the country, and can be installed on mobile devices. In cases of episodes of violence or threats of violence, the data relating to the persons present - alleged perpetrator, victim or witness, victim-perpetrator relationship, type of violence, possession of weapons, etc. - are uploaded to the system. This information is useful for planning subsequent actions, in order to better protect the victim as well as police officers.

The afore-mentioned Criminal Police Central Directorate also publishes some of the drafted analysis reports or makes them available to the general public through publication on the website of the Ministry of the Interior. Just as for other crime-related phenomena, this helps to raise the level of knowledge and awareness within civil society.

Article 51: Risk assessment and risk management

As far as the **Ministry of Health** is concerned most of the items indicated (i.e. possession of or access to firearms by the perpetrator; filing for separation/divorce by the victim or the break-up of the relationship; pregnancy; previous acts of violence; the prior issue of a restrictive measure; threats made by the perpetrator to take away common children; acts of sexual violence; threats to kill the victim and her children; threat of suicide; coercive and controlling behavior) constitute information indicating a risk of revictimization, in accordance with Annex B of the Prime Minister Decree of 24 November 2017, and are detected in the emergency room flow of the EMUR system, whose founding decree is being updated for the detection of information on violence against women, in implementation of Article 4 of Law No. 53 of 5 May 2022.

With regards to **Article 52 Emergency barring orders**, **Article 53 Restraining or protection orders**, **Article 56: Measures of protection**, reference is made to what has been stated above by the Ministry of Justice in terms of the regulatory interventions in criminal and civil matters, as well as to the statistical data provided in the above annexes.

Part III: Emerging trends on violence against women and domestic violence

The following is based on **ISTAT** data collection.

From the *Anti-Violence Center (CAV) User Survey*, there are 26,131 women in 2022 who have started a pathway out of violence with the help of the centers. They are increased over the years. Women who started their pathways out of violence together with an Anti-violence center during the year: 15,837 (2020); 19,592 (2021); 26,131 (2022).

For these women, the decision to embark on a pathway out of violence seems to come years after the beginning of the violence itself: for 41.3 percent of the women, more than five years have passed since the first episodes of violence suffered, for 33.5 percent from one to five years, for 13.5 percent from six months to one year, and only for 7.1 percent of the women the time elapsed between the violence suffered and the beginning of the pathway at the Centers is less than six months. Before starting the pathway with Centers, 43.5 percent of women turned to relatives for help, 31.9 percent to the Police and 28.4 percent went to the PS or hospital.

17.7% of women started the path out of violence in emergency situations, that is, a situation of danger or risk to their safety. Of these, 75% had been experiencing violence for more than one year and 38.3% for more than five years.

Data from the 1522 helpline

An important source of information about trends are data from the 1522, the Anti Violence and Anti Stalking Helpline. The national helpline 1522 against violence and stalking, made available by the Department for Equal Opportunities of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, represents a great support tool for victims of violence. In 2023, there were 51,713 valid calls, a significant increase compared to previous years (+59.5% compared to 2022). In 2020 there was a strong increase in valid calls (an increase of 48.8% compared to 2019) and in the following years the number of calls continued to rise compared to the same months of 2020, except for the lockdown period. The growth in calls in 2020 cannot unequivocally be attributed to the increase in violence due to the restrictive social and mobility measures imposed during the pandemic, given that at the same time extensive awareness campaigns against violence and stalking were carried out by the Department for Equal Opportunities of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers. The increase in contacts in 2023 compared to 2022 characterizes all quarters and is particularly accentuated, as every year, in correspondence with the last one, probably due to the great resonance of the International Day against Violence against Women on 25 November, when, under the push of the mass media and social media, citizens are more encouraged to turn to the service. In the fourth quarter of 2023, the increase was particularly evident, probably also due to the effects of the news events of the period on public opinion. People contact 1522 for requests for help as victims of violence or stalking (31.3% of requests), but also to ask for information on the service provided by the public utility number (33.5%) and to obtain information on the Centers Anti-violence (11.6%). Among 1522 users, the percentage of female callers is 79.7%. The violence reported to the 1522 operators is mainly violence within the couple: 52.6% from current partners (cohabiting or not), 22.1% from ex-partners and 0.6% from occasional partners.

DATA from Emergency room and Hospitalization

In 2022, women's accesses to the emergency room (ED) with an indication of violence totaled

14,448, up from the accesses recorded in 2021 (12,780, +13%). In 2020, while there was a sharp decline in emergency department (ED) accesses due to medical emergency (-39.8%), those with an indication of violence decreased with less intensity (-25.2%).

In 2022, accesses with an indication of violence are 4.9 accesses per 10,000 women, a figure that peaks among young women aged 18-34 (9.7 per 10,000), followed by adult women aged 35-49 (8.0 per 10,000).

