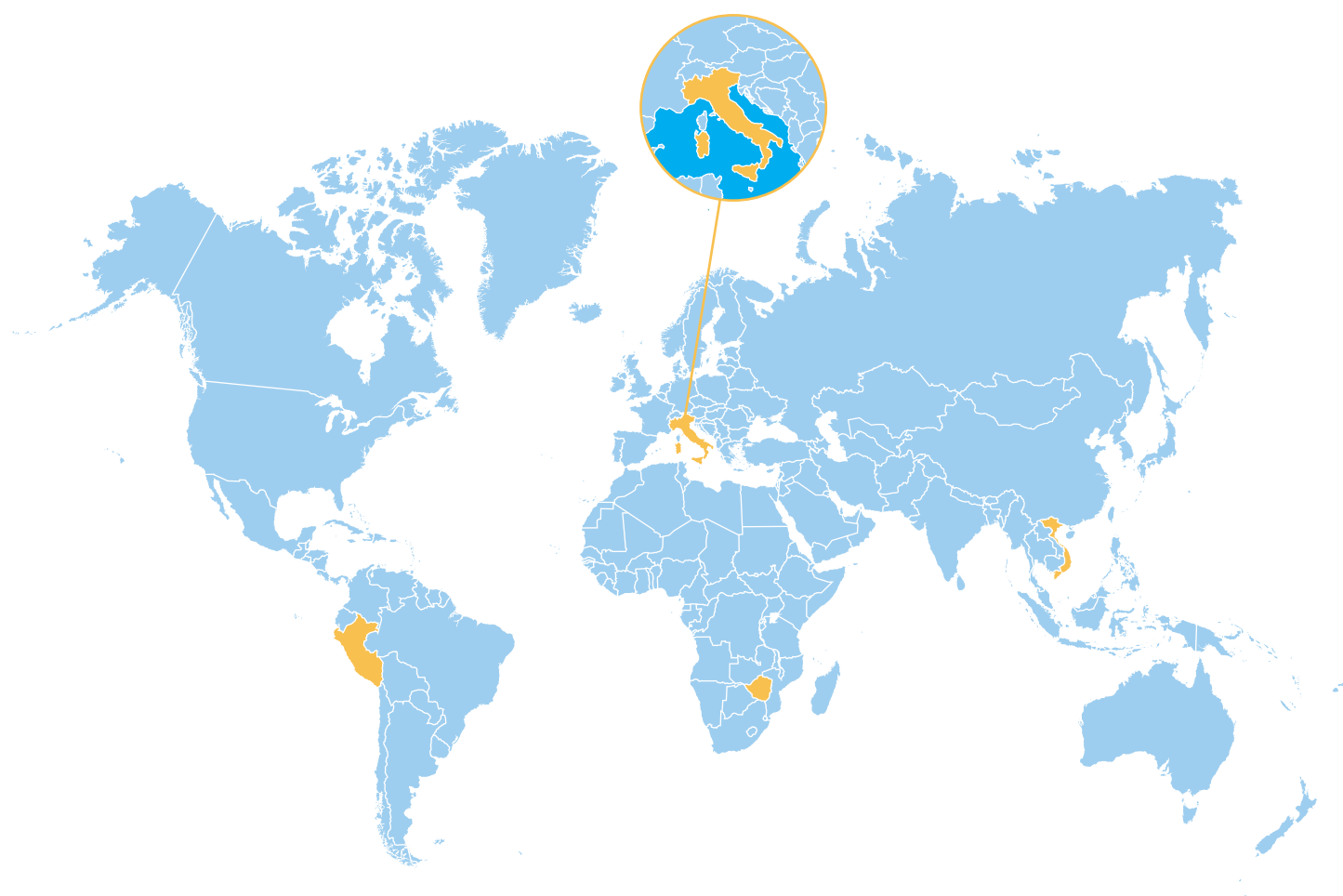




MULTI-COUNTRY STUDY ON THE DRIVERS OF VIOLENCE AFFECTING CHILDREN

Italian Report



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Executive Summary

Violence affecting children is prevalent in all societies – high, middle and low income – yet, the evidence base to support effective interventions remains weak. The Multi Country Study on the Drivers of Violence Affecting Children – coordinated by **Unicef Innocenti Office of Research** with the technical support of the University of Edinburgh and carried out for Italy by the **Istituto degli Innocenti** - stands at the intersection of evidence, policy and practice. Central to the study is the link between generating quality research, translating that into evidence, and turning evidence into effective and meaningful interventions. The four focus countries are Zimbabwe, Viet Nam, Peru and Italy. They have been selected for geographic and socioeconomic diversity, as well as the presence of quantitative data sets on violence affecting children and governments committed to violence prevention. Italy joins the study representing southern Europe as a high-income country. Participation in the study marks the Government of Italy's commitment to reducing and preventing violence, a mission shared within different ministries involved.

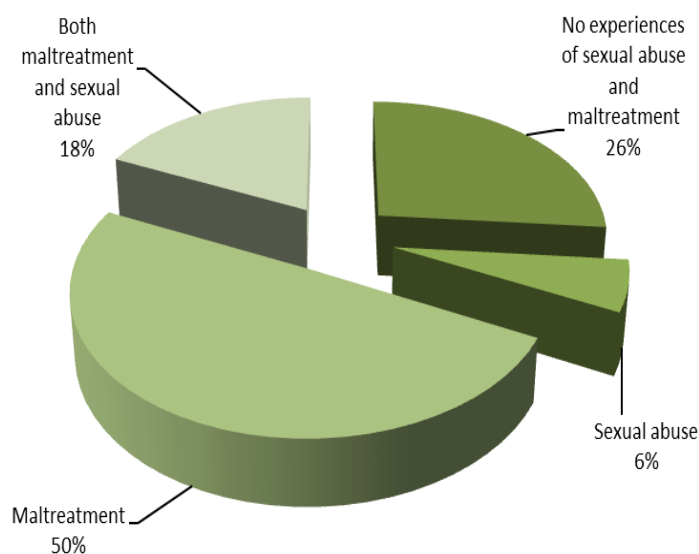
1. Data on Violence affecting Children in Italy

Evidence available in Italy, though limited, indicates that violence affecting children is a widespread phenomenon. Collecting data on an issue still shrouded in social taboos makes the subject of violence a particularly challenging research topic. In Italy, some important research efforts, even with their limitations, have been completed providing a peek into what appears to be significant trends. We include here the results of the two most significant surveys on the prevalence of violence against children the first from a retrospective study asking women about childhood experiences and the other capturing the types of abuse experienced by children taken care of by the social services due to maltreatment.

- a) The nationally representative survey *Vite in Bilico* (Bianchi and Moretti, 2006), a retrospective study of women between 19 and 60 years of age (n=2320) investigates the experiences of violence by women when they were minors. Data presented below, in Figure 1., provides estimates on the prevalence of violence and maltreatment among the Italian female child population. In this study sexual abuse¹ and maltreatment² were measured. Study results show that fewer than one-third (26%) of women reported never having suffered sexual abuse or maltreatment. One half of all women interviewed suffered from some form of maltreatment, 6 percent from sexual abuse only and poly-victimization (suffering from both or multiple types of abuse) was reported at 18 percent.

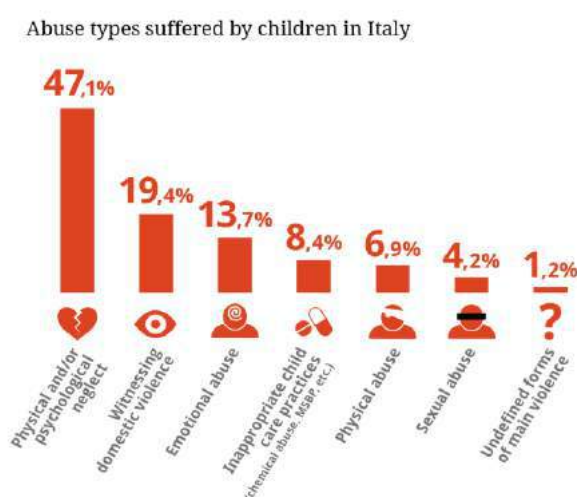
¹ The survey includes the following types of sexual abuse: exhibitionism; verbal harassment; exposure to child pornography; touching and acts of masturbation; attempted penetration; penetration

² This includes physical abuse identified by behaviors such as recurring physical punishment; beatings with objects, hair pulling or violent jerks; beatings with trauma. Psychological abuse identified as: criticizing or devaluing ironies. Material neglect: medical assistance was not sought in case of illness; inadequate clothing for the season, no supervision on eating. Emotional neglect: parents' lack of support and attention concerning children's school activities; no accompanying during falling asleep; no play time between parent and child; entrusting children to outsiders or very old people. Witnessing Violence)

Figure 1. Prevalence of violence, retrospectively, among women 19 to 60 years of age

Source: *Vite in Bilico* (2006)

- b) The national survey on child maltreatment carried out by the **Italian Network of Agencies against Child Abuse (CISMAI)** and **Terre des Hommes Italy (2015)** with the support of the Children's Ombudsman of Italy (National Authority for Children and Adolescents) provides administrative data from a total of 2,4 million children (25% of the total Italian child population) in 231 municipalities throughout Italy. Percentages below represent those children who reported violence and were treated through available social services –children taken care of by social services due to maltreatment.

Figure 2. Types of abuse reported by children taken care of by social services in 231 municipalities

Source: National Survey on Child Maltreatment (2015)

Moreover, the 2015 ISTAT survey on violence against women (Istat, 2015) sampled 24,761 women aged 17-70, and found that 10.6% of Italian women have experienced sexual violence before the age of 16. Different studies show that the great majority of perpetrators of child abuse are family members and well known trusted people such as teachers, neighbours and family friends (the National Survey *Vite in Bilico* by Bianchi and Moretti, 2006; the analysis of case sentences involving children by the Department of Juvenile Justice, 2012; the analysis of the status of implementation of law 269/98 by the Italian National Childhood and Adolescence Documentation and Analysis Centre for the year 2001 and 2002; the qualitative study by Zomero 2002).

2. Drivers

We provide here below a summary of the most relevant drivers emerging from a systematic literature review, secondary data analysis of the research *Vite in bilico* (Bianchi and Moretti, 2006) and evaluated interventions mapping. By using the concept of ‘drivers’ we refer to the wider context that may lead to violence and the idea that there are many community and society-level factors that may contribute to causing or preventing violence against children. Taken together the analysis indicates that there are multiple factors at play; these are preliminary hypotheses that will need further exploration with applied field research on social norms.

The main themes on the drivers of violence emerging from the research at the individual level focused mainly on risk factors for victimization including previous experiences of violence, psychological distress and other health problems and lack of education and skills for protection. The drivers at the interpersonal level that were identified in the research focused mainly on relationships within families and schools including parental relationships, parenting skills, family stress, school stressors and parenting and family norms around communication. At the institutional and community level, the main drivers of violence identified through the research focused on family isolation and institutional factors related to school governance. At the structural level, inequalities based on socio-economic status and migration emerged as potential drivers as well as efficient and embedded structures linked with organized crime and the perpetuation of commercial sexual exploitation.

These overarching themes revealed several specific findings, which emerged from the synthesis of the systematic review and secondary analysis data on the drivers of violence affecting children. They are presented here by typology of violence, places of violence and relationships.

Sexual Violence

- Psychological manipulation within unequal power relations of children trusting older figures
- Witnessing violence and previous experiences of (sexual) abuse
- Absence of family for child migrants
- Invisibility of trafficking victims

Physical Violence

- Quality of the couple relationship, lack of emotional support, parental anger, and impulsiveness
- Stressors at the household levels such as the combination of low income, health problems and problematic children (premature and/or in poor health conditions) (see also the section “violence in the home”)
- Witnessing violence and previous experiences of abuse

Violence in the home

- Families characterized by social isolation, family norms around silence and blame, humiliation within family, witnessing domestic violence (See also the section “emotional violence”)
- Parental stress linked to separation issues
- Sources of fragility in family functioning such as physical disability and psychological ill-being, financial poverty (see also the section “physical violence”)

Violence in the school

- Lower education levels, as determined by grade attainment and poor social skills development are risk factors for children to develop abusive behaviors
- Teachers’ previous experiences of violence in school when they were children and teachers’ unfair behaviour
- Quality of the relationship with teachers and parents (children who received an authoritarian education are more likely involved in bullying)
- Social environment: children who live in deprived areas are more likely victims of bullying

Violence in the Community (including on-line)

- Demand for sex workers and child pornographic material; existence of efficient organizations
- Social ambitions linked to relationships with sex traffickers influencing girls’ decisions to engage with the sex market and emotional attachment to trafficking agents
- Parents supervision of children’s internet use, limited knowledge of computer skills
- Lack of awareness by children of the risks of on-line behaviors

Parents – children relationship

- Psychological distress affecting parenting skills
- Parents difficulty in recognizing risk behaviors and effective strategies to fight bullying

Mothers – children relationship

- Stress and (mental) health, medical interventions and persistent post traumatic stress disorders (PTSD) symptoms as risk factors for emotional violence and neglect
- Mother’s socioeconomic (in)dependence
- Weak attachment bonds between children and mothers

Fathers – children relationship

- Italian fathers appear to believe in the positive value of physical punishment more often than Italian mothers (See also the section “physical violence”)

Age and gender

- Younger children and adolescents (ages 7-14 years) appear more vulnerable to sexual violence (see section on age and gender in the report)
- Bullying is most prevalent among young adolescents (11 for boys and 13 girls) and appears to decrease with age
- Girls are significantly more likely to be sexually abused than boys, while boys are more likely to be physically punished
- Girls are more heavily caught up in unequal power relations
- Perpetrators of sexual violence (adults and children) are almost exclusively male.

Ethnicity

- Mobility of migrants within a condition of social marginalization
- Families of foreign nationalities may have weaker social networks

3. Prevention Interventions' Mapping

In Italy the welfare system for children and families is embedded in municipalities and health units which ensure services for the prevention and treatment of violence against children. In addition to basic services, a series of projects and interventions are carried out through public and private funding by associations on their own or in partnership with the public sector. The report provides a mapping of the latter type of interventions and takes into consideration:

- Public bodies carrying out projects at national level (e.g. national Ministries such as the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies; the Ministry for Education; the Ministry for Health; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the Postal and Communication Police)
- Public bodies or associations carrying out projects at local level through public funds (notably, we included projects included in the reports on the state of implementation of law 269/98; projects funded through the law 285/97 which provides funding to 15 cities for different typologies of projects/interventions including violence prevention; project funded through the public notice of the Department of Equal Opportunities specifically dedicated to the prevention of violence against children);
- The most relevant associations/NGOs working in the field of protection and promotion of children's rights
- Some EU funded projects

The mapping of interventions focused on prevention of violence against children cannot be considered as exhaustive. It does, however, represent a significant overview of the violence prevention interventions in the public and private sectors.

In total, 90 interventions were reviewed many of which included multiple types of intervention. As regards the **typology of interventions**, the most common one was that of **awareness-raising** about violence against children (48 interventions) followed by **violence prevention interventions in schools** addressed to children and/or teachers (44), **parenting programs** and support (22), home visitation (14), **training** addressed to professionals working with children (13).

Definitions

What is violence against children?

Here we provide a glossary of terms used in the report juxtaposed next to national definitions as interpreted by the law and or related children's policies.

<p>Violence Against Children</p> <p><i>National definition</i></p>	<p>The UN defines violence against children in line with article 19 of the CRC: “all forms of physical or mental violence, injury and abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse.”</p> <p>In Italy, on a regulatory level, there is no specific definition of ‘violence against children’, but the different violent behaviors (physical and psychological, injury and abuse, negligence, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse) are punishable under the provisions of the Penal Code.</p> <p>Generally, the crimes set forth by the Italian Criminal Code relate to individuals and therefore also apply in cases where the victim is minor. In cases such as: incest, violation of the family care obligations, maltreatment against family and relatives, instigation or assisted suicide, female genital mutilation, purchase or sale of slaves, kidnapping, sexual violence and stalking, the crimes are aggravated because of the age of the victim.</p>
<p>Physical abuse</p> <p><i>National definition</i></p>	<p>That which results in actual or potential physical harm from an interaction or lack of an interaction, which is reasonably within the control of a parent or person in a position of responsibility, power or trust. There may be single or repeated incidents.</p> <p>Physical abuse of a child is punishable by the Italian Criminal Code through a set of provisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abuse of means of correcting (art. 571), • Maltreatment against family and relatives (art. 572), • Infanticide in terms of material and moral neglect (art. 578), • Instigation or assisted suicide (art. 580), • Beatings (art. 581), • Injuries (art. 582 e 583), • Practice of mutilation of the female genitals (art. 583 bis), • Domestic violence (art. 610).

<p>Physical abuse</p> <p><i>National definition</i></p>	<p>The Italian Criminal Code contains the following definitions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal injury (art. 582): that which results in an illness of the body or the mind. • Genital Mutilation (art. 583 bis): clitoridectomy, excision and infibulation and any other practice that which causes similar effects. <p>The document ‘National survey on abuse of children and adolescents in Italy’ contains the following definition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical abuse: presence of physical injury due to physical aggression, maltreatment, physical punishment or serious attacks to the child’s physical integrity and life. <p>On the website of the Observatory for the Fight against Pedophilia and Child Pornography, we can read instead that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hitting, beating, kicking, shaking, biting, strangling, scalding, suffocating and cutting are some of the actions committed by those who use physical strength against a child. • Generally, physical harassment results in noticeable bodily bruising like: bites, burns, scratches, wounds, fracture and difficulties in sitting, doing physical/play activities and walking.
<p>Sexual Abuse</p> <p><i>National definition</i></p>	<p>Child sexual abuse is the involvement of a child in sexual activity that he or she does not fully comprehend, is unable to give informed consent to, or for which the child is not developmentally prepared and cannot give consent, or that violate the laws or social taboos of society. Child sexual abuse is evidenced by this activity between a child and an adult or another child who by age or development is in a relationship of responsibility, trust or power, the activity being intended to gratify or satisfy the needs of the other person.</p> <p>The Italian Criminal Code contains the following definitions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual violence (art. 609 bis): constraint to perform or endure sexual acts, with violence or threats or by abuse of authority • Corruption of minors (art. 609 quinquies): perform sexual acts in the presence of a child under the age of 14 in order to force he or she to attend the scene or to involve him or she in the sexual acts. It can also be about showing the child under the age of 14 pornographic materials in order to incite he or she to perform or endure sexual acts. • Enticement of children (art. 609 udecies): any act intended to retain the confidence of a child by means of artifices, blandishments or threats also via the use of the Internet or other networks and means of communication. <p>Child pornography (art. 600 ter):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any visual representation, by any means, of a child under the age of 18 engaged in explicit sexual conduct, whether real or simulated

Sexual Abuse***National definition***

- Any representation of the sexual organs of a child under the age of 18 for sexual purposes
- Virtual Images (600 quater.1): images which have been obtained by means of graphic elaboration techniques that are not entirely or partly associated with real situations, but whose quality of representation renders fictitious situations realistic.

The document 'National survey on abuse of children and adolescents in Italy' contains the following definition:

Sexual abuse:

- Involvement of a child in sexual acts, with or without physical contact, in which the child cannot freely provide his consent due to the child's and the abuser's superiority
- Sexual exploitation of a child or adolescent
- Child prostitution
- All the different forms of child pornography.

Emotional abuse***National definition***

Emotional abuse involves the failure to provide a developmentally appropriate, supportive environment, including the availability of a primary attachment figure, so that the child can develop a stable and full range of emotional and social competencies commensurate with her or his personal potentials and in the context of the society in which the child dwells. There may also be acts towards the child that cause or have a high probability of causing harm to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. These acts must be reasonably within the control of the parent or person in a relationship of responsibility, trust or power. Acts include restriction of movement, patterns of belittling, denigrating, scapegoating, threatening, scaring, discriminating, ridiculing or other non-physical forms of hostile or rejecting treatment.

In Italy, on a regulatory level there is no specific definition of emotional abuse or witnessing violence to the damage of minors. The case law, prompted by international documents, recognizes the latter within the crime of maltreatment (art.572) or domestic violence (art. 610). The crime of personal injuries (art. 582) also punishes 'behaviors' that cause an illness of the body or the mind; therefore this rule could be in some cases be regarded as applying to cases of 'emotional abuse'.

The Criminal Code contains the following definitions that characterize a behavior potentially attributable to the concept of 'emotional abuse':

- Breach of the obligations of family care (art. 570): abandoning the home, evading the obligation of assistance relating to parental responsibility, waste the money and assets of the child, depriving a child of his/her legitimate livelihood.

Emotional abuse***National definition***

Persecution acts (art. 612 bis):

- Threatening and/or harassing such as to cause a severe state of anxiety and fear persisting over a prolonged period.
- Giving rise to a well-founded fear for the personal safety or for a next of kin.
- Forcing the victim to alter their habits and lifestyle.

The document 'National survey on abuse of children and adolescents in Italy' contains the following definitions:

- Emotional abuse: emotional relationship characterized by repeated and continuous psychological pressure, emotional blackmail, indifference, refusal, denigration and disparagement, which damages or inhibits the development of the child's fundamental cognitive-emotional capacities, such as intelligence, attention, perception and memory.
- Physical and psychological negligence: serious and/or continuous failure to provide care toward the child, or failure to provide proper education in areas that are of importance for the child, which result in significant damage for the health or for the development and/or results in an impaired growth.
- Inappropriate child care practices: failure to provide appropriate care according to the age, the development and the physical and/or psychic needs of the child, (hypocure, in case of carelessness; hypercure, in case of excessive care).

The CISMAI (Italian Coordination of the Services against child maltreatment and abuse) gives the following definitions:

- Witnessing violence: 'Minors witnessing domestic violence' is defined as a child having experience of any kind of ill-treatment (actions of physical, verbal, psychological, sexual and economic violence) committed on key figures, or other adults or children affectively significant to the child. The child may experience it directly (when it happens in his/her perceptual field) or indirectly (when the child is aware of the violence) and/or perceiving the effects. This definition includes violence by minors on other minors and/or family members as well as maltreatment and abandoning of pets.

The Observatory for the fight against pedophilia and child pornography define:

- Witnessing domestic violence is a form of domestic violence that is to force a child to watch (hence the term 'witnessing') scenes of aggression, verbal, physical or sexual abuse between people who are for him a point of reference or of people affectively significant to the child, whether adult or minor. The witnessed violence, insofar as emotional abuse, involves emotional, cognitive, physical and relational effects. Although there is no linear correlation between witnessing violence and the occurrence of clinical outcomes, harmful consequences caused by abuse and violence, occur very often, even in cases where the child does not immediately manifest symptoms.

Neglect <i>National definition</i>	<p>The document ‘National survey on abuse of children and adolescents in Italy’ contains the following definition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical and/or emotional neglect: serious and/or continuous failure to provide care toward the child, or failure to provide proper education in areas that are of importance for the child, which result in significant damage for the health or for the development and/or results in an impaired growth.
Family <i>National definition</i>	<p>Family is defined differently around the world and can refer to mother/father and extended family children or it can even extend to the community. Thus national setting is important to help contextualize the setting within which perpetration of violence take place and prevention strategies are to target.</p> <p>The Italian Constitution, in Title II of Part I devoted to ethical and social relationship, (art. 29) defines the family as a natural society founded on marriage. Marriage is based on the moral and legal equality of the spouses within the limits laid down by law to guarantee the unity of the family.</p> <p>Law 76/2016 regulates civil unions and domestic partnerships.</p> <p>Even those that constitute a de facto family outside of wedlock, have the same obligations and responsibilities towards their children: the rules of family law. In recent years, those rules have been reformulated and implemented, aimed at developing a new conception of the relationship between parents and children, in which the ‘parental responsibility’ is no longer a right but a real duty, a responsibility, geared to promoting the development of the personality of the child. Regardless of being born within a marriage, the child has the same rights toward his parents.</p> <p>Regarding the issue of violence against children, civil law provides a series of measures that the Juvenile Court may adopt when parents perform detrimental acts to their children (art. 330 to 333 c.c.). At the same time, the public authorities may remove, in case of emergency, a child who is under risk (art. 403. Intervention by the public authorities in favor of children.)</p>
Drivers of Violence	<p>The concept of ‘drivers’ is being adopted more frequently in the international child protection research field than the terms ‘risk and protective factors’ or ‘vulnerabilities and resilience’. This is in part due to the recognition that there are many community and society-level factors that may contribute to causing or preventing violence against children and also in part due to the language not wanting to be interpreted as something inherent only to a child or family that causes violence but understanding the wider context and that particular risk and protective factors often interact creating ‘drivers’ of violence.</p>

1. Introduction - The Multi-Country Study

The Multi-Country Study on the Drivers of Violence Affecting Children, is a four-year action-research project to be carried out by the UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti with the Istituto degli Innocenti in Italy and with UNICEF Country Offices in Peru, Vietnam and Zimbabwe in collaboration with the University of Edinburgh as the academic partner. The study seeks to increase understanding of what drives violence affecting children and how best to address it.

Violence-related vulnerability evolves in complex socioeconomic and cultural contexts. This research analyses how structural, institutional, community and individual factors interact to affect violence in children's lives and identifies causal pathways to better inform national strategies for prevention. It places age and gender at its center focusing on girls and boys at different stages of the life course, from the very young to older adolescents.

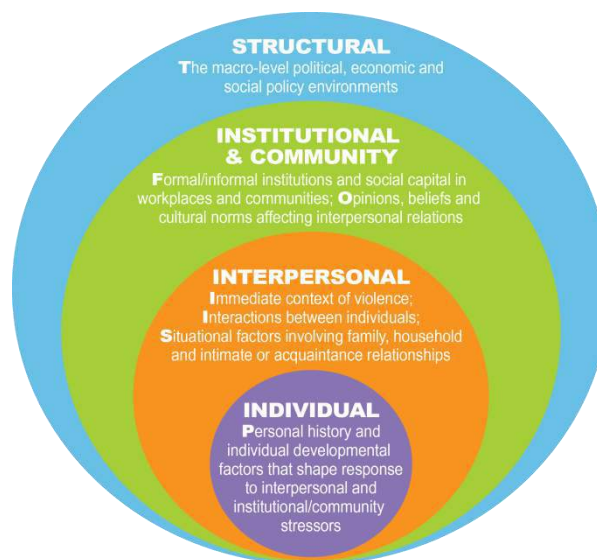
A cornerstone of this study is to connect disparate pieces of quality research and effectively translate the synthesis of these findings into evidence that can inform more meaningful interventions to protect children. Outcomes occur at all stages—and therefore findings can be used to inform child protection planning, practice and policy on a continual basis in a positive and reinforcing feedback loop.

The study employs two different frameworks, which taken together are likely to help explain how violence manifests both throughout different levels of society and throughout the span of childhood from infancy to 18 years of age.

A recent UNICEF synthesis of child protection evaluations suggest that effective programmes most often used an 'ecological' framework to understand the effects and intersections of the *macro or structural level* (socio-economic and political), the *interpersonal level* (children's relationships with their parents, peers and community members) and the needs of vulnerable and marginalized children at the *individual level*.³ Critical and yet missing from this framework is the *institutional level*. Ideally, a comprehensive response system includes health, criminal justice, and social service institutions addressing the needs of victims and formulating and implementing prevention strategies.

The success of violence prevention efforts depends to a substantial degree on the ability of the informal and formal sectors to work together through *community* and state-enforced institutions. The role *communities* play in upholding (or eliminating) norms around violence is important and must be studied to explain how change occurs. Proposed here is a general framework to guide the work across cultures and settings. The model (see Figure 1) pays attention to the holistic development of children and will be elaborated as the research unfolds.

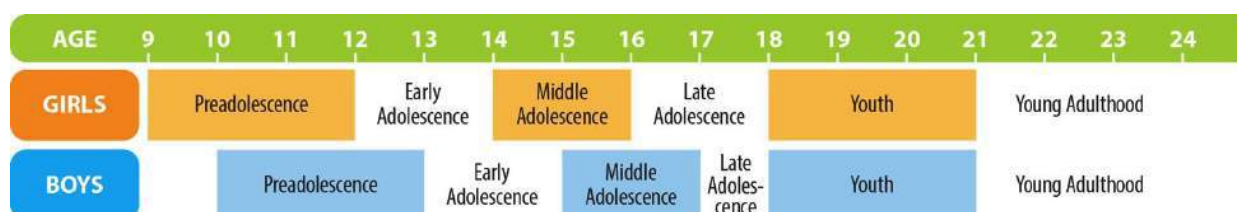
³ Protecting Children From Violence: A synthesis of evaluation findings, Summary, Evaluation Office, June 2012.

Figure 3. The socio-ecological framework

Using a socio-ecological perspective, the multi-country study begins with a focus on the systemic and contextual factors that render children vulnerable to violence. The ensuing multi-level analysis builds a framework for directing interventions. It demonstrates how critical protective and/or risk factors for interpersonal violence interact at the household, community, institutional and national levels, shedding light on what is needed to reduce violence. In doing this, the research explores the interaction of family/group and community level characteristics with children.

The second framework employed in this study captures how children share common developmental milestones, but are far from homogenous and face diverse challenges. The research looks at children along the lifecycle, acknowledging differences by age and gender.⁴ While it is understood that definitions of childhood may vary regionally, nationally and even locally—the biological and physiological changes that accompany a child’s general development are fairly consistent worldwide. For this study, we employ a now accepted and comprehensive model of adolescent development (see Figure 4.) that attends to different theories and research findings on the impact of environment, neuro-psychological functioning and information processing.

⁴ The life cycle approach is adapted from a PAHO approach found in Chong, E. Hallman, K. and Brady, M. 2006. *Investing When it Counts: Generating the evidence based for politics and programmes for very young adolescents*. The Population Council and UNFPA, New York, NY.

Figure 4. The stages of adolescence (PAHO classification)

Age and gender are both extremely significant meta-factors, the implications of which will differ in different contexts. This approach acknowledges that opportunities and risk factors that are in turn dependent on not only differing political economies, as noted above but also on children's evolving capacities and they move through childhood. In the end, interventions must address all of these complexities.

The study consists of three inter-related stages: 1) Grounding the Programme, 2) Applied Research and Intervention Development and 3) Interventions Testing. Each is a logical component with a distinct set of objectives, activities and milestones that feed the main outcomes and outputs of the study. Each is intended to feed back into both country programming nationally and emerging global evidence base on violence prevention.

In this national report for Italy, we provide the results of Stage 1—Grounding the Programme.





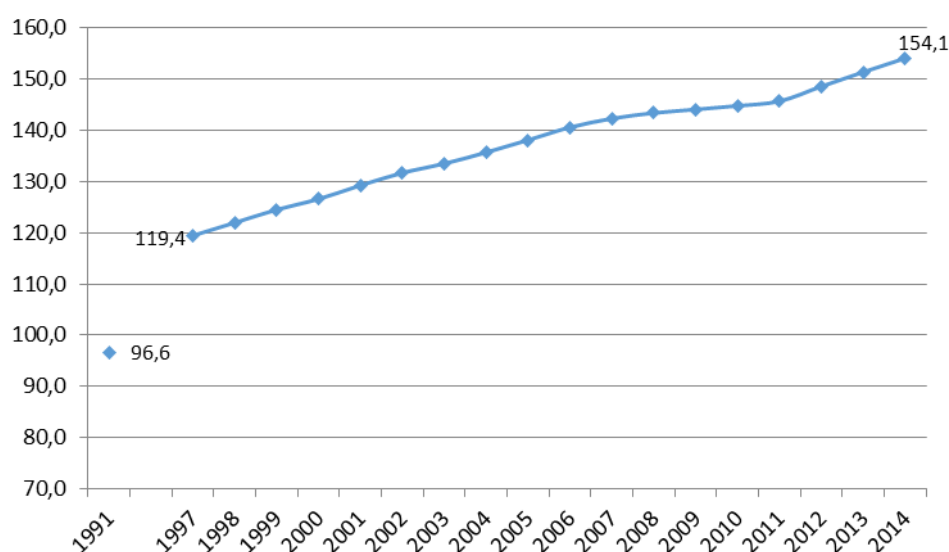
2. The Political Economy of Italy—Issues unique to Italy

Italy today: General characteristics of the population

On 1 January 2015 Italy had a population of 60,795,612, of which 48.5% male and 51.5% female. The North is the area with the most residents, with a percentage of 45.7; 19.9% of the population lived in the Centre and 34.4% in the South. There were 10,096,165 minors under 18 – corresponding to 16.6% of the overall population, which is one of the lowest at European level – of which 51.5% male and 48.5% female.

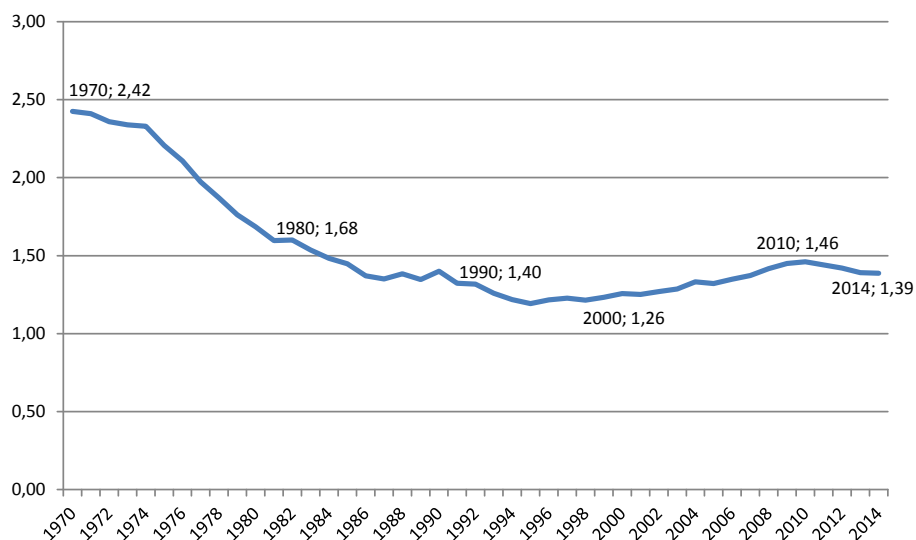
Until the end of 2014 the ageing trend continued. In fact, on 1 January 2015, the ratio of people older than 65 to people younger than 15 increased to 157.7%, while in 1991 it was equal to 96.6%. When comparing global statistics, Italy is one of the European states where the population is ageing most rapidly. This trend affects all Italian regions, but it is stronger in the North and in the Centre.

Figure 5. Ratio of people older than 65 to people younger than 15. Years 1991, 1997-2014



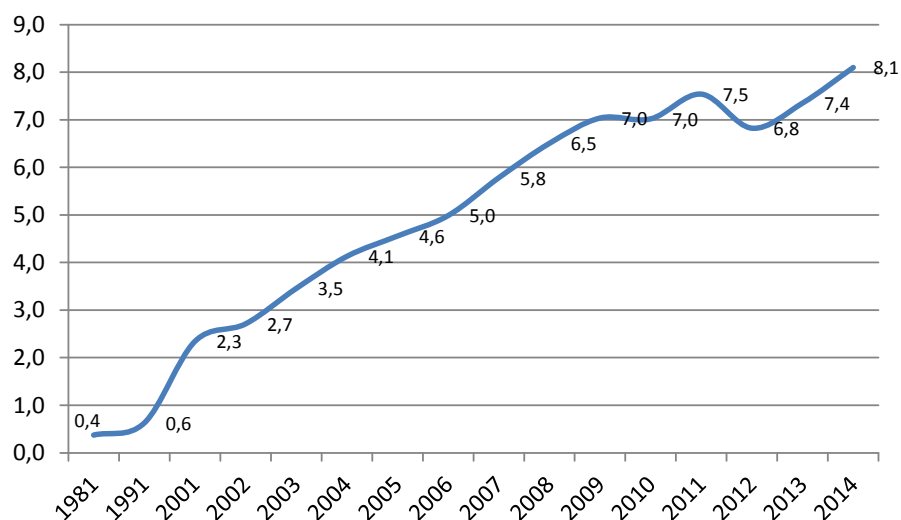
Source: Istat, 2015

In 2014 there were 509,000 new born, 5,000 less than in 2013. **This is the lowest level since the Italian unification in 1860.** The average age of giving birth has risen to 31.5 years. In Italy, **the average number of children per woman dropped from 1.4 in 1990 to 1.27 (largely below the replacement rate) in 2002; in 2014 it rose slightly to 1.39**, due in part to immigrant women (1.97 children for woman). At an international level, Italy is still one of the least prolific countries in the world. The fertility rate began to fall in the late 1970s, not only because of the higher **number of women who do not have children at all**, but also because they now begin to have children later.

Figure 6. Total fertility rate, year 1970-2014

Source: Istat, 2015

As regards foreign population⁵, on 1 January 2014 there were 4,922,085 registered foreign residents. Migration flows continue to grow, but also more illegal immigrants have become legal residents. The incidence of the foreign population on the overall population is now equal to 8.1%.

Figure 7. Percentage of foreign population (date of reference: 1 January)

Source: Istat, 2015

⁵ Registered foreign residents includes all those who do not have Italian citizenships (including other EU nationals) that are regularly registered as residents.

The foreign population is mainly concentrated in the Northwest (34.6% of foreigners) and in the Northeast (25.5%), even if in the last period Southern Regions, especially Sicily, have hosted a growing number of migrants and asylum seekers arriving by boat from the Southern coast of the Mediterranean. The analysis of age groups highlights that the foreign population is generally younger. More than half of all immigrants are aged 18-43 (51.9%) and more than one in five are under age (22.0%).

Italy has constantly attracted migration flows since the 1970s, however, only in the last decade has children's ethnic minority status been recorded in official statistics. The most interesting statistic is not only the total number of foreign pupils now attending Italian schools, but the rate at which their presence is growing every year. In the last 14 years the presence of foreign pupils has increased (from 196,414 in 2001 to 802,844 units in 2014). This is due to two main factors: 1) foreign children who were born in Italy begin to attend primary and secondary schools; 2) older children and adolescents who have reunited with their families now begin to attend high school. The Ministry of Education has approved specific policies aimed not only at the integration of foreign students but also at the promotion of intercultural education and antiracism. In particular, in 2014 the Ministry of Education has approved the guidelines for intercultural education which in turn refers to the document "The Italian way to school intercultural integration of foreign students" drafted in 2007 by the National Observatory for the integration of foreign students and for intercultural education. The document refers both to the actions on integration specifically directed at foreign students and their families (e.g. integration into the school, learning of Italian as a second language, the promotion of multilingualism, the relationship with foreign families) as well as actions for intercultural education addressed to all school actors (e.g. actions relating to discrimination and prejudice, the promotion of an intercultural perspective in the curricula).

In this framework, it is important to mention the phenomenon of unaccompanied foreign children. According to the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, at the date of 30th April 2016 there were 11,648 unaccompanied foreign children in Italy which corresponds to a rise of 41% in relation to the same date in 2015. Most of them are male adolescents (56% are 17 years old, while only 7.3% are under 15). Male children is 95% of the total. The most represented nationalities are Egypt (20.9%) and Albania (12.5%) followed by countries of Central Africa (Gambia, Eritrea, Nigeria and Somalia).

Unaccompanied foreign children identified at reception centers are typically assigned to group housing with about 5-10 children, and enrolled in vocational schools. However, some of them leave in order to look for a job or to join relatives in other European countries. For this reason, it is feared that some may become vulnerable to involvement with criminal organisations and are at risk of sexual and other forms of exploitation. At the date of 30th April 2016, 5,099 unaccompanied foreign children were irretraceable and most of them were Somali (23.5%), Egyptian (23.3%) and Eritreans (21.1%).

Important reforms in the system of reception of unaccompanied foreign children have recently been approved and others are under discussion. In 2014 the government established a plan to address the influx of migrants, with specific attention to unaccompanied foreign children. The number of specialized reception centres will be increased and the information systems for tracking children will be improved (Ministry of Labour & Social Policy, 2015). Moreover, there is a bill in Parliament n. 1658 on unaccompanied foreign children that contains important reforms in the reception system including: the reception of unaccompanied foreign children in the reception system of asylum seekers (this specific point has already been implemented); the identification of the child must take place within 5 days; a specific information system to trace minors; the promotion of family foster care through the creation of list of people properly trained; the appointment of appropriately trained guardians; specific measures

for children victims of trafficking; measures of support and integration when the minor reaches 18 years; the creation of a specific fund.

Families and children

The Italian family has undergone a radical process of change, concerning both its structure and the relations among its members: different relationships between men and women due to the improved condition of women; lower number of marriages; growing instability of the marriage tie and increased social acceptance of couples living together without being married; diffusion of homosexual couples and families with homosexual parents. As a consequence, there is now a broader variety of family models all over Italy. In particular, live-in partners (7% of the overall number of couples) and reconstituted families (6%) – i.e., formed after the breaking off of the previous marriage of at least one of the two partners – represent an emerging phenomenon, even if not at the same levels as in other Western countries. The structure and the type of families vary considerably across the nation: in the North and in the Centre the share of couples having only one child is much higher than in the South. In particular, it is in the South that the percentage of singles is lowest and that the percentage of couples having children is highest, whereas in the Northwest there is the highest share of singles, of single-parent families and of couples without children.

The increased presence of foreigners over the years has also favoured the formation of ‘mixed’ couples, in which one spouse is Italian and the other is a foreigner. In fact, the percentage of marriages with at least one foreign spouse increased from just 4.8% in 1995 to 12% in 2013.

Furthermore, marriages now tend to be shorter and the rate of separation or divorce has increased sharply in the past 20 years. Since 1995, separations have risen by 68% and divorces by 87%. The instability of marriage likely has a significant impact on minors, given that most of the couples that separate or divorce have children. In 2012, 87,717 minors were involved in cases of separations or divorces.

Besides the increased instability of family ties, minors are now experiencing growing isolation, due to the fact that more and more children have no siblings and that, as a consequence, even the number of cousins is decreasing.