In 2021, 60.3 percent of women with access to the Emergency Room for violence received a green code and 27.7 percent received a yellow code (indicating urgency and deferrable urgency). Compared to previous years, the share of yellow codes has increased significantly: in 2017 it was 12.8% and in 2020 25.1%. This is a result that is consistent with the provisions of the “National Guidelines for Health and Hospital Companies on Relief and Socio-Health Care for Women Subjected to Violence,” according to which, in cases of violence to women, at least a relative urgency coding (yellow code or equivalent) must be recognized so as to ensure a timely medical examination (usually within a maximum waiting time of 20 minutes) and minimize the risk of second thoughts or voluntary departure. In fact, not a few women leave the emergency room: in 4% of cases this happens before the medical examination or during the examination, while 3% leave the emergency room after the examination refusing admission to the hospital.

Regarding hospitalizations, data compiled from the analysis of hospital discharge records (SDOs) show an improvement in the ability to identify cases of violence by physicians and health care workers, as well as better quality in the data. This can be seen by the increased presence of violence-related information on primary and secondary diagnoses and “external cause” that allow the origin of hospitalization to be identified. In 2022, there were 1,196 routine hospitalizations of women with an indication of violence, 19.6 percent less than in 2019, referred to 1,093 women (0.4 per 10 thousand women): over a 12-month period, these women had more than one hospitalization attributable to the violence they experienced (on average 1.1). Female hospitalization attributable to violence is highest for minors and 18-34 year olds (0.59 and 0.65 routine hospitalizations per 10 thousand residents, respectively, compared with 0.40 for the total), is close to the average for adult women aged 35-49 years and is lowest after age 50.

The average stay in the hospital for hospitalizations, again with an indication of violence, is more prolonged for Italian women (6.9 days in the three-year period) than for foreign women (5.5 days), particularly from age 50 onward.

Analysis of the types of diagnoses of violence reported in the SDOs shows that, among female minors, the most frequent diagnoses of violence correspond to mistreatment (battered child syndrome, 36.6 percent in the three-year period 2020-2022), injuries inflicted by others (assault, rape, etc.) and parent-child problems (reported in 26.7 percent and 16.7 percent of the forms, respectively); among adults women, injuries inflicted by other people emerge (66.1 percent in the 2020-2022 three-year period), followed by maltreatment (physical, mental, sexual abuse and neglect).

d. Gender stereotypes and the social image of violence

Articles 12 and 14 of the Istanbul Convention focus attention on the essential role of gender stereotypes in reproducing the cultural matrix of violence. Istat conducted the first survey collecting stereotypes in 2018; the second edition is now underway, of which provisional data can be analysed. The first results show positive signs: stereotypes have decreased and, above all, greater awareness about violence is emerging, although there is still a long way to go to defeat prejudice, especially among younger people.

The 2023 data show less tolerance of physical violence in couples (2.3% of people think it is acceptable always or in some circumstances that “a guy slaps his girlfriend because she has

flirted/flirted with another man,” 4.3% that “in a couple a slap happens once in a while”). However, 10.2% of respondents, mostly young people (16.1%), say they still accept the man's control over their wife/partner's communication (cell phone and social).

53.6 percent of the population between the ages of 18 and 74 has at least one stereotype about gender roles; the value is higher for men and, compared to the first survey, decreasing especially among women. Stereotypes about sexual violence are also widespread, with 48.7 percent of the population adhering to at least one stereotype on this issue. 39.3 percent of men strongly or fairly agree that a woman can evade sexual intercourse if she really does not want to, and nearly 20 percent of men think violence is caused by the way women dress, percentages that among women stand at 29.7 percent and 14.6 percent, respectively. On the other hand, no differences in opinion between males and females emerge with regard to some situations: about 11 percent believe that a female victim of sexual violence when she is drunk or under the influence of drugs is at least partly responsible, and about 10 percent believe that if a woman after a party accepts an invitation from a man and is raped, it is also her fault.

Part IV: Administrative data and statistics

In relation to administrative data and statistics, reference is made to what already described in connection with the collection of data in the statistical findings.

LIST OF ANNEXES

1. Agreement to feed the gender-based violence database with judicial information flows
2. Decree of 22 February 2022 establishing the National Monitoring Centre for the Integration of Gender Equality Policies
3. Decree of 12 April 2022 establishing the National Monitoring Centre on the phenomenon of violence against women and domestic violence
4. Ministerial Decree 4 October 2022 establishing the permanent monitoring center on the effectiveness of gender and domestic violence legislation
5. Questionnaire Good Practices on Gender and Domestic Violence Juvenile Prosecution,
6. Questionnaire Good Practices on Gender and Domestic Violence Ordinary Prosecution Offices
7. CSM Statistical data civil proceedings on gender and domestic violence
8. Statistics duration and outcome code protection measures
9. Regulatory Observatory Sources Collection
10. Monitoring Centre anti-violence brochure
11. Second national survey on CUAV
12. National-Strategic-Plan-on-male-violence-against-women-2021-2023
13. DECRETO 29 marzo 2022 & DECRETO 12 aprile 2022 (Decrees of the Minister for Equal Opportunities and Family Affairs pro tempore: on the Steering Committee, March 29, 2022, and on the Observatory, April 12, 2022)
14. INTESA 14 SETTEMBRE 2022 CAV-CR (Agreement State – Regions on Anti-violence Centers & Shelters)
15. INTESA 14 SETTEMBRE 2022 CUAV (Agreement State – Regions on Centers for perpetrators)