Briefly, the youngest generations are influenced by the following demographic and social developments:

- lower birth rate;
- on average, both men and women get married at an older age;
- couples now have children later;
- smaller average family size;
- higher number of couples having no children;
- lower number of couples having children;
- higher number of single-parent families;
- weakening of relations with relatives;
- increase in separations and divorces;
- slight yet significant increase in the number of children born from unmarried couples;
- growing tendency of young people to remain with their families well beyond the average age at which people get married;
- growing number of so-called “second generation” of migrants.

In the medium-long term, the structural and cultural changes occurring in the Italian families have a great influence on the society overall, which can be summarized in the following main points:

- a) **Generational imbalance.** The progressive reduction in cohorts of newborns means that children are now more likely to grow up without siblings and cousins, i.e. without horizontal family ties. On the other hand, the vertical ties (with grandparents and great-grandparents) are more easily interrupted, due to separations or divorces, or more onerous because of the longer life expectancy. They are characterised by a growing age difference between parents and children.
- b) **Fragmentation of the social fabric.** The weakening of primary family ties implies further isolation of families and the emergence of renewed individualism in the anonymous metropolitan areas.
- c) **Growing number of immigrant children.** The growing presence of migrants and in particular of so-called 'second generation' of migrants leads first of all to the creation of a multicultural society. Secondly, it contributes to reduce the ageing of the Italian population. Thirdly, it has an important impact on the school system that has to take into consideration the specific linguistic, cultural and religious needs of these children.

Socioeconomic conditions

We provide here some data about socio-economic conditions in Italy. The socio-ecological model diagram, used in this study, emphasises the importance of the structural level on the other levels indicated.

Low productivity growth characterizes Italy's macroeconomic imbalances with very high level of public debt and the weak external competitiveness. Italy's real GDP has fallen to the early 2000s levels, while the euro area GDP is more than 10% higher. (Istat data)

Social and regional disparities are growing wider. According to Istat data, poverty and social exclusion have greatly increased, and the social protection system is not able to respond effectively to the needs of the most vulnerable people due to its fragmentation. The southern regions have suffered the most severe situations due to their long-standing structural weaknesses.

The **unemployment rate** has reached historically high levels: in 2014 it increased to **12.8%**. Between 2008 and 2013, there has been a strong increase of people at risk of poverty and social exclusion (+14.7 percentage points) for a total of 2,227,000 people. Youth unemployment has almost doubled over the past decade to reach almost 43% in third quarter of 2014. The proportion of young people aged between 15 and 24 not in employment, education or training rose from 16.2% in 2007 to 22.2% in 2013 (32.9% for those aged 25-29) and is now the highest in the EU. Only 54.6% of those aged 15-34 who graduated from the first and second stages of tertiary education within the previous three years were employed, against the EU average of 78.6%. This may have potentially severe consequences on Italy's human capital accumulation.

In 2013, 12.6% of Italian families are in condition of relative poverty (3,000,230 people), **7.9% of Italian families are in condition of absolute poverty** (2,028,000 people). Children remained the age group at highest risk of poverty and social exclusion and the presence of children remained a discriminating factor in Italian households, with higher poverty and social exclusion in households with children. Among households with children, the in-work at risk of poverty rate was particularly high for single parent households (24.7%, among the highest in the EU). It is particularly severe also the situation of

couples with children: 7.5% of couples with one child are in a condition of absolute poverty; 10.9% with two children; and 21.3% if children are three or more. In 2013, 1,434,000 children are poor in absolute terms, corresponding to about 14% of the minor population (they were 1,058,000 in 2012). Structural inequalities between the south and the other regional areas in terms of poverty and social exclusion indicators remained significant.

Social expenditure in Italy is largely oriented towards the elderly and dominated by pension expenditure, which represented 16.6% of GDP in 2012, the second highest share in the EU. Italy spends 1.4% of its GDP on activities to support the family and the birth rate compared to the EU average is 2.2% of GDP. Following the financial crisis, the national budget for social programs fell drastically--from 1.6 billion Euros in 2007 to 43.7 million in 2012 and then rose to 297 million Euros in 2014. According to Istat data, regional differences in the allocation of funds are glaring. In 2012, average expenditure was 242€ per inhabitant in the Autonomous Province of Trento in the North but only 20€ in the southern Region of Calabria. In general, spending on services for families and children in southern provinces is only a third of that in the North. Some positive initiatives to address poverty and social exclusion have been recently experimented. They include the launch of the pilot scheme on the support for active inclusion, combining cash benefits with compulsory activation and social services programmes. Progress in improving the effectiveness of family support schemes and quality services favouring low-income households with children has been implemented. The government is also currently prioritising expenditure on school education after several years of cuts. The government held a public consultation on a reform of the school system, to be financed by EUR 1 billion in 2015 and EUR 3 billion from 2016 through a fund created by the 2015 Stability Law.

Women's position and gender equality in Italy

The general **condition of women⁶ in Italy has seen significant improvements since the end of the second world war**. However there are still some significant problematic areas, including employment rates, political representation, gender stereotypes and violence against women as recognized by international and European organizations. According to the European Gender Equality index⁷, Italy is ranked below the EU average (40.9% against the EU average of 54%). At legislative level the right to equality on the basis of sex is established in the Italian constitution and through a series of legislative measures included in the National Code for Equal Opportunities (legislative decree 198/2006) as well as the enactment of international conventions and EU directives.

The **legislative reforms** have been prompted also by important **women's and feminist movements** that were very active during the 1970s. Their mobilization led to the approval of important laws including the law on divorce (1970), followed by the reform of family law (1975) and the law on abortion (1978). During the 1980s and 1990s the women's movement lost its strengths while in the mid 1990s forces advocating traditional roles of women and the family prevailed. However in the last years this eventually led to the resurgence of women's movement also through the creation of new organizations protesting

⁶ For a more in depth analysis see Rosselli (2014), The Policy on Gender Equality in Italy, Directorate General for Internal Policies. Policy Department C: Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs Gender Equality

⁷ The Gender Equality Index is formed by combining gender indicators in six core domains: work, money, knowledge, time, power, health and two satellite domains (Intersecting inequalities and violence). The index has been developed by the European Index for Gender Equality (<http://eige.europa.eu/content/activities/gender-equality-index>)

in particular against violence against women and the stereotyped role of women portrayed in the media. Some important new laws were passed including the so-called law against femicide (Law 119/2013).

Notwithstanding increasingly good records in the **education sphere** (in 2011, women who have a **tertiary degree were 59%** whereas men are 41%) the economic position of women is still a disadvantaged one. The **female employment rate** in 2014 is **53.2%** while the male employment rate is 76.7%. Female employment rates are especially low in Southern Italy. Moreover, there is a gender pay gap⁸ of 6.9% according to Eurostat data of 2012 which is however significantly lower than the EU average of 16%.

As regards welfare measures: “The family – in particular, the work of women inside the family - has traditionally been the main provider of social protection and care services for the Italians, according to what has been defined the ‘**Mediterranean model of welfare state**’ (Rosselli, 2014: 26)”. This has led to a situation characterized by both a **low fertility rate (1.43 in 2012 with the EU-28 average at 1.58)** and a **low activity rate (52.6% in 2013 with the corresponding EU-28 average at 66.1%)**. Against this historical trend, some important measures for the conciliation of family and working life are active including compulsory maternity leave – one of the most generous in the EU at 5 months. Currently reforms are under discussion to strengthen paternity leave. **Child care services for 0-3 years cover 21% of the 0-3 population** (Centro nazionale, 2013) still largely below the EU average (28%) and there is a wide regional variability. (Southern regions have fewer available places). The care of elderly people is largely carried out through private arrangements between families and domestic workers, the majority of whom are migrant women, especially in the case of live-in domestic workers.

As regards the **political level, women** - who gained the right to vote in 1946 - **are under-represented**: they represent 31% in the Italian Parliament where there are no obligatory quotas. The latter are instead present at local level thanks to a recent law. Italy has never had a woman Prime Minister nor President of the Republic. In the public administration, women represented 48.5% in 2012, however their percentage drops between 31% and 41% as regards managerial positions.

According to the **UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women** who visited Italy in 2012, gender stereotypes continue to be frequent in the country. She also added that: “Women carry a heavy burden in terms of household care, while the contribution of men thereto is amongst the lowest in the world. With regards to their representation in the media, in 2006, 53% of women appearing on television did not speak; while 46% were associated with issues such as sex, fashion and beauty and only 2% issues of social commitment and professionalism.”⁹

The UN Special Rapporteur also stated that violence against women still represents a significant problem notwithstanding the fact that “the legal framework largely provides for sufficient protection for

⁸ The gender pay gap is the difference in the pay between men and women calculated on the basis of the difference in the average hourly wage.

⁹ Report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences on her mission to Italy (15–26 January 2012) (A/HRC/20/16/Add.2), p. 6

violence against women” and “the vast amount of expertise regarding the provision of legal, social, psychological and economic assistance to women victims”.¹⁰

A national survey conducted by Istat in 2014 estimated that **31.5% of women between the ages of 16 and 70 had experienced physical or sexual violence during their lifetime** (20.2% suffered physical violence, 21% sexual violence and 5.4% more severe forms of sexual violence such as rapes and attempted rapes). Partners or former partners commit the most serious forms violence (62.7% of rapes are committed by a current or ex-partner). Data about violence suffered by foreign women are similar to those of Italian women%.

It is interesting to note that **in comparison with the previous survey carried out by Istat in 2006 there have been some improvements**. Physical or sexual violence have decreased from 13.3% to 11.3%. According to Istat this is due to **better information and awareness** on the part of women in a social climate of **greater condemnation of violence**. Women also seem to be more aware of the seriousness of violence. More often they consider violence they suffered as an offense (from 14.3% to 29.6% for violence by partners) and more women report it to the police (from 6.7% to 11.8%). More often they talk about it with someone (from 67.8% to 75.9%) and they seek help from specialized services and anti-violence centers (from 2.4% to 4.9%).

The same situation applies to the case of violence by non-partners. However there are also **negative trends**. **Violence is more serious**: there is an increase of violence causing injuries (from 26.3% to 40.2% as regards partner violence) and the number of women who feared for their life (from 18.8% to 34.5%). Even violence by non-partners is more serious. This data is in line with that about femicide. In **2013 Eures found that 179 women were killed** (one every 2 days) with an increase of 14% compared to 2012. This is the **highest number of feminicides ever registered in Italy**. One out of three women were killed after choosing to leave their partners.

The most significant finding however is the increase of matricides (23 mothers accounting for the 18.9% of family feminicides) partly as a result of the continuing crisis, for economic reasons or for aggravation of relations after cohabitation imposed by necessity. **In 7 out of 10 cases, the feminicides were committed within the family context**, a figure which has remained constant in the period between 2000 and 2013 (70.5%). According to Eures, the institutional response was inadequate given that in 2013 more than half of future victims (51.9%) had reported or denounced the violence. Whereas for 10 years, half of feminicides took place in the North of Italy, in 2013 there has been an increase of 27% in the South. Concerning the causes, in the majority of cases, feminicides appear to be the consequence of the women’s decision to leave their partner, while around 20% are due to conflict between partners and 16% to economic reasons (mostly matricides).

In relation to the issue of violence against women it is important to underline the commitment of the government with the approval of the **‘Extraordinary plan against sexual and gender violence’** recently approved (May 2015) under Article 5 of the law against femicide, as well as the first National Plan of Action against Trafficking approved on the 26th february 2016.

¹⁰ Report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences on her mission to Italy (15–26 January 2012) (A/HRC/20/16/Add.2), p. 17



3. The Child Protection System

The obligations and tasks of promoting the rights of children derives directly from the Italian **Constitution**. Article 2 imposes mandatory obligations to the State to guarantee the effective recognition of the inalienable rights of every person, be it adult or minor. Article 30 requires the state to provide for the fulfilment of the tasks inherent in the concept of parental authority in the case of incapacity of the parents.

The setting up of a child protection system originated from the following main steps:

The Reform of the Family Code (1975) brought in a new definition of the family and familial roles, modifying the rights and duties of each member of the family, especially equal rights for the husband and wife as a couple and as parents.

The approval of specific provisions regarding violence against children also in order to implement the CRC ratified in 1989 (see the Policy timeline section).

The launch of specific policies for developing a safer and more child-centred social environment. This included: planning initiatives that encouraged family responsibility and good parenting; creating services for children and their families; providing financial support and encouraging initiatives that assist the father and mother to share responsibility for looking after and caring for their children.

At the national level the competencies on childhood and adolescence are divided among several Ministries (Ministry for Social Solidarity, Ministry for Family Policies, Ministry for Youth Policies and Sports, Ministry for Equal Opportunities, Ministry of Labour and Social Policies, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Education, Ministry for Economic Development and Ministry of Health).

The following bodies, set up by law 451/97, **ensure coordination** among these Ministries through their designated tasks:

Parliamentary Committee on childhood: formulating observations, proposals and comments about the current Italian legislation, according to the principles of CRC; requesting information, data and documentation to public administrations and bodies dealing with childhood matters; promoting an exchange of information and contacts between the different agencies, associations, NGOs and others involved in children's rights domain, at national and international level

National Observatory on childhood and adolescence: drafting the two-years National Action Plan; the two-years Report on children's condition; the five-years Report to UN CRC Committee

National Childhood and Adolescence Documentation and Analysis Centre: supporting the National Observatory in its tasks; drafting reports on the state of implementation of specific laws on children; carrying out research, surveys and monitoring on different issues relating to children's rights, ensuring a documentation and database system on the condition of children in Italy, carrying out training initiatives aimed at professionals working with children. The main tool to monitor actions for the prevention and

fight against child abuse and sexual exploitation is the periodical Report to Parliament on the implementation of the Law no. 269/1998, as established in art. 17 of the Law n. 269/1998.

Moreover there are coordination bodies that specifically concern violence against children:

- The **National Centre for the Fight against Child Pornography on the Web**, within the Ministry of the Interior - Postal and Communication Police Service;
- The **Observatory for the Fight against Pedophilia and Child Pornography**: this body has been set up in accordance with the law n. 38/2006 and it is set up within the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, Department for Equal Opportunities. The Observatory has the task to draft the **National plan to prevent and combat the abuse and sexual exploitation of children** as well as studies and initiatives on the subject.

Recently a new plan has been approved that acts on several interconnected levels. First, through an accurate identification of the specific characteristics, at a phenomenological level, related to the abuse and sexual exploitation of minors in Italy. Secondly, through the implementation of the existing regulatory provisions with particular reference to the forms of abuse and sexual exploitation of children related to the use of new technologies (sexting, grooming, cyber-bullying) and to those phenomena that are still difficult to identify and combat effectively (sex tourism, abuse within the family or in places not yet specifically regulated, such as sports and recreational activities and volunteering). Thirdly, through interventions aimed at building a multidisciplinary and complex system to provide adequate protection of children victim of sexual abuse or exploitation, both during the judiciary process, and outside of it, by creating effective support instruments at a legal, psychological and social level. And finally, by creating a system of coordinated interventions of prevention of the sexual abuse and exploitation, through the diffusion of greater awareness and training. These interventions are to be implemented at every level in each different context. They will directly or indirectly involve children and adolescents as well as all those who are in contact with children (for family reasons, educational, recreational, professional, medical, etc.), aiming to develop a real cultural change of the child protection system, in the civil society.

In order to adequately pursue these objectives, the Plan has four strands of work (Prevention - Fight-Protection- Monitoring), which represent the strategic areas of intervention to be implemented in coordination among the different agencies concerned. In order to achieve the objectives above, several relevant entities were involved: governmental departments, regions, local authorities, trade associations (for tourism, for the IT sector, for the media, etc.), child protection associations and bodies, cultural, sports and recreational associations and other actors of civil society.

Also the National Observatory for Children and Adolescents has recently drafted a new National Plan of Action requested by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. It has 4 main areas of action:

1. Lines of action to combat poverty of children and families
2. Socio-educational services for early childhood
3. Strategies and actions for the education and social integration
4. Parenting support , integrated system for out of home children

The innovative aspect of this action plan is the strong integration of central government, local regions and authorities at both a political and technical level - also through the establishment of a scientific Coordination, composed of members of the Observatory representing the Regions - the Anci (National Association of Italian Municipalities) and bodies not belonging to the public government, under the coordination of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, in collaboration with the Department for Family Policies.

Other important policy documents concerning violence against children include:

- The ***Guidelines for training on the topic of child abuse and maltreatment***, approved in 2001 by the then Coordination Committee for the protection of minors from sexual abuse and exploitation (art. 17, Law no. 269/1998) and by the National Observatory on childhood and adolescence. This text includes the guidelines for the training of professionals dealing with violence against children in the social, legal, medical and educational sectors. The training guidelines identify five different levels which have been taken into consideration by many regional and local institutions in the planning of training activities for professionals in this sector.
- The ***Action proposals for the prevention and fight against maltreatment*** approved by National Coordination Committee for the protection of minors from maltreatment, sexual abuse and exploitation in 1998. This text describes strategies to combat violence against children which can be adopted by the public administration in collaboration with the other bodies and institutions involved, with NGOs, the third sector and civil society in general.

As regards the general functioning of the child protection system, this is based on 4 phases:

1. Prevention
 2. Detection
 3. Reporting to judicial authority
 4. Protection
1. **Prevention** is based on a series of social and health interventions addressed to reduce the risk factors, such as limited parenting abilities, at risk pregnancies, families with problems of alcohol, drug abuse, mental illness, socio-cultural problems etc through intervention by the social services.
 2. As regards **detection** all those who are public employees (such as teachers, doctors, nurses, police etc) are obliged to report a case of child abuse or suspected child abuse that they encounter during their work. All other citizens are not obliged to, but can report the case to the judicial authorities. The identification of a situation of abuse can occur in two different situations: a) in the contexts of daily life (early childhood services, schools, associations, health units, hospitals etc) b) in those settings where the institutions meet with children who are already signaled for a request of help. (such as social services, police, child psychiatry, residential services etc).
 3. When a situation of prejudice has been identified and social services could not find a consensual solution with the family, the **judicial authority** is involved (juvenile tribunal).
 4. The involvement of the judicial authority has the aim to put the child in a condition of safety. The juvenile tribunal will decide whether the child can remain with his/her family (that will be monitored and supported) or needs to be removed (foster family or residential service). The **protection** function has to be carried out by the municipality through its social services and in agreement with the Juvenile tribunal. This is a particularly sensitive and complex task which involves also other local actors, including the local health units (in particular there are specialized units within each local health unit) on the basis of operational protocols.

The protection intervention carried out by the social services and the local health units is evaluated by the Juvenile tribunal. This needs to establish whether the child can re-enter the family (in case he/she had been removed) or not and which further interventions are required in order to minimize the trauma for the child

and support the parents. In case of criminal proceedings, attention will be paid to the protection of the child and the necessary support during the proceedings.

Among the services and government initiatives it is important to recall the **toll-free emergency phone number for minors (114)**. Finally, new specialized services have been created for the treatment of abused children. Since more than 15 years the State Police manages the website www.bambiniscomparsi.it, – through the Operation Central Service of the Central Anti-Crime Directorate – that is currently under revision and that is part of the Global Missing Children Network <http://internationalmissingchild.org>. Also the European number 116000 dedicated to missing children has been assigned to the Ministry of the Interior and it is managed through “SOS – Il Telefono Azzurro ONLUS” based on an agreement. Moreover, also in Italy the “Child Alert” service is active, namely a European emergency mechanism handled by the Service for International Cooperation of the Central Directorate of the Criminal Police. Their effectiveness has been enhanced by sharing expertise and experience in order to identify new tools and methods of working, as for example in the experience of the Italian Coordination of Services against Child Abuse (CISMAI).

Concerning the specific issue of **female genital mutilations (FGM)**, important legislative and policy measures have been introduced in the recent period:

1. first of all, the law n. 7/2006 prohibits the practice of FGM and includes measures of prevention.
2. The Ministry of the Interior manages the “Free-toll number for female genital mutilations” (as in the law n. 7 of 9th January 2006) through the Operational Central Service of the Anti-Crime Central Directorate of the State Police since its activation on 9th November 2009.
3. A Plan of action and agreement between the Presidency of the Council of Ministers and Conference State-Regions which includes different typologies of action:
 - Innovative projects aimed at the prevention of FGM and based on the formation of networks between public and private actors
 - Training courses addressed to all those who may be involved in prevention projects (health professionals, cultural mediators, professionals working in migration centres, police, social workers, associations etc)
 - Information and awareness raising initiatives (brochures, campaigns, meetings).

Funds allocated for these actions are 3 millions euro. The agreement includes specific indicators of the results of the activities undertaken by the Regions.

Moreover, the **first National Plan of Action against Trafficking** was approved on 26th February 2016. It is founded on three pillars: a coordination mechanism, a single program of assistance and compensation to victims, cooperation with international bodies and other countries. The Plan aims to respond to a need for coordination of actions already in place and also introduces new measures such as compensation to the victims. It also includes training actions for professionals.

Finally, to sum up the key changes in the last ten years in Italy as regards preventing violence against children are the following:

- Child abuse is a public matter.
- The several forms of violence against children are nowadays penal crimes.
- The State’s duty is to guarantee children’s needs are met and their rights are respected.
- All workers in the public sector must report any case of child abuse or a child in need to Juvenile Court and/or the police.



4. Services and response

In Italy the welfare system for children and families is based on the role of local municipalities and health units which ensure services for the prevention of violence against children, as well as for the treatment of the consequences of violence. Basic health services have to respect the minimum levels of healthcare (LEA) that have been approved in 2001. The essential levels of care (LEA) are the services that the National Health Service has to provide to all citizens, free of charge or on payment of a fee.

Concerning the collection of data on child abuse, the Department for Equal Opportunities has promoted the creation of a central database that includes data from four official sources: Department for Equal Opportunities, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Justice and Istat. The database is currently being implemented.

We provide here some data resulting from the research by Cismai -Terre des Hommes with the support of the National Ombudsman on children assisted by social services of Italian municipalities. The important and complex care and protection activities carried out by professionals in Italy are addressed to all the population groups in situations of need, through the activation of interventions. At 31.12.2013, in Italy, about 5% of children are assisted by social services (about 458,000 minors).

Figure 8. Maltreatment (physical, emotional and sexual) among minors assisted by Social Services by geographical area

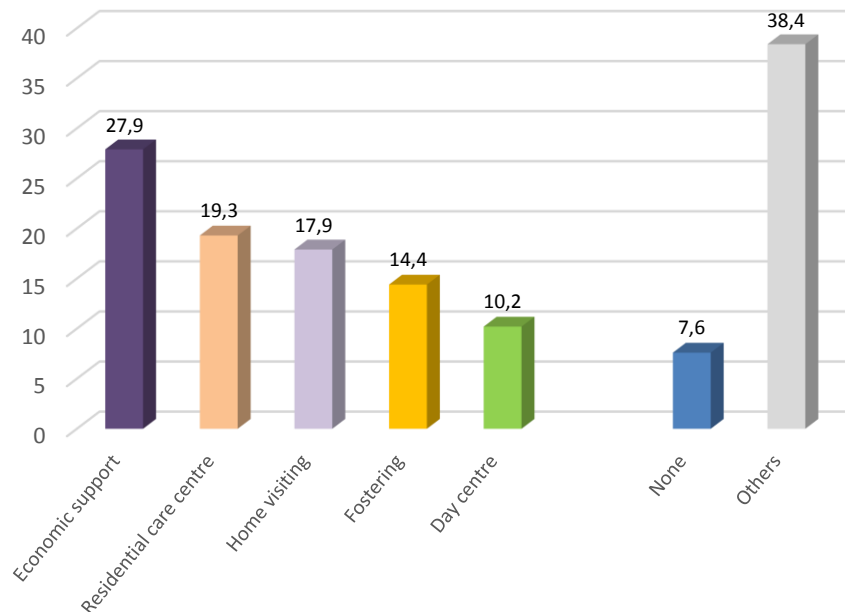


Source: Cismai and Terre des Hommes Italy (2015)

For about 1 out of 5 of the 458,000 estimated children assisted by social service (corresponding to 91,000 children, which is about just under 10% of the total child population) an intervention has been

activated as a result of experiencing an abuse (sexual abuse, physical and psychological abuse, witnessed violence, disease treatment and neglect material and emotional). In addition to measures of prevalence, the study provides information on the major types of intervention and care protection put in place by the social services in favor of abused minors.

Figure 9. Types of services accessed by abused children (interventions per 100 abused children)

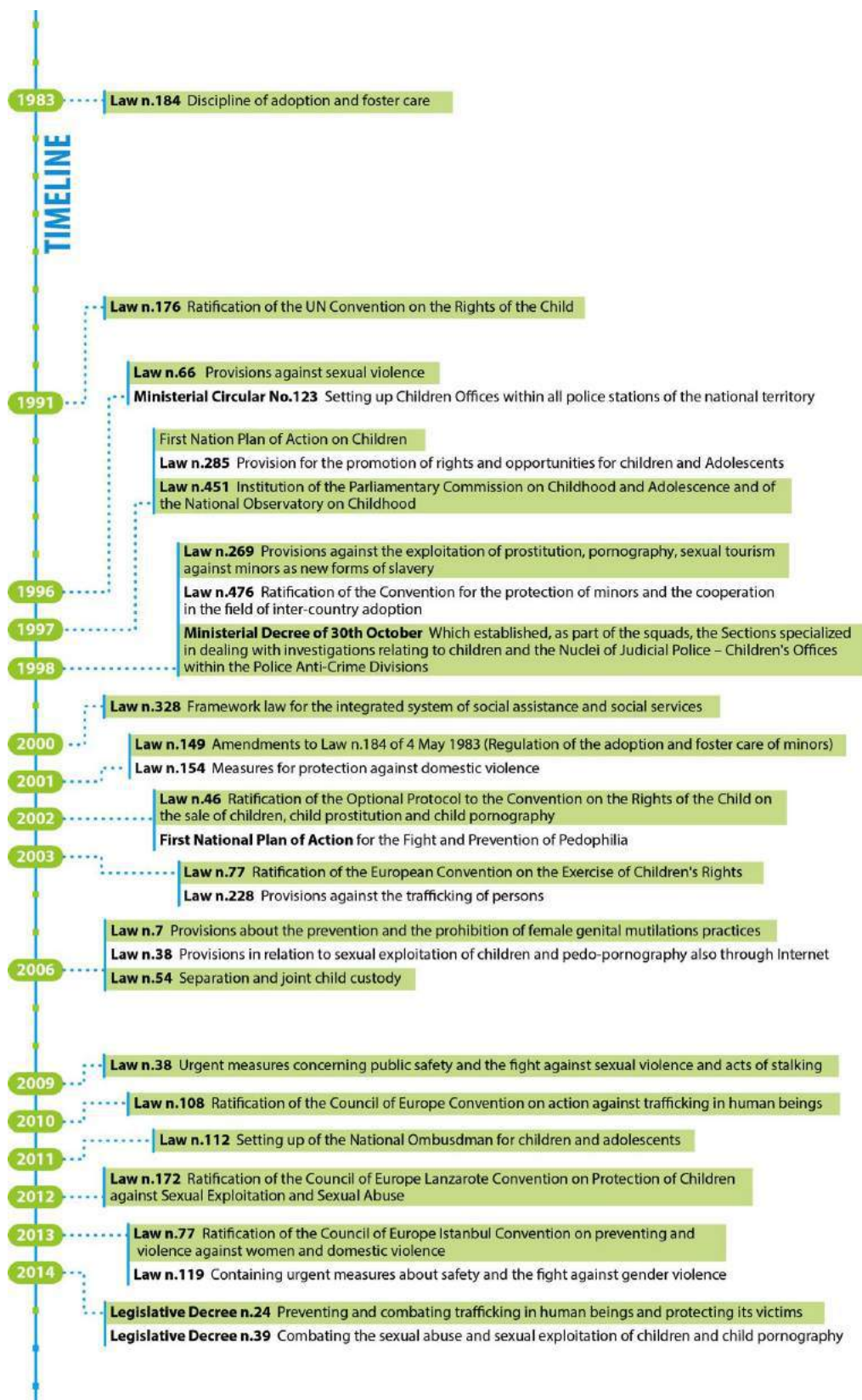


Source: CISMAL and Terre des Hommes (2015)

The intervention mostly implemented is related to the economic assistance to the household (28% of cases), followed by the removal of the child from his/her family of origin with placement in a residential community (19%). If we add to this item the share of those who are placed in foster care (14%), the share of temporary placement out of family rises to 34% approximately. The item "other" which is numerically significant (38%), covers a wide variety of types of intervention, linked to the methods of intervention by the social services of each municipality. Just to name a few we can mention the daytime educational activities, territorial education, support to parenting, access to family counseling, etc.



5. Policy Timeline





6. Evidence on Violence Affecting Children: Methodology

The following section reports evidence on violence affecting children in Italy.

This report is the result of a literature review on studies collecting data on physical, emotional and sexual abuse¹¹ affecting children in the country. It also provides in-depth analysis of data collected in the 2006 national sample survey of *Vite in Bilico*, the most detailed research carried out at national level to this date, which is a retrospective study on women between 19 and 60 years of age (n=2320) investigating the experiences of violence when they were minors.

Studies have been selected according to the following criteria:

- Primary research studies on violence (physical, sexual and emotional) affecting children in Italy
- Peer-reviewed and non peer-reviewed journal articles, research reports and other 'grey' literature
- Published in the last 15 years (34 in the last 10 years)

The total number of studies collected was 237, out of this body of literature **67 studies** met the inclusion criteria. The analysis builds upon first of all the results of broader studies carried out at national level such as *Vite in Bilico* (Bianchi and Moretti, 2006), the national investigation (sample size n = 231 municipalities covering 4.2 million children) on child maltreatment in Italy from Cismai and Terre des Hommes, 2015 and the most recent sample survey (sample size n = 24,761) on Violence against women by ISTAT, 2015. At the same time, smaller-scale studies were also included that focused on specific topics of interests, relating, for instance, to drivers of particular types of violence. This is also due to the fact that there is a well acknowledged lack of data on this subject (See the report "CAN surveillance in ITALY: current policies and practices", Istituto degli innocenti, 2013 and the report by Cismai and Terre des Hommes, 2015)

A detailed list of the included studies with information on the methodology (such as objectives, sample and study design) is available in the Appendix B. The University of Edinburgh also developed a quality assessment tool, which allowed for evaluation of the main studies cited in the report by looking at a series of criteria such as the clarity of the objectives, sample size and study design.

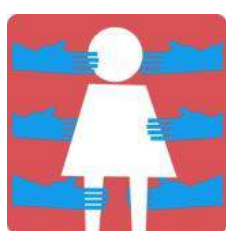
Importantly, a **secondary analysis** has been performed on data from the *Vite in Bilico* (Bianchi and Moretti, 2006) survey. Through the calculation of odds ratios¹² we were able to identify potential drivers of violence relating to specific variables at play, specifically within family relations. In addition, cross tabs have been used to identify more variables of interest.

¹¹ In this literature review, the area of neglect is included in the section about emotional abuse. Researchers also wish to acknowledge the fact that female genital mutilations did not emerge in the search based on the above stated criteria (physical, emotional and sexual violence) but could be usefully addressed in a further research as this is a relevant issue in Italy.

¹² An odds ratio is a measure of association between two variables.

7. Types of violence

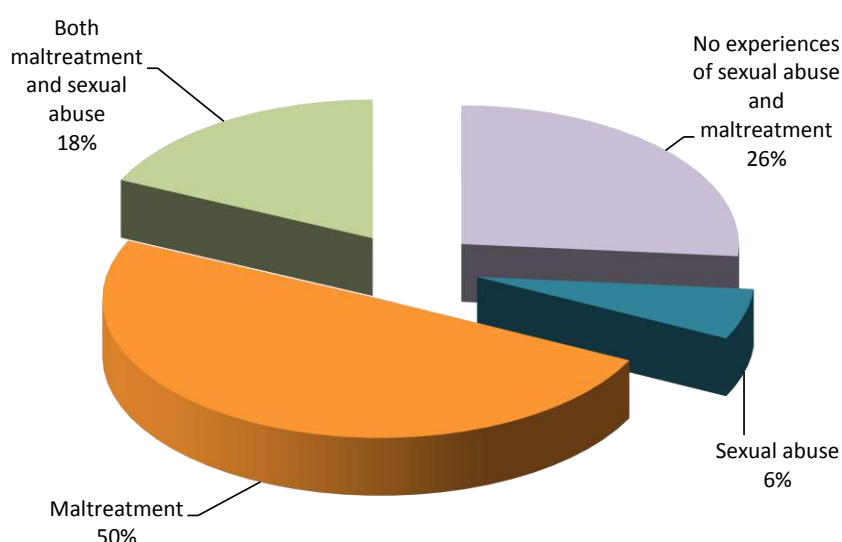
This section will focus on different types of violence grouped under sexual, physical and emotional abuse, which also includes material and emotional neglect. For each category, we provide descriptive data on prevalence and relevant trends emerging from research. Moreover, we highlight factors that seem to drive the occurrence of violence. Emotional abuse appears to be the most widespread typology of violence in Italy (CISMAI and Terre des hommes, 2015), however, sexual violence also emerges as a significant issue in the country affecting, it seems, 1 out of 4 female children (Bianchi and Moretti, 2006).



Child Sexual Abuse

Bianchi and Moretti (2006), CISMAI and Terre des Hommes (2015) and ISTAT (2015), all report interesting data on the prevalence of sexual abuse in Italy. The graphs below show the prevalence rates of violence among children and give an indication of the extent to which sexual abuse is widespread compared to other types of violence.

Figure 10. Women according to the experiences lived when they were minors



Source: Bianchi and Moretti¹³, 2006

¹³ In the report *Vite in Bilico* sexual abuse is indicated by: exhibitionism; verbal harassment; exposure to child pornography; touching and acts of masturbation; attempted penetration; penetration. Maltreatment, on the other hand, includes physical abuse identified by behaviors such as recurring physical punishment; beatings with objects,

This graph shows that almost 1 out of 4 women experienced some form of sexual abuse, when they were minors, and the same percentage had no experiences of sexual abuse or maltreatment.

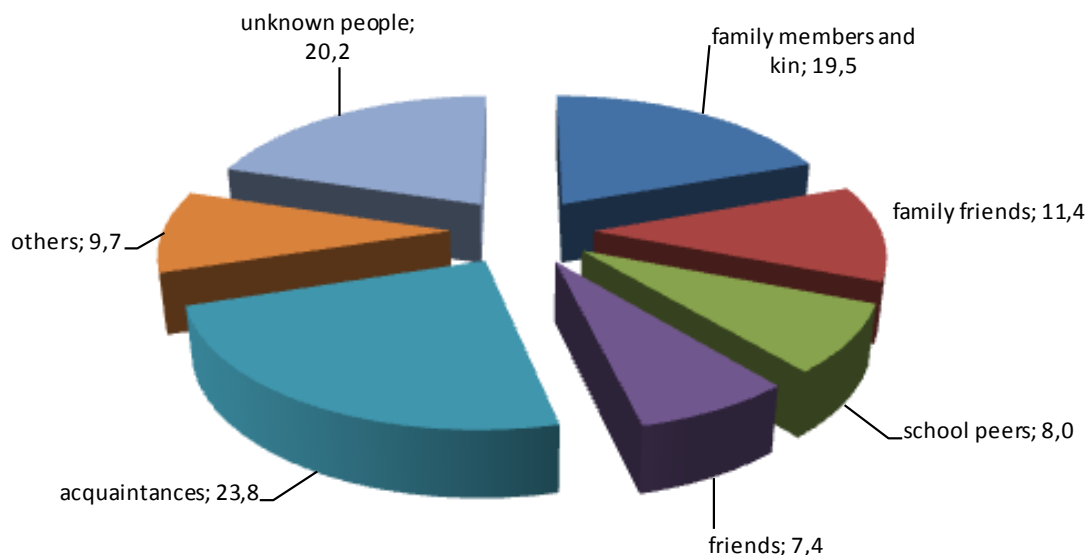
Descriptive

According to the most recent Istat report on violence against women, **10.6% of Italian women have experienced sexual violence before the age of 16**, while 0.8% have been victims of serious types of sexual abuse such as rape. (Istat, 2015). Pellai *et al.* carried out a local study among high school students (n =2,839) using a voluntary cluster sample design in Milan. All students registered at their last year of high school, who wished to, were able to participate. In this study, they found that sexual abuse, including light forms of abuse, concerned 14.6% of the total sample: 12.3% were victims of light abuse and 2.3% were victims of serious abuse (Pellai *et al.*, 2004). Bianchi and Moretti found that 5.9% of the female population was subjected to sexual abuse during childhood, while a combination of **multiple forms of physical, sexual and psychological abuse concerned 18% of the population** (Bianchi and Moretti, 2006).

In the most recent national survey on child maltreatment carried out by Cismai and Terres des Hommes (2015), which covered a population of 2.4 million children (25% of the total Italian child population) in 231 municipalities, it emerges that **4.2 out of 100 maltreated children have suffered sexual abuse**. This is a slightly smaller percentage compared to what the team found in a previous survey, with a smaller sample, in 2013: 6.1% victims of sexual abuse among child victims of maltreatment taken care of by 25 municipalities (Bollini, et. al 2013).

According to Bianchi and Moretti (2006) 64% of perpetrators of child abuse are family members and well known trusted people such as teachers, neighbors and family friends. Pellai et al. (2004) also found that perpetrators of forced sexual intercourse are well known by victims 84% of the times. According to Pellai's research (n = 2, 839) perpetrators belong to the child's family in 10.6% of the cases, extended family 33.7%, and education settings 4.8%. The following pie graph illustrates the results of ISTAT's most recent survey on violence against women.

hair pulling or violent jerks; beatings with trauma. Psychological abuse identified as: criticizing or devaluing ironies. Material neglect: medical assistance was not sought in case of illness; inadequate clothing for the season, no supervision on eating. Emotional neglect: parents' lack of support and attention concerning children's school activities; no accompanying during falling asleep; no play time between parent and child; entrusting children to outsiders or very old people. Witnessing Violence. (Bianchi and Moretti, 2006)

Figure 11. Perpetrators of sexual violence against women before age 16

Source: Istat, 2015

Crisma et al (2004), writing on the Italian results of the larger study on Counseling and Support Services for Young People Aged 12–16 Years Who Have Experienced Sexual Abuse, show that a high proportion of the 41 cases analysed in the study report that adolescents who experienced sexual abuse were reluctant to seek help from professionals. Moreover, it was reported by participants that those who did seek the services of professionals were in the receipt of poor help. The results were consistent with that of investigations conducted in other countries engaging larger samples. The study reports that all abusers identified by participants were male, abuse perpetrated by a family member lasted over a year and the majority of reported abuse was 'severe'. Further, some participants reported that they were in doubt if their experience constituted violence as in a few cases physical violence was not present or that subtle strategies were employed by the perpetrator. Most adolescents participating in the study said they experienced negative consequences following the abuse, for example, shame or guilt, difficulty at work and school, difficulty in relationships, depression or attempted suicide. Over two-thirds of those interviewed in the study did not look to their parents for help. Barriers to family support identified in the study include pathological, disrupted or unstable family relations, the desire to protect family members or the perception that parents were non-protective or insensitive.

Telefono Azzurro (2013) found that between 2006 and 2013, 34% of help requests (n = about 12,000) received by the 114 helpline concern abuse and violence, with 3.9% are specific cases victims of sexual abuse. The analysis of help requests among victims of sexual abuse received by the 114 helpline reveals an **increase in the number of cases of sexual abuse** reported to the helpline: from 13.4% in 2009 to 22.3% in 2012 (Telefono Azzurro, 2013).

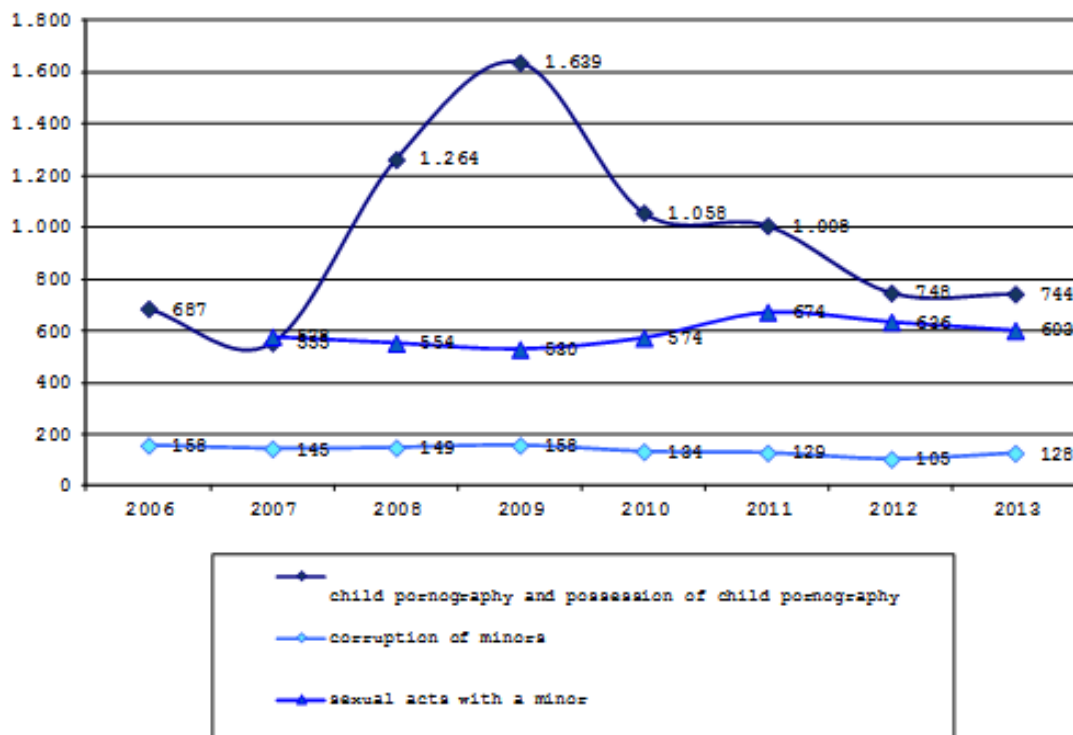
The survey *Vite in Bilico* found that the majority of cases of sexual abuse occurred once (49.6%); more than one time, 39.9%; often, 5.1% (Bianchi and Moretti, 2006). Evidence indicates that **the closer the relationship between perpetrator and victim, the longer the duration of the abuse** (Bianchi and Moretti, 2006). This may be because when there is a close relationship between the victim and the perpetrator, victims may harbor feelings of guilt and responsibility for the abuse, this, in turn, makes it

harder for victims to disclose or report the abuse. (Dipartimento Giustizia Minorile, 2012; Bianchi and Moretti, 2006).

According to a qualitative small study (n = 29 including 20 social workers) Save the Children Italia (2013) and the investigation mandated by the House of Representatives (Camera dei Deputati, 2012), which entailed a series of hearings of representatives of the CRC group for Italy and other NGO's involved in assisting prostitution child victims, as well as the analysis of ministers and government documents, **show that children are affected by the phenomenon of indoor sexual exploitation¹⁴.**

For the area of trafficking for sexual exploitation, see the section about violence in the community.

Figure 12. Adults reported or arrested by the police for violations against children (pornography, 'corruption' of minors and sexual act), 2006-2013



Source: Minister of Interior, 2013

As regards sexual acts with a minor and corruption of minors, data indicate a stability in the phenomena in the period from 2006-2013. Concerning child pornography data register an increase around the year 2009.

¹⁴ Save the children Italia highlights the high number of sex ads published on local newspapers offering sexual encounters in apartments. NGO workers reported that, within the same month, they were able to approach 231 girls through answering sex adds, but were able to count less than half (100) on the streets (Save the Children, 2013)

Romito et al (2011), in their study on pornography and its effects on violence and victimisation, found that almost all of the male adolescents in the study sample (n=303, 12th grade and 18 to 25 year olds), and two thirds of female adolescents interviewed for the study had ever watched pornography. At the time of interview, 42% of the male sample and 32% of the female sample were watching pornographic depictions of violence against women, including rape, torture, degradation, and murder. Of the sample, 33% of males and 26% of females watched videos of women apparently enjoying the violence they were subject to and in the survey, a minority also watched pornography which depicted women torturing men, sex with animals and sadomasochism.

Drivers

This review examined 15 studies focused on sexual abuse. Among these studies, four main themes emerged on the drivers of child sexual abuse: unequal power relations, previous experiences of abuse, family structure and the invisibility of certain types of violence and victims.

- **Psychological manipulation within unequal power relations of trust.** Evidence shows that most frequent types of sexual violence are forms of light abuse that do not involve physical contact. The survey *Vite in Bilico* found that 64% of women sexually abused during childhood suffered no physical contact but rather abuse such as exhibitionism, verbal violence and exposure to child pornography. 34.4% were subjected to touching, masturbation and attempted penetration. 1.6% were subjected to sexual intercourse (Bianchi and Moretti, 2006). Victims of sexual abuse are often tricked with deception 10.2% (games, growth control) or through promises and gifts 7.7%. Only in 2.6% of the cases women were abused with violence (Bianchi and Moretti, 2006).
- **Witnessing violence.** Children who witness fathers being violent with their mothers are more likely to perpetrate violence¹⁵ against their partners (Istat, 2015; Dipartimento Giustizia). ISTAT found that the probability for people to perpetrate intimate partner violence increases from 5.2% to 22% if they have witnessed their father being violent with their mothers (Istat, 2015).
- **Previous experiences of abuse.** The probability for people to perpetrate intimate partner violence increases from 5.2 to 35.9% if they have been physically abused by mothers. (ISTAT, 2015) Previous experience of sexual abuse are also seen to increase minors' vulnerability to sexual exploitation as referred by professionals working with children involved in the sex market (Camera dei Deputati, 2012; Save the Children Italia, 2013)
- **Absence of family for migrant children.** The Parliamentary Commission on Childhood and Adolescence stresses the potential link between the presence of unaccompanied minors in migrating flows across Europe and the phenomenon of sexual exploitation (Camera dei Deputati, 2012; Save the Children Italia, 2013) (See violence in the community). For instance, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies identified that 43.5% (5,099) of the 11,648 unaccompanied foreign children present in the reception centres, at the date of 30th April 2016, were irretraceable. According to Europol, out of the 10,000 unaccompanied foreign

¹⁵ In the Study, ISTAT does not specify what type of violence, however, the investigation looks at physical and sexual violence, therefore the driver seems to relate to both types of violence. (ISTAT, 2015)

children who have disappeared after their arrival in Europe, 5,000 arrived in Italy. While some may have reached their families in other European countries, it is feared that others are involved in the phenomenon of sexual exploitation through criminal organisations.

- **Invisibility of trafficking victims** (Camera dei Deputati, 2012; Save the Children Italia, 2013). Several factors contribute to the invisibility of trafficking victims: mobility, false documents and the existence of exploitative indoor circuits of exploitation.



Child Physical Abuse

Descriptive

According to the survey *Vite in Bilico*, **11% of the female population experienced physical abuse at least some times in their life** (Bianchi and Moretti, 2006). In the most recent national survey on child maltreatment, Cismai and Terres des Hommes (2015) found that **6.9 out 100** (n = 251 municipalities, about 2.4 million children) **maltreated children have suffered physical abuse**, a slightly higher percentage than what had emerged in 2013 (4.8% , n = 48.280)

According to the analysis of requests received by the 114 helpline, 34% of emergency calls concern abuse and violence and 11.9% are about children victims of physical abuse. Telefono Azzurro (2013) has also remarked an increase in the number of referrals of physical abuse over time: from 5.2% in 2006 to 17.1% in 2012.

In a small, local, qualitative study with 20 young adults who had experienced violence during childhood, Zomero (2002) found that physical maltreatment experienced by respondents included: attempted homicide, hitting with the belt, being forced to sit on someone's knees for hours with one's arms lifted up, hair pulling, fighting, objects' throwing, slapping, punching and kicking.

With regards to bullying, Telefono Azzurro and Eurispes (2011) carried out a survey among children (n = 1496) and parents (n = 1266) and found that about 3% of children have suffered from physical violence (hitting) from peers. (see also the section on violence in the school and outside the school)

Concerning the duration of physical abuse, the study *Vite in Bilico* (n = 2320) found that **18% of physical maltreatment victims suffer repeated episodes of violence** (Bianchi and Moretti 2006).

A multi-country study of mothers and children (using a sample of 336) aged 6 to 17 years examining the use of physical discipline and normative attitudes towards it, the authors found that **both mothers and children in Italy recalled more normative use of physical discipline than counterparts in other countries (including China, India, the Philippines and Thailand)** (Lansford *et al*, 2005). A survey of 1,417 parents in Italy was conducted in 2008-2009 as part of the "Parenting across Cultures project". In Italy, the parents of 12% of girls and 23% of boys aged 7-10 said they had beaten their children severely in the past month. (Lansford *et al*, 2010)

Drivers

A total of 16 studies in this review included information on the drivers of physical abuse. From these studies a number of themes emerge including: the quality of the relationship between parents, stressors at the family level, gender bias concerning the educational value of corporal punishment, and, similarly to sexual abuse, witnessing violence and previous experience of violence.

- **Quality of the couple relationship.** From a clinical study comparing parents (n = 59) at high risk of maltreating their children (as measured by the Abuse Scale of Child Abuse Potential inventory Form VI – CAPI) and parents (n = 59) at low risk of maltreating their child, it emerges that parents who perceive their couple relationship as weak or not supportive have a higher risk of physically maltreating their child (Miragoli, Di Blasio, 2012). Moreover, the **lack of emotional support, together with parental anger, and impulsivity** also emerged as drivers of corporal punishment in a study on parents' (n = 123) educational strategies carried out in the North of the country, especially concerning mother's enactment of physical violence on children (Arace, Scarzello & Occelli, 2013).
- **The combination of low income, health problems and problematic children (premature and/or in poor health conditions).** In a study conducted on 2,388 families in Tuscany, researchers found that stressors experienced by parents represent a risk for minor forms of physical punishment as defined by the Physical Aggression Scale of Wolfner and Gelles (1993) (Bardi and Borgognini-Tarli, 2001).
- **Italian fathers appear to believe physical punishment to be more adequate for educating sons than daughters.** In their study on parenting and educational styles, Arace et al., note how Italian fathers seem to generally uphold a more authoritative and traditional parenting model compared to Italian mothers. Such model seem to influence their belief in the value of corporal punishment (Arace et al 2013) (See also the section on violence fathers & children). However, a multi-country study conducted by Lansford et al (2010; sample of 1417) examining ethnic and cultural differences in the use of corporal punishment in China, Columbia, Italy, Jordan, Kenya, the Philippines, Sweden, Thailand and the United States, appeared to show different results. Mothers emerged as using corporal punishment more often than fathers. Moreover the study showed that male children were corporally punished more often than female children. Gender differences in corporal punishment have been reported to be dependent on the family's cultural context (Lansford et al, 2010). Figures from Italy showed that even though corporal punishment was reportedly high, Italian parents were second to Swedish parents in their belief that it was necessary to use corporal punishment to raise children (ibid).
- **Witnessing violence.** As previously mentioned in the section on sexual abuse, children who witness fathers being violent with their mothers are more likely to perpetrate violence¹⁶ against their partners (Istat, 2015; Dipartimento Giustizia). (See section on sexual abuse)

¹⁶ In the Study, ISTAT does not specify what type of violence, however, the investigation looks at physical and sexual violence, therefore the driver seems to relate to both types of violence. (ISTAT, 2015)

- **Previous experiences of abuse.** Again similarly to sexual abuse, the probability for people to perpetrate intimate partner violence – including physical violence - increases from 5.2 to 35.9% if they have been physically abused by mothers. (ISTAT, 2015)

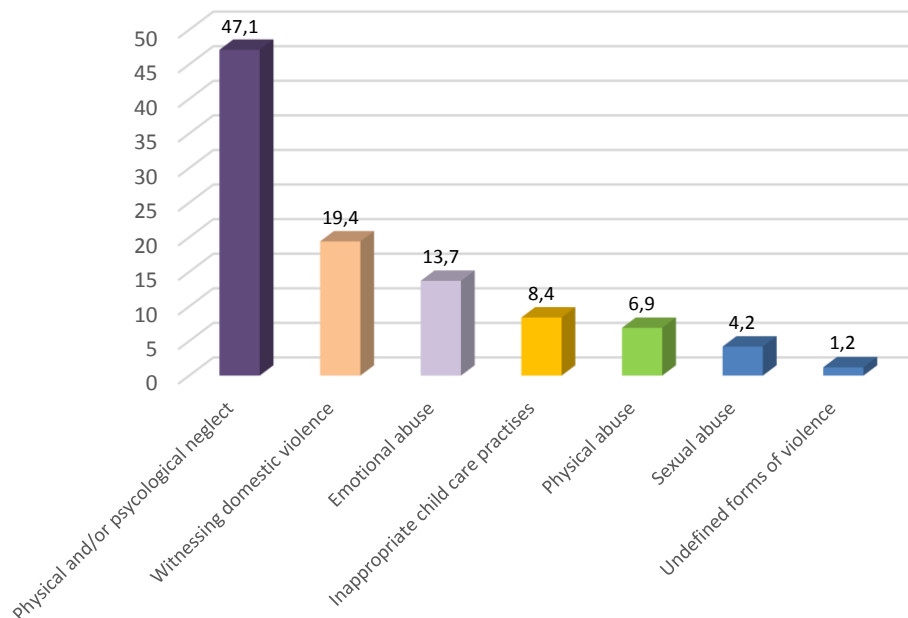


Child Emotional Abuse

Descriptive

Evidence suggests that **physical and psychological neglect are common types of maltreatment**.¹⁷ CISMAI and Terre des Homme (2015) found that 47.1 out of 100 maltreated children taken care of by social services have suffered physical and/or psychological neglect. The same study also states that 13.7 out of 100 maltreated children have suffered emotional abuse and that 19.4 out of 100 maltreated children have witnessed domestic violence (see the section about drivers of violence in the family).

Figure 13. Abuse types suffered by children assisted by Social Services in Italy



Source: CISMAI and Terre des Hommes, 2015

¹⁷ We include in this section data about neglect which include an emotional/psychological component, but sometimes also a physical one.

The graph shows the distribution of the different typologies of maltreatment and abuse of children assisted by social services on the national territory. About 1 out 2 children is victim of physical and/or psychological neglect. Emotional abuse concerns 13.7% of children assisted by social services.

Bianchi and Moretti (2006) found that **emotional abuse** (defined as criticism and/or devaluing ironies) **concerned 13.4% of the female population (n=2320)**. Telefono Azzurro (2013), looking at help requests concerning abuse and violence received by the 114 helpline, found that 7.4% children (n = 11.876) are subjected to psychological maltreatment and 5.5% to pathology of care. Similarly to physical abuse, Telefono Azzurro (2013) marks an increase in the number of referrals of psychological maltreatment over time: from 8.3% in 2006 to 12.9% in 2012. In addition, emergency calls concerning cases of neglect and parental inadequacy have also increased from 5.7% in 2006 to 10.4% in 2012 for neglect; and from 6.3% in 2006 to 10.2% in 2012 from parental inadequacy (Telefono Azzurro, 2013).

A small, local qualitative study on young adults victims child abuse (n = 18) found that emotional violence endured by respondents included: being humiliated, insulted, devalued or belittled (see page about drivers in violence in the home). **All cases of physical abuse also included psychological abuse.** Moreover, respondents recalled witnessing the following types of emotional violence between parents: devaluation, denigration and abandonment (see the section about drivers on violence in the home). There were also cases of economic violence concerning separated couples where fathers would not provide financial support for the child (Zomero, 2002).

Drivers

15 studies in this review were found to provide information on the drivers of emotional abuse, which include material and psychological neglect. *Vite in Bilico* and Di Blasio's work on risk and protective factors, in particular, shed light on major trends such as: parental stress, conflictual relationships among parents, social isolation and socio-economic hardship.

- **Parental stress linked to separation issues and to being a single parent.** Studies show that in families where maltreatment - including emotional abuse and neglect – occurs, there is often a tense relationship in the parental couple, and that the stress of being a single parent correlates with the risk for violence (Telefono Azzurro, 2013; Baker and Verrocchio, 2013; Zomero, 2002).
- **A conflictual relationship and lack of affection in the couple.** Di Blasio (2005) found that this is a risk factor for abusive mothers.
- **Families characterized by social isolation or conflict** (Bianchi and Moretti, 2006) – see section about Violence in the home for further information.
- **Deprived socio-economic conditions** (Caso et al., 2011; Bianchi and Moretti, 2006).



Polyvictimisation

Descriptive

Polyvictimisation is common and witnessing violence often indicates risks for other types of abuse to occur (see the section about drivers on violence in the home and sexual abuse). 64% of sexually abused women were also exposed to domestic conflicts when they were children; 48% of them witnessed episodes of verbal violence against another family member (Bianchi and Moretti, 2006). According to the survey *Vite in Bilico*, 49.6% of women had experienced episodes of maltreatment¹⁸ during childhood and 18.1% experienced a combination of sexual abuse and maltreatment.

It is interesting to note that out of 100 women who were sexually abused at least once in their life time, 75% were also maltreated (Bianchi and Moretti, 2006). At the same time, out of 100 maltreated women, only 26% also report being sexually abused (Bianchi and Moretti, 2006). Zomero's (2002) qualitative study also indicates that victims of **child abuse often experience multiple types of violence including economic violence, which is intertwined with neglect.**

Concerning sexual exploitation, children affected by the phenomenon are often victims of physical and psychological violence (Save the Children Italia, 2013; Carchedi, 2004; Camera dei deputati, 2012). Frequent forms of violence experienced by minors involved in sexual exploitation are hitting, punching, emotional harm, controlling, scaring, threatening, hostile treatment and forced sex (Save the Children, 2013).

¹⁸ Here maltreatment includes: neglect, assisted violence, physical and emotional abuse.

8. Places



Violence Affecting Children: In the Home

Descriptive

The review found a high prevalence of sexual abuse within the family environment. Records from the Department of Justice indicates that, in 2012, 48% of child victims know their perpetrator from their social environment and 33% are victims of sexual violence by someone in their family (Dipartimento Giustizia Minorile, 2012). According to Pellai et al. (2004), perpetrators belong to the child's family in 10.6% of the cases (n= 2839) (See the section on sexual abuse).

With regards to sexual exploitation, adult family members may be already involved in the sex industry themselves, and children join their activities. Families where sexual exploitation takes place are often characterized by the presence of domestic violence and alcohol abuse (Carchedi, 2004; Save the Children, 2013; Camera dei Deputati, 2012). At times families are being threatened by traffickers or organizations external to their kin (Carchedi, 2004).

Concerning maltreatment and psychological violence, the analysis of the data provided by *Vite in bilico* shows that difficult family relationships raise the likelihood of the occurrence of maltreatment and psychological violence, also severe ones.

Drivers

This section is particularly robust given the secondary analysis completed by IDI on *Vite in bilico*. Several important trends within family settings appear to be strong risk factors for violence.

- **Families characterized by social isolation.** The condition of having weak contacts with extended families and social networks, or hostile break ups with other family members, as well as, scarce opportunities to seek help in times of hardship (Bianchi and Moretti, 2006; Caso et al 2011). Female respondents who reported growing up in a family that did not socialize with others were five times more likely to report having experienced severe maltreatment than female respondents who reported that their family socialized with others (Odds Ratio 5.40, $\chi^2 = 25.95$, significance 1%) (Secondary analysis on *Vite in bilico* data).
- **Family norms around silence and blame.** Female respondents who reported growing up in an atmosphere at home that included secretive and accusatory family communication were twice as likely to report having experienced sexual abuse and 6.5 times more likely to have reported experiencing any maltreatment (neglect, physical or emotional abuse) than those who did not report these characteristics of family communication (OR 6.51, $\chi^2 = 101.74$, sig. 1%) (Bianchi and Moretti, 2006). Furthermore, those who experienced secretive and accusatory family communication were also more likely to report experiencing severe maltreatment (OR 8.18, $\chi^2 = 34.53$, sig. 1%) (Secondary analysis on *Vite in bilico* data).

- **Humiliation within family.** Female respondents who reported being humiliated within their family environment as they were growing up were 14 times more likely to experience severe maltreatment than female respondents who report never experiencing maltreatment or reported moderate maltreatment (OR 14.19, $\chi^2 = 87.56$, sig. 1%) (Secondary analysis on *Vite in bilico* data).
- **Family fights.** Female respondents who reported witnessing family fights as they were growing up were 7 times more likely to experience maltreatment than female respondents who report never witnessing family fights (OR 7.62, $\chi^2 = 312.48$, sig. 1%) . (Bianchi and Moretti, 2006). Furthermore, the more frequent the family fights, the higher the likelihood, 10 times, of experiencing severe maltreatment (OR 10.19, $\chi^2 = 43.20$, sig. 1%) (Secondary analysis on *Vite in bilico* data).
- **Parental stress linked to separation issues.** Studies show that in families where maltreatment, including emotional abuse and neglect, takes place there is often a tense relationship in the parental couple, and that the stress of being a single parent correlates with the risk for violence (Telefono Azzurro, 2013; Baker and Verrocchi, 2013; Zomero, 2002). For instance, when investigating the family composition of child victims of violence, Di Blasio looked at a sample of children (n = 55, 117 questionnaires filled out by different social service offices) who had been referred to multiple services multiple times (2003) who found that 45.5% of families were made up by biological parents, of which 27% were single parents versus 15% in the global sample. Prevalence of sexual abuse also appeared to be higher among children living with single parents and separated/divorced parents, compared to children living with both parents (Pellai et al, 2004). Moreover, in the analysis of official figures on child victims and perpetrators of sexual crimes, the Department of Justice (2012) highlights that children involved in processes of juvenile justice are characterized by a condition of loneliness and vulnerability while growing up in families, who, increasingly often, are breaking apart.
- **Sources of fragility in family functioning such as physical disability and psychological ill-being, financial poverty** (Bianchi and Moretti, 2006) Through the analysis of data collected with the *Vite in Bilico* survey, researchers noticed that no single variables seemed to drive maltreatment by itself, however the presence and overlap of stressors at the family level, linked with mental and physical health of family members as well as to economic difficulties, lead to further risks for violence, which is something we find again in different studies (Bianchi and Moretti 2006; Bardi and Borgognini-Tarli, 2001, Caso et al 2011)
- **Witnessing domestic violence.** Bianchi and Moretti (2006) found that 64% of sexually abused women were also exposed to domestic conflicts and that 48% of them witnessed episodes of verbal violence against another family member. In mothers' opinions, children develop relational problems with peers as a consequence of witnessing violence (Caso et al, 2011). Domestic violence can also represent a risk factor for sexual exploitation as reported by the studies investigating the phenomenon (Carchedi, 2004; Save the Children 2013; Camera dei Deputati, 2012).



Violence Affecting Children: In Schools and outside Schools

Descriptive

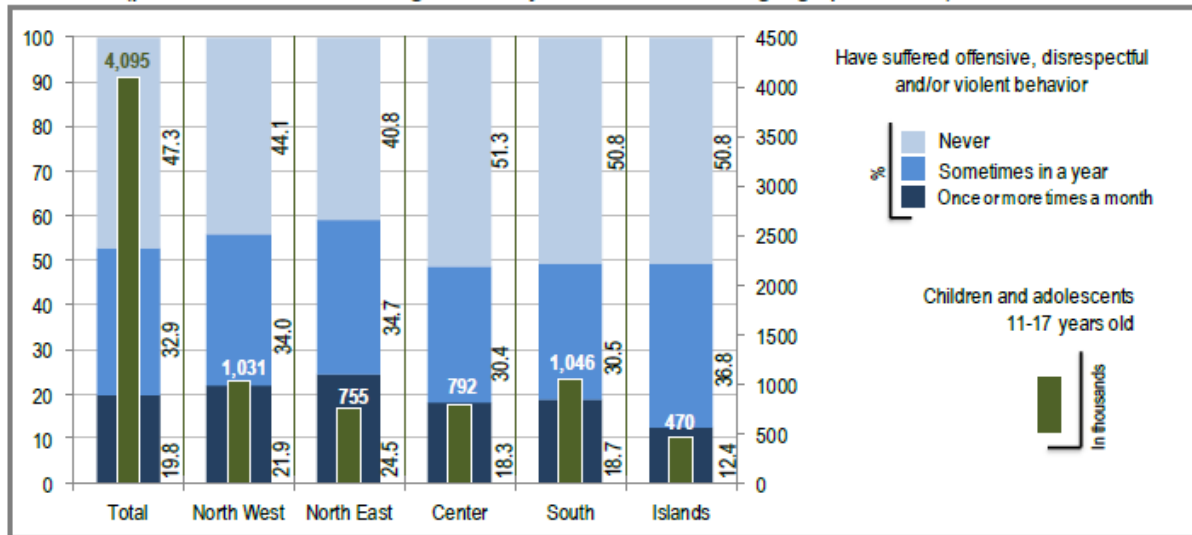
There is an increasing number of studies on violence affecting children in schools and bullying seems to be a relevant issue in Italy calling for attention. Evidence from national statistics collected by the Regional World Health Organization for Europe for the HBSC study Italy (n = about 59,000) **suggests that about 10% of students aged 11,13 and 15 years experience bullying at school. This data is similar to the percentage found by Menesini and Nocentini local study on students** (n = about 1,000) **in Tuscany** (Menesini and Nocentini, 2008; HBSC, 2010). Menesini and Nocentini' longitudinal study (2008) found that between 22 and 28% students had encountered light and sporadic episodes of bullying. They also found that so called full-time bullies are 7.2% of the population while temporary bullies make up 37.3% of the population (Menesini and Nocentini, 2008). In a smaller scale study (n = 208 teachers, 43 parents) conducted in the South of Italy, Di Vita, et al. (2009) found that 65% of teachers report the occurrence of sporadic episodes of violence at school. (see also the section on relationship).

Data collected from a sample of 1,059 8 to 15 year olds showed that half of all students had involvement in either bullying or victimisation (Baldry, 2003). This cross-sectional study, conducted in and around the city and province of Rome, indicates that both victimisation and bullying is widespread in the primary and lower secondary schools surveyed and revealed gender differences for bullying. For example boys reported bullying others significantly more often than girls for all types of bullying especially in the case of physical bullying and name calling. Gender differences emerged also with reference to indirect bullying, but only in the case of spreading rumors with boys more involved than girls. A qualitative study by Gini (2008a) mirrored these results in an urban context in northern Italy, finding that 14 to 16 year old males were more likely to be overtly victimised than their female peers (sample size, n=409). However, there was no difference between genders in relational victimisation, which is predominantly considered to be a female experience (ibid). A mixed methods study sampling a younger population of 6 to 10 year old children (n=113) found associations between typically masculine traits – such as independence, self-affirmation, risk-taking, social dominance and aggressiveness – and active bullying behaviour, regardless of sex (Gini and Pozzoli, 2006).

If we consider bullying not only in schools but also in other environments, a recent study by Istat (2014) on “Offensive and violent behaviours among early teens: bullying” found out that among early teens (aged 11-17 years) 19.8% has been victim of bullying several times a month and 9.1% of these victims have suffered actions of bullying on a weekly basis. If we consider the time period of one year, over 50% has suffered from offensive, disrespectful and/or violent episodes during the preceding 12 months.

FIGURE 14 FREQUENCY BY WHICH CHILDREN AND TEENAGERS 11-17 YEARS OLD HAVE SUFFERED OFFENSIVE BEHAVIOUR DURING THE LAST 12 MONTHS. REGIONAL BREAKDOWN

Year 2014 (per 100 children and teenagers 11-17 years old in the same geographical area)



Offensive, disrespectful and/or violent acts have been repeatedly suffered more by the adolescents aged 11-13 years (22.5%) than by those aged 14-17 years (17.9%); more by females (20.9%) than by males (18.8%). Also in relation to cyber bullying victims were more present among females (7.1% related to females aged 11-17 years vs. 4.6% related to males).

The victims of assiduous bullying accounted for 23% of the adolescents aged 11-17 years in Northern Italy. Including also actions that have occurred sporadically (sometimes during a year) the bullied adolescents living in the North were over 57%.

The most common bullying acts consist of offenses by nicknames, swear words or insults (12.1%), derision for physical appearance and/or way of speaking (6.3%), defamation (5.1%), exclusion because of their views (4.7%).

Among the adolescents aged 11-17 years, 16.9% have been a bullying direct victim, in a face to face relationship between the victim and the bully; 10.8% have been a bullying indirect victim, without physical contact. Among girls the difference between the direct bullying and the indirect one was minimum (respectively 16.7% and 14%). On the contrary, among males, the direct forms (17%) were more than double than the indirect ones (7.7%).

Bullying victims were more frequent among those living in households with less than four members (12.2% every day or nearly) than among those living in households with more than four members (7.8% every day or nearly). Among the young people aged 11-17, 23.6% of those who rarely meet their friends have been repeatedly bullied, compared to 18% corresponding to those who meet their friends every day.

To defend themselves from bullies, 65% of young people aged 11-17 (60.4% males and 69.9% females) considered appropriate to ask for help to parents; 41% considered appropriate to ask for help to teachers (37.4% males and 44.8% females).

Teachers generally appear as unprepared to respond to violence in the classroom or to detecting maltreatment at home. Di Vita et al. found that 46% of teachers feels unprepared to deal with bullying especially since they do not feel there are appropriate tools at their disposal to respond to the phenomenon. More specifically, 37% of teachers complained about the lack of structures to have after school meetings and deal with the issue (Di Vita et al, 2009). In a qualitative study on the experience of maltreatment and abuse, Zomero (2002) found that schools did not act as protective factors in the experience of her participants, who reported a lack of awareness/intervention by teachers. They had been dismissive of students' stories or tended to take the side of (violent) parents. However extra-curricular activities such as playing chess or writing were reported as protective, therapeutic factors for children who had experienced abuse.

Several studies explored individual characteristics associated with bullying behaviour, particularly around moral competence, or the ability to logically judge moral issues. Bullies consistently displayed normal or higher than average moral competence (Gini *et al.* 2011; Gini, 2006; Caravita, *et al.* 2012). Results from a mixed methods study by Gini *et al* (2011) indicate that while bullies are able to assess the moral permissibility of actions, there is a gap in applying this knowledge to behaviour. Using a sample of 719 9 to 13 year olds, this cross-sectional study found that bullying behaviour was associated with a lack of empathy, a lack of guilt and moral disengagement, or self-justification of behaviours that violate social norms (Gini *et al*, 2011). Moral disengagement was also positively correlated with aggressive behaviour in qualitative research by Gini (2006) in a sample of 204 8 to 11 year olds. Pozzoli *et al* (2012) found that moral disengagement was already present in children at a young age in their study sampling 663 8 to 10 year olds. However, when studying two age groups from 9 to 11 ($n=235$) and 12 to 15 ($n=305$) in a mixed methods study, Caravita *et al* (2012) found the association between moral disengagement and bullying only manifested in early adolescents. In this quantitative study, social status influenced the relationship between individual characteristics, in this case, morality, and social behaviour: high social status, or popularity, was positively correlated with bullying behaviour, particularly among boys (*ibid*). Using a similar sample (children aged 9-10, $n=133$ and aged 11-14, $n=236$) in a mixed methods study, Caravita *et al* (2014) also found that self-justification processes among early adolescents were susceptible to change under peer influence.

There is further research exploring the **convergence between individual traits and social behaviour**, and the resultant interaction with bullying behaviour. A mixed methods study by Pozzoli and Gini (2010), which sampled 462 seventh and eighth grade students in a mid-sized city in northern Italy, examined the interaction between individual characteristics and peer pressure. While students who displayed problem-solving coping strategies and personal responsibility were more likely to assist a bullied peer, they could be deterred from intervening if they perceived **peer pressure** not to do so (*ibid*). This finding aligns with other research that indicates the strong influence of social groups among adolescents (*ibid*).

Similarly, in their mixed methods study, Jones *et al* (2012) reported that among their sample of 128 10 to 13 year olds, **identification in a social group** affected the response to bullying: if a child felt strongly included within a group, one of whom was victimised, they were more likely to feel anger toward the bullying and in turn were more likely to tell a teacher about the incident. In another quantitative study on bystander behaviour in bullying, Baldry (2005) found that in a sample of 594 12 to 16 year olds, the most common reaction to bullying was to support the victim and discouraging the bully. The study showed that there were **differences in behaviour across gender** in that girls were more likely to support the victim than boys but boys were found to be more likely to either encourage the bully or ignore the incident altogether.

Gini (2008b) reported similar results with a sample of 246 9 to 12 year olds living in a mid-sized town in northern Italy in a mixed methods study. While girls supported victims slightly more than boys, the type of bullying affected results: boys were less likely to support victims of physical bullying, whereas girls were less likely to support victims of indirect bullying (ibid). Younger children also displayed greater support for victims of bullying when compared to pre-adolescent children (ibid).

The school environment emerged as a significant factor when examining perceptions of bullies and their victims. In the same study by Gini (2008b), a stronger sense of community within the school predicted the likelihood of supporting the victim. Conversely, in a school environment where students perceived a negative relationship with teachers, children were more likely to blame victims of bullying (ibid).

Bacchini *et al* (2009) conducted a cross-sectional study in Ercolano, near Naples, an area with high unemployment and a history of mob culture, to explore bullying among fifth year high school students. The authors found that in a sample of 734, the role of the 'bully' was associated with the way in which respondents perceived the level of danger and probability of **violent situations** in their relationships with teachers and classmates and in their local neighbourhoods.

The study reports that 'pure bullies' and 'bully victims' were most likely to experience dangerous and violent situations in their local community so therefore had more of a negative perception of their relationships, particularly with teachers. Lenzi *et al* (2014) also found that negative perceptions of teacher relationships were positively correlated with bullying behaviour. In a mixed methods study with a sample of 662 11 to 13 year old students, both girls and boys were more likely to display bullying behaviours if they believed their teacher treated them unfairly (ibid). Similarly, in another mixed methods study using a nationally representative sample of 11-, 13- and 15- year old students ($n=4386$), Nation *et al* (2008) found that **teacher-student relationships in which the child felt disempowered predicted bullying behaviour.**

While the teacher-student relationship was an important predictor of bullying behaviour among younger students, the parent-child relationship became a more significant factor in predicting bullying behaviour as children aged into adolescence (Nation *et al*, 2008). Children who did not participate in decision-making with their parents were more likely to engage in bullying behaviour (ibid). The Baldry (2003) study discussed earlier explored the influence of the home environment, examining links between domestic violence and bullying in schools (sample size, $n=1059$, aged 8-15). Among the sample, 17.4% of 8 to 15 years olds reported that they had been exposed to inter-parental violence with a larger prevalence of father to mother violence (ibid). Exposure to inter-parental violence was associated with bullying behaviours: bullies were almost two times more likely to have been exposed to domestic violence (ibid). This pattern is even more pronounced among girl bullies, who were over three times more likely to have been exposed to domestic violence than girls who were not exposed (ibid).

Among the suggested policies to tackle bullying are anti bullying interventions carried out in schools and continued promotion of national awareness of anti bullying campaigns (Vieno *et al*, 2015). The introduction of these measures showed a marked reduction in reported figures for bullying decrease between 2006 and 2010 (sample of 13,174; ibid).

Another typology of bullying on which a few research have been recently carried out concern **homophobic bullying**, namely acts on bullying based on actual or perceived sexual orientation.

Adolescents may be a target of this type of bullying because of their appearance, behaviour, physical traits or because they have friends or family who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or possibly just because they are seen as being different. Therefore homophobic bullying may be addressed both to homosexual and heterosexual adolescents and often homophobic verbal insults are used just to generically offend a person.

A research by **Prati (2010)** of 3,600 students of secondary schools from Northern-Centre Italy found out that about 80% of students hear the use of homophobic vulgar terms to offend peers and that more than 40% has assisted to acts of bullying towards people not showing traditional gender characteristics. Only a minority of students report homophobic bullying (14% in the secondary school of first degree and 3% only in the secondary school of second degree).

Homophobic bullying is carried out mainly in small groups or by single individuals, generally boys and of Italian nationality. Homophobic bullying has serious effects to the point that the victims may wish to leave school or in extreme cases to commit suicide.

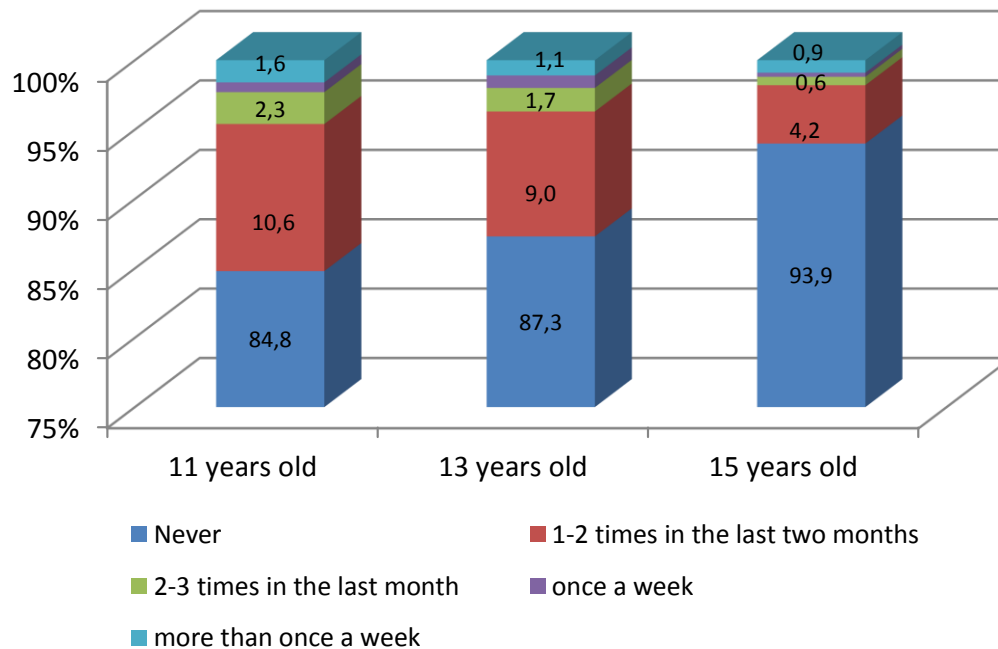
Another research by **Mauceri (2015)** based on a total sample of 920 students in 10 Roman schools identified as the main influencing factor the **acritical adherence to the heterosexist norm** of the dominant culture which leads to judge homosexual behaviours as unnatural and therefore to stigmatize. The group of pairs emerges as having a very significant impact as 59.7% of adolescents who have frequently assisted in their group of pairs to acts of homophobic bullying develops a very hostile attitude towards homosexuals, while 25% develops a medium-high negative attitude.

The research also analyzes the influence of **ideological affiliations** and shows that adherence to a right wing political-ideological orientation predisposes to homophobic prejudice in that it is founded on the preservation of a social order based on traditional cultural models. On the contrary a progressive orientation predisposes to have a more favourable attitudes towards homosexuality. The study also discusses the **role of the religious and political attitudes** of parents, showing a greater importance of the father one's. At the same time the investigation shows that the intensity of the hostility toward gay people tends to increase when the religious experience is regarded as fundamental by both parents. Concerning family models of education, homophobic prejudice is positively correlated with **authoritarianism**, namely education based on a strong submission to parental authority.

The research also highlights an important **gender difference** as for adolescent boys, unlike for girls, **the construction of their masculinity is based on a clear distancing from homosexuality**. The fear of being judged as homosexual often drives them to implement themselves homophobic behavior in an attempt to prove their masculinity. An inverse association between socio-cultural capital and prejudice also emerged, however in the case of the difference between high school and technical schools an hypothesis turned up (but needs more research to be confirmed) it is the teaching of some humanistic subjects, such as philosophy, that makes the difference.

Finally, regarding the effectiveness of prevention interventions, **dialogue on homosexuality** tends to produce a more open attitude towards homosexuals provided that it happens in a symmetrical situation of power and students are allowed to express freely their views, also the negative ones.

Figure 15. Children (ages 11-13-15) who experienced bullying at school within the last two months according to the frequency of the event, 2010



Source: HBSC Italia, 2010

Drivers

The major drivers emerging from research are: poor education and social skills; teachers' unfair behavior and previous experience of violence; the quality of relationships with peers, parents and teachers. Also the family size and presence of siblings as well as the social environment appear as relevant elements.

- Poor education and social skills development are risk factors for children to develop abusive behaviors.** An investigation of the Department of Juvenile Justice found that 71% of child offenders attend school till the first level of high school (age 11- 14); 15% stopped going to school after primary education and 73% were not working or involved in any sort of training (Dipartimento Giustizia Minorile, 2012). Similarly scholars investigating bullying found that children who frequently bully also have poor academic performance. (Menesini and Nocentini, 2008).
- Violence in schools, can be triggered by teachers' unfair behaviour.** A study by Vieno et al. (2011) of 6,744 students in 348 classrooms throughout Italy found that after adjusting for age, gender, and psychosocial confounding factors, bullying was more common in schools where students felt that teachers treated them unfairly and the administration was seen as overly strict. (Vieno et al, 2015; Lenzi, 2014) Also Gini (2008b), found that in a school environment where students perceived a negative relationship with teachers, children were more likely to blame victims of bullying while a stronger sense of community within the school predicted the likelihood of supporting the victim.

- While the teacher-student relationship was an important predictor of bullying behaviour among younger students, the parent-child relationship became a more significant factor in predicting bullying behaviour as children aged into adolescence (Nation *et al*, 2008).
- **The quality of relationships matter.** Nation *et al*. (2008) explored the link between bullying and relationships with peers, teachers and parents. Strikingly, students who said their teachers discouraged them from expressing themselves were more likely to be bullied and to perpetrate bullying. Children who said their parents made decisions by fiat, without consulting them, were also more likely to be involved in bullying, as victims and perpetrators. (also in the study by Nation *et al*, 2008) These findings suggest that when children aren't given the chance to develop healthier communication skills, they may tend to express themselves through gratuitous violence instead, or submit to the will of others as a coping mechanism. Differences in decision-making among peers seemed to have little influence on bullying or victimization, although bullies tended to be more socially competent, and victims less so. The authors suggest that these findings may indicate that anti-bullying interventions should work with families as well as schools. Also the study by Mauceri (2015) on homophobic bullying shows that homophobic prejudice is positively correlated with authoritarianism, namely education based on a strong submission to parental authority.
- Different studies (Pozzoli and Gini, 2010, Jones *et al*, 2012) showed the influence of **peers** also in relation to the response to bullying.
- **Family size and presence of siblings.** The Istat survey (2014) found out that early teens are more likely to be victims of bullying (12.2% every day or nearly) if they live in households with less than four members, compared to early teens who live in households with more than four members (7.8% every day or nearly).
- **Social environment.** The highest percentage (49.7%) of adolescents who were never victims of bullying is to be found among those who live in areas that are not deprived in comparison with adolescents who live in deprived areas (44.6%) where there is also the highest percentage of victims (23.3%) of frequent acts of offensive and violent behaviours. (at least one a month) (Istat, 2014)
- Concerning **homophobic bullying** the research by Mauceri (2015) identified the following most important drivers: conservatism (political, religious and gender); parents' religious attitudes (more important than that of the father); education based on authoritarian values; need to affirm their masculinity for adolescent boys.



Violence Affecting Children: In the Community

Descriptive

With regards to trafficking aimed at sexual exploitation, the collection of data is a very complex task because of the illegal and hidden dimension of the phenomenon. A research carried out in 2009 on the basis of the experience of some of the most relevant associations working on the street to support the victims of sexual exploitation (Caritas italiana, Gruppo Abele, CNCA, On the road) estimated that in 2009 there were about 24,700 women victims of trafficking out of each 8 to 10% are minors. (Castelli, 2014) The association Ecpat draws similar conclusions that child prostitution in Italy amounts to 2,500 each year (75% female, 25% male).

According to the Department of Equal Opportunities, 22,669 victims of trafficking¹⁹ (of which 1,215 were children) received services from social integration projects (ex-art 18 of law 286/98)²⁰ between 2000 and 2013. Concerning disaggregation by gender of adolescents included in the reintegration programmes there is a great variation by nationality. For instance data relating to 2013 show that for some nationalities there is an overwhelming majority of girls (e.g. Nigeria, Romania, Albania, China) while for others there is a great majority of boys (e.g. Egypt, Morocco, Ghana, Senegal). However, when we look at the typology of exploitation, we see that a majority of female corresponds to the typology of sexual exploitation whereas a majority of boys corresponds to other forms of exploitation. Therefore we can conclude that girls are much more exposed to sexual exploitation than boys.

Furthermore projects carried out under art. 13 of the law against trafficking (law 228/2003) included a total of 208 children from 2006 to 2012. However, it is crucial to remark that these numbers can be misleading in terms of providing information on the scope and scale of the problem as they are likely to severely underestimate the problem.

Boys and girls who engage in prostitution seem to have different experiences. Girls are more often caught up in exploitative criminal organizations while boys are more likely to be independent and engaged in a range of criminal activities, resorting to prostitution when they fail to raise money by other crimes, such as stealing (Carchedi, 2004; Camera dei Deputati, 2012).

¹⁹ There are no disaggregated data that correlates age, gender and the typology of exploitation, but overall data shows that the main purpose of child trafficking refers to sexual exploitation, although there are significant variations by nationality.

²⁰ Passed in 1998, the Italian Law on Immigration outlines provisions granted to immigrant populations. Article 18 is specifically aimed at trafficked people through the establishment of social assistance and integration programs.

Drivers

Because of its geographical position, Italy is one of the most important countries for human trafficking in Europe. How this affects children is less understood. The following associations appear to be important:

- **Demand for sex workers and child pornographic material.** Official sources mark a growth in the child pornography business and sex market, which involves minor workers as well (Save the Children 2013; Camera dei Deputati 2012; Carchedi 2004). According to the statistics of the international observatory against child abuse and sexual exploitation, Italy is the sixth top country in terms of demand for online child pornography (Verrecchia et al., 2011).
- **Existence of efficient organizations.** Criminal organizations are efficient in safeguarding their work facilitating the mobility of child victims, taking charge of logistics while performing strict control over girls (Save the Children 2013; Camera dei Deputati 2012). Exploiters force girls to declare being over 18 years of age, moreover they make them move often within the same city or across different regions, sometimes spending time in open sites, such as the street, or in flats. In addition, exploiters exercise control over these girls in various ways: patrolling with their car when girls are on the streets, as well as, psychologically and physically threatening them. (Save the Children, 2013)
- **Social ambitions linked to relationships with sex traffickers influence girls decisions to engage with the sex market.** Often victims and trafficking agents or managers come from the same social structure in home countries. They may share similar dreams and ambitions and have the same customs (Carchedi et al., 2004). With regards to Nigerian women, who represent one of the most prevalent groups being trafficked to Italy together with Romanians, Moroccans, Egyptians and Chinese in recent years, researchers have noted that according to Ibo culture younger people are subjected to the authority of the elders, girls wish to pay off debts and fear voodoo practices enacted by controlling agents (Save the Children, 2013). Moreover it is reported that trafficking recruiters have a notion of contributing to local development and poverty alleviation.
- **Emotional attachment to trafficking agents**, therefore acts as a powerful hook motivating girls to keep prostituting (Save the Children Italia, 2013), at times, in fact, girls may be in an emotional relationship with traffickers or other men that may encourage, if not force, them to prostitute.
- **Unaccompanied foreign children** who escape registration or escape from the reception structures where they are hosted, may become vulnerable to sexual exploitation from traffickers
- **Compulsive consumerism seems to drive adolescents to prostitute themselves.** From the investigation on child prostitution mandated by the Parliamentary Commission on Childhood and Adolescence, which included a series of hearings with key stakeholders and organizations working to fight sexual exploitation, it emerges that in bigger cities teenagers use prostitution as a way to satisfy secondary needs such as the purchase of goods (Camera dei Deputati, 2012)



Information, Communication and Technologies

The number of cyberbullying crimes that are reported to the police have doubled in the last period (from 154 in 2013 to 345 in 2014) as well as the number of the juvenile authors of crime (from 28 in 2013 to 60 in 2014). The author and victim of crime often know each other because they meet at school or in sport or recreational activities.

In 2014 there have been 238 adolescents between 14 and 17 years of age that reported to the police crimes of cyberbullying, 75 children between 10 and 13 years and 32 below the age of 9.

With regards to risks for violence in online communities, online chats seem to be the most dangerous sites for children to fall victim of grooming; however mobile phones and social networks can also expose children to the risk. It is interesting to note that victims of this kind of abuse belong to families that do not have a problematic profile (Rangone, 2012).

In 2014, 501 people have been reported to the police for crimes related to pedo-pornography, 49 have been subjected to measures restricting their freedom and 249 minors have been identified as victims of grooming.

As regards the websites with pedo-pornographic materials at the date of 31st December 2014 the black list included 1,746 websites (data of the Postal Police, Ministry of Interior). However these refer to foreign websites that are provided to the Italian Internet providers.

Drivers

For this section on the drivers of violence through information and communication technologies we rely on two main important data sources: reports from the world observatory against pedophilia (OS. MO. CO. P) and the international study on teenagers strategies for avoiding online sexual violence (n = 120) across five different countries in Europe, including Italy, carried out by Ainsaar et al. in 2012. Thematic areas of interest concern parents and children computer and social skills, parents supervision of children's use of the internet, the gap between children's motivation for communicating online and their knowledge about the risks they are exposing themselves to.

- **Parents supervision of children's internet use** (Meter Onlus, 2015; Ainsaar et al., 2012) influence the exposure to risk. Adolescent respondent to a cross country analysis of strategies against violence online (Ainsaar et al, 2012 : n =120 teenagers) agreed that free internet communication should be allowed only from a certain age onwards and that younger children ought be supervised by adults. However, respondents also highlighted the generational gap with older adults – including parents – as a major obstacle to preventive actions (Ainsaar et al 2012).

- **Limited knowledge of computer and social skills.** In a cross-country analysis of strategies against violence online, researchers found that adolescents endorse protective strategies when communicating via the internet such as adopting specific technical computer settings that guarantee access only to people who have been identified and accepted. Adolescents found that a key strategy of safe and successful communication is the ability of knowing when to stop (Ainsaar et al., 2012). When communication becomes inappropriate and insincere, indeed, a good strategy – according to the respondents of Ainsaar’s study – is to block the conversation online or stop responding.
- **Children are often unaware of the risks of online behaviors, which may be connected to sexual experimentation, rather than problematic backgrounds** (Ainsaar et al., 2012). Adolescents from different European countries report to appreciate the freedom and opportunities of exploring (sexual) life on the internet, which provides a space to play with identity and social interaction. Moreover, discussing sexual issues on the internet is easier than in real life, this makes the internet an appealing experiment place (Ainsaar et al., 2012).

9. Relationships



Parents and Children

In this section we address different types of relationships—parental, including mothers with children and fathers with children, as well as siblings and other family members. Additionally, we consider children’s relationships to their partners and peers. The family as a unit, no matter what configuration, is an important anchor for most children worldwide. All children have the need for and the right to parenting. Parenting means providing the ongoing care and support a child needs in order to survive and thrive. If children are to develop to their full potential, ongoing parental care and support through parenting is crucial. However, parents worldwide have to face multiple challenges and often do not have the skills, knowledge or resources to raise children to their full potential. Positive social support (family or friends) plays an important role in a child’s ability to make healthy choices. Social support means being able to access people that a child can rely upon if needed. The support of family, including siblings and friends (from the wider social support network) has long been seen to have a positive emotional effect on children. In Italy, there is little data on these important relationships and how they may or may not be associated with violence affecting children.

In an eight country study with a sample of 2,356 examining child maltreatment in the family, with a focus on European countries, the mother or the father of the child was identified most frequently as the perpetrator of harm..

Drivers

- **Psychological distress affecting parenting skills.** Miragoli and Di Blasio’s work on parents (n = 118) at high and low risk of maltreating their children (according to Child Abuse Potential Inventory Form VI – CAPI) shows that parents at high risk of maltreating their children have difficulties with regards to internalizing symptoms: depression, feeling of loneliness and with regards to building gratifying relationships with the child within and outside the family (Miragoli and Di Blasio, 2012). They also display problematic relational attitudes to the extent that they seem to be unable to maintaining relationships of solidarity with others and perceive their relationship with their partner as less satisfying and helpful than parents with low risk of maltreatment (Miragoli and Di Blasio, 2012).
- **Parents difficulty in recognizing risk behaviors and effective strategies to fight bullying.** Telefono Azzurro and Eurispes’ sample survey (2012) found that 43% of parents (n = 1266) do not really know how to handle bullying and show a tendency to minimize the problem; some parents think facing an adversity such as bullying is part of growing up. From the same survey, however, it emerged that 32.3% of children feel the need to receive guidance from their parents about how to go about incidents of bullying; although 21.9% declared to want to solve the

problem independently and 16.6% would actually be against seeking parents' involvement when handling a bullying incident Di Vita et al. note that parents also seems to be poorly equipped in detecting behaviours which are seen to be symptomatic of children likely to perpetrate bullying, such as hyperactivity, or becoming victims of bullying, as passiveness. (Di Vita et al., 2009).

- **Supporting relationship between the parents is a powerful protecting factor against maltreatment.** Evidence shows that partners supporting relationship impacts the quality of the care parents are able to provide to their offspring, harmony and support between parents, in fact, bears a positive influence on parental stress and the emotional state of the parents affecting their children (Miragoli and Di Blasio, 2012).



Mothers and Children

Drivers

- **Pregnancies emerge as delicate time during which violence may set off.** Some women identify the starting point of domestic violence in the transitioning period towards parenthood. Children's birth can also be a destabilizing factors triggering fathers' jealousy (Caso et al., 2011).
- **Stress and (mental) health** (Miragoli and Di Blasio 2012; Caso et al., 2011; Zomero, 2002; Bianchi and Moretti, 2006). Miragoli and Di Blasio (2012) found that mothers at high risk of maltreating their children show higher levels of distress and feelings of loneliness compared to fathers at high risk of maltreating their child. Unpredictable mood swings, excessive jealousy, aggressiveness and nervousness are risk factors for maltreatment among mothers (Caso et al., 2011).
- **Women's strength in terms of resistance and socio-economic independence are important protective resources.** In case of domestic violence the following emerge as protective factors: support of social network and friends; intervention of the Police or health personnel; women's professional and economic autonomy. Mothers' desire to protect their children is a strong motivation to report violence and seek help (Caso et al., 2011).
- **Positive attachment bonds between children and mothers are also powerful protective factors.** In a study investigating which individual dimensions (attachment bonds, intellectual level, internalizing or externalizing problems, coping strategies) favor resilience in maltreated compared with non-maltreated children, as well as the link of such dimensions with the positive or negative outcome of the family psychological treatment, on 110 subjects (composed of 52 maltreated children of low social class and 58 non-maltreated children of low and middle social

class), Di Blasio, et al (2005) found that attachment bonds of the secure type prove to be the variable, which alone is able to explain positive outcomes of family therapy.

- **Medical intervention (prematurity, caesarean section) and persistent PTSD symptoms** affect the mother-child relationship (Caffo et al., 1982; Ionio and Di Blasio, 2014). Mothers with PTSD symptoms are more likely to enact intrusive behaviours with their children and be anxious about their relationship with the child. Such behaviour, in turn affects the response of the children, who display negative engagement, disorganization and withdrawal (Ionio and Di Blasio, 2014). Therefore early mother-child interactions are affected in a way that puts a strain on the attachment and positive relation between the two.



Fathers and Children

Drivers

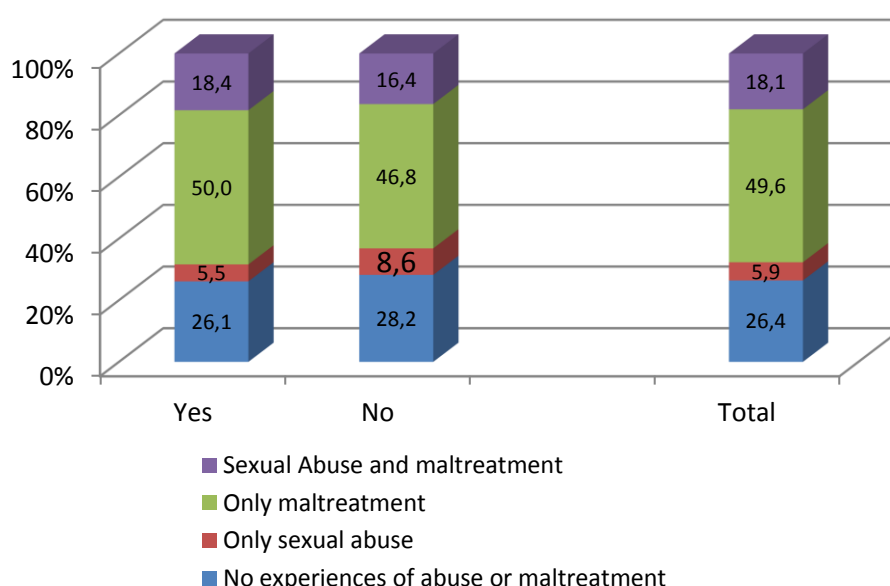
- **Physical maltreatment of children is more frequent among fathers than mothers.** Bardi and Borgonini-Tali (2001) found that for fathers, both minor and severe violence were significantly associated with father's educational levels, higher educational levels being associated with higher rates of minor violence, and lower educational levels having higher rates of severe violence.
- **Italian fathers appear to believe in the positive value of physical punishment more often than Italian mothers** (Arace, et al., 2013). As mentioned in the section on physical abuse, Arace et al indicate that Italian fathers seem to uphold a more authoritative and traditional parenting model compared to Italian mothers. Such model seem to influence their belief in the value of corporal punishment (Arace et al 2013)
- In the multi-country study cited above a need for fathers to be the target of prevention strategies and that further collection of data on harm towards children should be a research priority for all European countries (May-Chahal, 2006).



Siblings and other Family Members

According to the survey *Vite in bilico* the percentage of cases of sexual violence is higher in families without siblings (8.6% vs 5.9%). This could indicate that siblings may play a protective role however there is no available national data to support this hypothesis.

Figure 16. Girls' experiences during childhood according to the presence or absence of siblings.



Source: *Vite in Bilico*, 2006

On the contrary Pellai, et al. local study among high school students (n =2,839) (2004) found that the prevalence of sexual abuse is higher among children with siblings compared to single children. It is interesting to note that in a study examining a group of children who were referred to multiple services multiple times, Di Blasio, et al. (2003) found that 39% of these children had a sibling who had also been referred to the services. In 30% of the cases they had 2 siblings already known by services.

Drivers

From the analysis of the literature it emerges that there is contrasting data on drivers relating to the presence or absence of siblings concerning violence affecting children.

- However, a qualitative study investigating young adults experiences of violence during childhood shows that the opportunity to talk to siblings and non abusive parents about episodes of abuse acts as a strong factor facilitating victims path towards recovery. **Being listened to and**

believed by siblings and non abusive parents appear to be a strong factor fostering children's resilience (Zomero, 2002). From Zomero's interviews with young adults victims of abuse during childhood, it emerges that when family members, including grandparents, siblings and non abusive parents are present and available to children, victims gain the important chance of sharing the story of their experience with someone who believes them (Zomero, 2002). This process of narrating the episode of violence allows for the cognitive restructuring of events and the acknowledgment of one's feelings and emotions.



Partners and Peers

National statistics show that in 2010, about 36% of students (n=59,000) (age 11-13-15) reported having taken part in episodes of violence against peers at least once in the previous year (HBSC-Italy, 2010). In a longitudinal study, researchers found that between 22 and 28% of students (n = about 1000) had been subjected to bullying, 10% of whom to a very serious extent (Menesini and Nocentini, 2008). According to the national (n = 1.496 children and 1266 parents) investigation of Telefono Azzurro and Eurispes (2011), **dissemination of false and mean information about a person is the most frequent type of bullying affecting** 25% of the child population. Concerning different types of bullying this investigation found that 22.8% of children declared being victim of repetitive provocations and teasing; 21.6% victim of offences while 10.4% suffered episodes of being isolated and excluded. 10.4% is the percentage of **victims** who reported having their objects damaged by a bully; 7.6% experienced having food or objects stolen, 5.2% threats; and 3.1% experienced having money stolen (Telefono Azzurro and Eurispes, 2011). (see also the section on bullying)

According to the literature, other anti-social behaviors also call for attention. Menesini and Nocentini (2007) found that physical aggression outside the school was significantly more prevalent than bullying. Making a distinction among different types of aggressive behaviors they found that while bullying concerned 7.1% of their sample; relational aggressive behaviour involved 57.3% of respondents and physical aggression 44.8%. These types of behavior seemed to naturally decrease (see section on age and gender) as children grow up with the exception of serious systematic behaviors that seemed to worsen (Menesini and Nocentini, 2007; 2008).

With regards to child offenders and other anti-social behaviors, data from the Department of Justice (2012) indicates that 51% of child offenders commits crimes with other peers, as a group. In 75% of the cases, no adult was present. Forty eight (48)% of the crimes analysed in these records concerned adolescent victims, 20% younger victims. In general, **juvenile crimes are most often committed in groups towards people of more or less the same age** (Dipartimento Giustizia Minorile, 2012). Taking in consideration the number of referrals being monitored by the Telefono Azzurro 114 Helpline, the number of children and teenagers perpetrators of sexual violence increased from 6.4% in 2008 and 14.6% in 2012 (Telefono Azzurro, 2013).

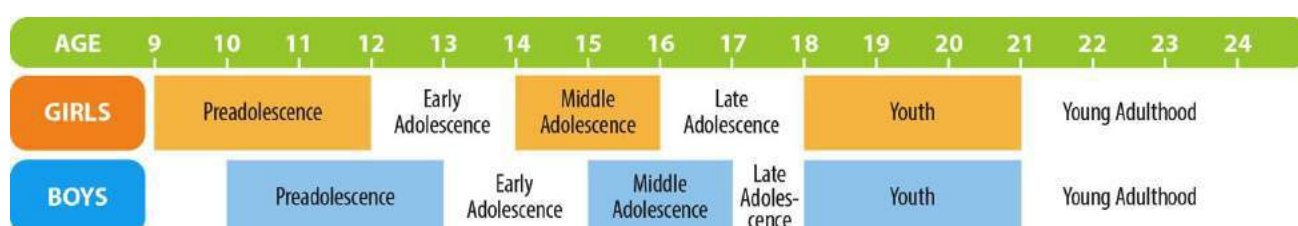
Finally in relation to dating violence among minors there is a lack of data and analysis on the subject.

10. Across Childhood/Key Transitions



Age/Gender Nexus

Age and Gender: Worldwide, research shows that children share common developmental milestones, but are far from homogenous and face diverse challenges. The research looks at children along the lifecycle and recognizes change as a critical factor in children's lives.



Age and gender are both extremely significant meta-factors, the implications of which will differ in different contexts. This approach acknowledges that opportunities and risk factors that are in turn dependent on not only differing political economies, as noted above but also on children's evolving capacities and they move through childhood. In the end, interventions must address all of these complexities.



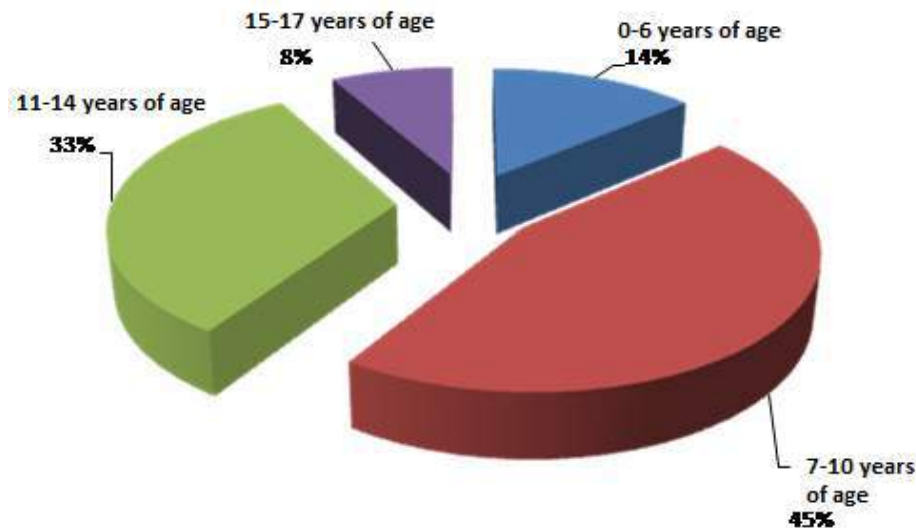
Childhood

In their analysis of website containing child pornographic material, Telefono Arcobaleno found that 40% of the victims are under 5 years of age (Verrecchia et al., 2011).



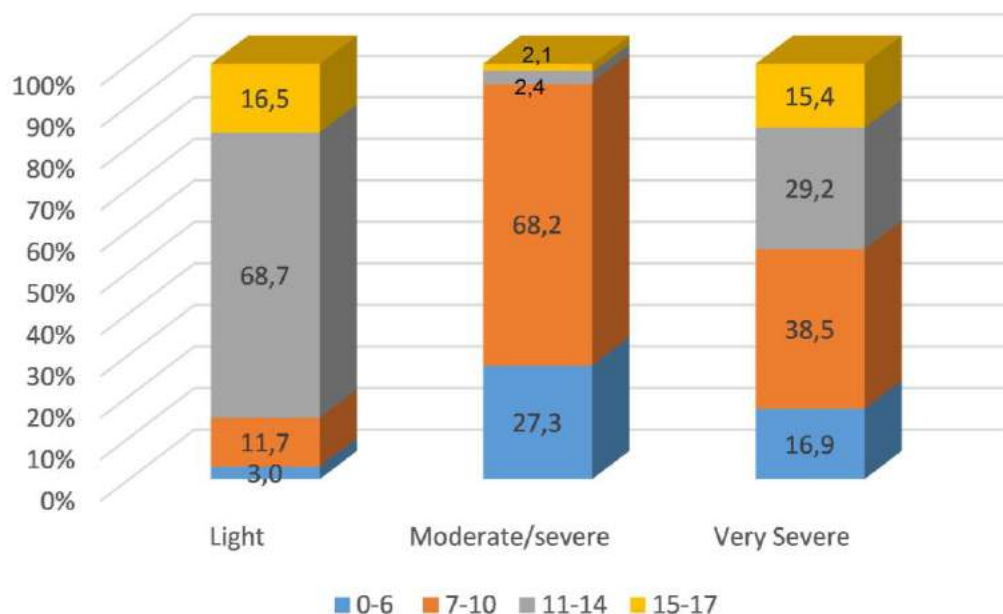
Preadolescence

In general, evidence shows that most cases of sexual violence concern younger children, often **under the age of 10**. According to the National Centre on Childhood and Adolescence, 60.3% of abuse concerned children under the age of 10 (Centro nazionale di documentazione e analisi per l'infanzia e l'adolescenza, 2001). The same percentage is recorded in the analysis of referrals to the Telefono Azzurro 114 helpline, where children under the age of 10 are involved in 60% of the cases (Telefono Azzurro, 2013). In *Vite in Bilico*, researchers found that sexual abuse would generally start when children are between 7 and 10 years old, 44.5% of cases (Bianchi and Moretti, 2006).

Figure 17. Adult women who reported experiencing child sexual abuse by age at first episode

Source: *Vite in bilico*, 2006

A little less than one woman in two claimed they had experienced the first episode of sexual abuse between 7 and 10 years, and 8 women out of 10 between 7 and 14 years.

Figure 18. Adult women who reported experiencing child sexual abuse by severity of abuse and age at first episode

Source: *Vite in bilico*, 2006

This graph shows that the age group 7-10 years comprises the highest share (38%) of cases of very severe abuse²¹.

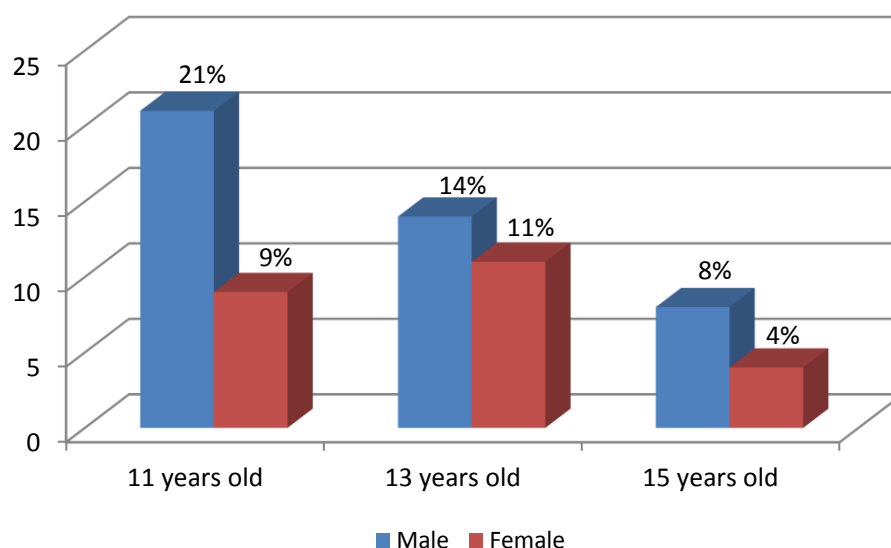


Early and Middle Adolescence

The second most common age group for onset of child sexual abuse according to the national *Vite in Bilico* study is between 11 and 14 (32.1%) (Bianchi and Moretti, 2006). The analysis of official records shows that children between 11 and 14 years of age constitute 40% average prevalence of victims of sexual crimes (Ministero Pari Opportunità, 2006).

As previously noted (see section about violence in school and outside schools), **bullying decreases with age** (Menesini and Nocentini, 2007).

Figure 19. Children (11,13 and 15 years of age) who experienced bullying at school within the last two months by gender, 2010



Source: HBSC, 2010

²¹ The Light, moderate / severe and very severe scale depends on the intensity of the abuse suffered as well as the frequency of the episodes of violence, for more details on the definition (Bianchi and Moretti, 2006).



Middle and Late Adolescence

With regards to sexual exploitation following migration trajectories, evidence shows that migrant minors involved in this type of activity are typically between 16 and 18 years of age. There were fewer groups of respondents who were 14-16 years old (Save the Children, 2013). Among the victims of sexual abuse, the number of adolescents victims of sexual abuse has increased from 13.4% to 22.3% between 2009 and 2012 (Telefono Azzurro, 2013). In 2001, 73.1% of child victims of sexual abuse are female. If we consider the age category 15-17 the percentage increases to 78.6% (Centro Nazionale di Documentazione e Analisi per l'infanzia e l'Adolescenza, 2002). According to *Vite in Bilico*, among other studies, **older age seems to be a protective factor** (see graph Abused women according to age at first episode and severity of sexual abuse) concerning severe types of sexual abuse.

Focus on gender

Concerning the data disaggregated by gender on the different typologies of violence, the first fundamental element is the limited availability of data. The largest surveys on violence against children focus only on girls (*Vite in Bilico* and Istat surveys), while other surveys do not distinguish by gender. There are, however, some studies on specific typologies of violence (e.g. bullying) as well as the survey by Cismai and Terres des Hommes that disaggregate data by gender.

The most evident emerging trends are that girls are much more likely to be victims of sexual abuse. At the same time boys are more likely to be physically abused including for corporal punishment.

Evidence about sexual violence comes from juvenile justice data that indicates a much higher percentage of female victims, 75% versus 25% males and a reverse trend for offenders, 99% male, 1% female (Dipartimento Giustizia Minorile, 2012). Data also shows a constant pattern through time. Official records on the number of girl victims of sexual crimes, for instance, show a constant percentage from 2001 and 2006 of more than 70% (Dipartimento pari opportunità, 2006). In 2002, 75.8% of child victims of sexual violence is female; in 2003 90.4% is female; in 2004 83.6% (Bianchi et al., 2006). Gender is a constant variable through age and ethnicity (Centro Nazionale di Documentazione e Analisi per l'infanzia e l'Adolescenza, 2001). Other studies confirm this trend. For instance Pellai et al found that girls are 2.4 times more likely to be subjected to light forms of sexual abuse than boys and 4.2 times more likely to be subjected to serious types of sexual abuse than boys (Pellai et al, 2004).

Also data from the Department of Equal Opportunities on reintegration projects for children victims of trafficking shows that girls are much more likely to be victims of sexual exploitation while boys are more likely to be victims of other kinds of exploitation. Evidence suggests that **girls are more heavily caught up in unequal power relations** with exploitative organizations and people compared to boys, who are less likely to be tied to sexual exploitation managers and organizations (Carchedi, 2004). Young boys also appear to engage in prostitution activities more consciously and autonomously compared to girls involved in sexual exploitation (Carchedi, 2004; Commissione parlamentare per l'infanzia e l'adolescenza, 2012). Often times, in fact, girls are tied to specific people (traffickers/older women) who deceive and coerce them into sexual exploitation while boys may voluntarily resort to prostitution when not performing well on other tasks such as stealing (Carchedi, 2004; Commissione parlamentare per l'infanzia e l'adolescenza, 2012).

Concerning the watching of pornography and its effects on violence and victimization, Romito et al (2011), found that male adolescents are more exposed to pornography than girls as almost all of the male adolescents in the study sample (n=303, 12th grade and 18 to 25 year olds), had watched pornography in comparison with two thirds of female adolescents.

Boys and girls seem to be equally taken care of by social services due to maltreatment. In the national survey on children taken care of by social services, it emerges that out of 1,000 girls taken care of by social services 212 are victims of maltreatment; while out of 1,000 boys taken care of by social services, 193 are victims of maltreatment. (Cismai and Terres des hommes, 2015)

When looking at bullying, **boys and girls seem to differ in both drivers and typologies of behaviors they are most likely to be subjected to.** In the male population, bullying correlates with physical aggressive behavior, while for girls it correlates with relational aggressive behavior (Menesini and Nocentini, 2007). Telefono Azzurro and Eurispes (2011) found that boys are more likely to suffer objects' damaging episode (13.7% compared to 8.7% of girls) as well as threats (7% as opposed to 4.2% girls) and hitting (4.1% and 2.5% girls). With regards to the spreading of false and mean information, victims are more often girls 28% as opposed to boys 20.8%. According to this study, girls are also more likely to become victims of cyber bullying: 23.3% compared to 14.7% of the boys (Telefono Azzurro and Eurispes, 2011).

11. Ethnicity

From the literature review it emerges that in general there is a lack of disaggregated data by ethnicity. From the survey by Cismai and Terres des Hommes it emerges that the percentage of foreign children assisted by social services due to maltreatment is double than the one of Italian children (about 1% of Italian children and about 2% of foreign children).

The Istat survey on violence against women aged 16-70 years states that there are no significant differences between Italian and foreign women, however it does not provide a specific indication about minors.

Data disaggregated by ethnicity are provided in relation to sexual exploitation as trafficking for the scope of sexual exploitation involves foreign children and adolescents who are trafficked from other countries (Eastern Europe, Africa, Latin America and Asia) by criminal organizations or individuals. Child prostitution also involves Italian children, as indicated in the report by the Parliamentary Commission on Childhood and Adolescence, however its extent is difficult to ascertain.

According to the investigation carried out by the Parliamentary Commission on Childhood and Adolescents (2012), foreign minors, both male and female affected by sexual exploitation come mostly from Romania and Romanian Roma, but also from Northern Africa, Albania, Moldova, Nigeria and the Balkans in general. Foreign female minors are estimated to represent about 7% of the people involved in prostitution in the street (in some areas of Northern-Central Italy this percentage rises to 10-12%). In recent years, Italian services have also engaged with an increasing number of victims from Morocco, Egypt and China (Save the Children, 2013). Also a study from Unicri (2010) states that the most represented nationality among children trafficked to Italy is Romanian, followed by Nigerian.

Data about the social reintegration projects financed by the Department of Equal Opportunities shows that most represented nationalities concerning girls involved in trafficking for sexual exploitation are: Nigeria, Romania, Albania, China. The majority of boys come from Egypt, Morocco, Ghana, Senegal, however, they are involved in other forms of exploitation.

With regards to corporal punishment in a local study (n =123 parents) conducted in the North of the country, no cultural differences were found in parental beliefs about physical discipline and frequency of use of corporal punishment in the same study. (Arace et al., 2013). The same study also notes that in migrant families the number of children seems to affect the use of corporal punishment (higher prevalence of maltreatment in larger families) and that younger children are physically punished more often than older children (Arace et al., 2013).

Drivers

- **Mobility of migrants within a condition of social marginalization increases vulnerability for sexual exploitation** (Camera dei deputati, 2012). As already mentioned, the Parliamentary Commission on Childhood and Adolescence mandated a study on child prostitution which entailed a series of interviews and hearings with NGO's active in the field and specific witnesses. The investigation highlights the link between the phenomenon of migration in Italy at large and the specificities of child prostitution within that. It is interesting to note that Italy is a way into other European countries and that migrants move from one country to the other to avoid police controls.

- Families of foreign nationalities may have weaker social networks. (See family social isolation in violence in the home) Caso et al. (2011) interviewed 24 women victims of domestic violence living in a shelter home and found that in multi-ethnic couples, partners can feel rejected by their spouses' families.
- Migrant women's poor language skills hinder their capacity to report violence and protect their children (Caso et al., 2011).

12. Violence Prevention Interventions: Findings from the Mapping

In Italy the welfare system for children and families is based on the role of local municipalities and health units which ensure services for the prevention of violence against children, as well as for the treatment of the consequences of violence. Basic health services have to respect the minimum levels of healthcare (LEA) that have been approved in 2001. The essential levels of care (LEA) are the services that the National Health Service has to provide to all citizens, free of charge or on payment of a fee.

Concerning projects and interventions for children, Law no. 285 of 28 August 1997 developed and consolidated regional and local interventions, while law no. 328 of 8 November 2000, "General policy law for the implementation of an integrated system of social services" reshaped the organization of services of the local and regional governance. Law 328/2000 was part of a more general planning action for redefining the responsibilities of regional governments, which became the exclusive authorities in charge of social issues by means of the approval of Constitutional Law no. 3 of 18 October 2001.

As regards social services, the Inter-regional Nomenclator of services aims at providing a mapping tool of the interventions and social services through the integration of the descriptions and definitions provided by the various regions. The range of interventions and services provided in the Nomenclator refers to the social interventions provided by the municipalities and individual members as provided by law 328/2000.

The Nomenclator includes the following typology of services: Social secretariat, information and counselling for access to the services network; Prevention and awareness, promotion and participation initiatives; Social emergency services; Social service activities to support people, the family and social network; Social integration services; Educational and welfare initiatives and services to support work placement; Measures to promote home care service; Support services; Cash transfers; Transfers for payment of fees; Transfers for activation of services; Additions to income; Day centres and daytime activities; Centres with an educational-recreational function; Educational services for early childhood; Socio-healthcare and activity centres; Residential housing; Residential care and social welfare centres for health and social integration; Other centres and residential housing. Each typology has sub-typologies of interventions.

In addition to this public basic services that normally run a permanent basis, a series of projects and interventions with a definite timing are carried out by the voluntary sector. Such projects and interventions may avail of public funding or they can be based on private funding that the associations themselves avail of. They can be carried out by associations on their own or in partnership with the public sector.

Sources identified for the mapping include:

- Public bodies carrying out projects at national level (e.g. national Ministries such as the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies; the Ministry for Education; the Ministry for Health; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the Postal and Communication Police)
- Public bodies or associations carrying out projects at local level through public funds (in particular we took into consideration projects included in the reports on the state of implementation of law 269/98; projects funded through the law 285/97 which provides funding to 15 cities for different typologies of projects/interventions including violence prevention;

project funded through the public notice of the Department of Equal Opportunities specifically dedicated to violence against children);

- The most relevant associations/NGOs working in the field of protection and promotion of children's rights
- Some EU funded projects

Given the overall Italian welfare system, as explained above, the following mapping of interventions focused on prevention of violence against children cannot be considered as exhaustive. However, it represents a significant overview of the interventions in this area both as regards actions carried out by public bodies and associations.

In total we collected about 90 projects many of which included more than one intervention. As regards the **typology of interventions**, the most common one was that of **awareness-raising** about violence against children (48 interventions²²) followed by violence prevention interventions in schools addressed to children and/or teachers (44), parenting programmes and support (24), home visitation (14), training addressed to professionals working with children (13).

The first typology is that of awareness raising, however if we consider that a significant part of these interventions are carried out in schools, we can conclude that the typology of **violence prevention and education interventions in schools** is the most common among the identified projects. Within this large typology, interventions have focused on different topics and methodologies. Among the projects that have specified the latter, the following methodologies have been used: peer education, on prevention of gender violence and discrimination, life skills development, sexual/emotional education, dating violence prevention, prevention of homophobic violence, child sexual abuse avoidance.

Interventions in schools generally aim on the one hand at increasing teachers' capacity to recognise and respond to abuse and maltreatment and on the other at working with children and adolescents on sexual and emotional education, gender violence, bullying, the recognition of stereotypes and prejudices and to recognize when relationships can become violent. They also increasingly focus on new media education and on identifying the risks associated with Internet and social media.

Among the **awareness-raising campaigns**, the 'white ribbon' (fiocco bianco) campaign emerges as particularly innovative in that it targets men and in particular boys in schools in order to prevent gender violence.

Parenting programmes and home visitation also represent a frequent typology of interventions. These are normally aimed at preventing minors' ill-being through early interventions at the family level, early detection of maltreatment or risk situations and at fostering good relationships and attachment between children and parent(s). Most interventions target primarily mothers, but also aim at involving fathers. Moreover, they support parents in approaching social services available in the territory. The most significant project in this area is the national programme PIPPI (programme to prevent

²² As already specified, when considering these numbers we have to bear in mind each project may contain more than one intervention, or typology of interventions.

institutionalization) that since 2011 included a large number of children and parents.²³ An innovative methodology in this field is based on the idea that a family with difficulties is helped by another family that is available to provide a support mainly through friendly relations.

Among the projects that have focused on **training of professionals** working with children, the majority of them have worked with educators and social workers, but also health professionals and police. In some cases projects aimed at training multidisciplinary teams composed of health professionals, social services and education practitioners with the objective of monitoring risk situation and provide an early intervention.

As regards the specific topic (or sub-topic) addressed by the interventions, 17 have focused on bullying prevention in all its forms including cyber-bullying. Moreover, a good number of projects (13) focus on the prevention of violence through the use of Internet and deal with new forms of crimes, such as grooming, cyber-bullying, sexting etc.

Other typologies of interventions include mentoring programmes (3) and helplines (3).

As regards the **setting**, the majority of interventions take place in **schools** and in the **homes** while some also include the involvement of the social services and the local health units. Another important setting is that of the **website** and **social media**. Some projects took place in associations and in one case in a religious setting (church). In one case the project was carried out in prisons and addressed at authors of violence in order to prevent the re-occurrence of the crime.

Concerning the **target group** most project target children and adolescents through school interventions, as well as parents (or in particular, mothers/pregnant women in parenting programmes) and teachers (and other school operators). Other professionals involved are those of the social, health and judiciary sector. Some interventions, such as awareness campaigns, are addressed to the general public. One intervention targeted authors of crime and one included religious figures (priests).

Projects generally address the needs of girls and boys alike. Some parenting programmes target in particular mothers while the project “White Ribbon” specifically target boys. The **ethnicity** dimension is not often specified in the projects. The typology of projects that take the ethnicity dimension more into consideration is that of parenting programmes where mothers of foreign nationalities are included in the sample or cultural mediation is part of the intervention. In one case the project is based on the infant observation method which respects different child rearing styles.

Theories of change are explicitly indicated only in a minority of cases. Generally parenting programmes refer to psychological theories and in particular theories of attachment. The PIPPI project is based on Brofenbrenner’s (2005) ecological model on humans’ strengths and resilience. Other interventions refer to the theories elaborated by different authors, e.g. Stern (2006), Ammaniti (2002) and Korfmacher (2008) which develop psychological and educational perspectives, paying attention to relational dynamics, taking into consideration people’s lives trajectories; Winnicott and psychodynamic theory;

²³ In the first edition of the programme 2011-2012 about 300 professionals have been involved (including social workers, educators, psychologists and child psychiatrists); 122 children in 89 families in the target group; 37 children in 35 families in the control group. During the second edition in 2013-2014 about 630 professionals have been involved, 198 children in 144 families in the target group and 39 children in 34 families in the control group.

Esther Bick; Bowlby's attachment theory; Stern's emotional harmony; Tronick's mutual regulation model; Selma Fraiberg, Bertrand Cramer and Stern.

As regards education's interventions, in one case the project is based on the idea that it is necessary to act before gender stereotypes are formed in order to prevent gender violence, therefore the project focuses on pre-adolescents. Other projects are based on education theories developed by their authors (e.g. Veglia, 2004; Pellai et al., 2004) or emphasise the importance of developing teachers' ability to listen to children's needs.

The work developed by the association Hansel e Gretel is based on the following methodology based on 5 key points: *subjectivity* describes adults' capacity to listen, define and express their own needs including that of being supported in the responsibility to raise children at the family or professional level; *emotional intelligence* is the capacity to acknowledge and express in words feelings and emotions; *small groups*, which are stable and continuous, favour participants feelings of care and reassurance, which are crucial to counter anxiety and indifference; empathic understanding based on the countering of dynamics of blame and guilt towards one's own or other people's doing; play in order to give people the opportunity to elaborate experiences.

The project addressed to the authors of crime is based on the idea that self-awareness and the acceptance of one's suffering decreases the risk of objectifying other people which is the basis of violent action.

Concerning the **evaluation** dimension, this was present in the majority of projects financed through the funds of Based on the law 285/97 and the Public Notice of the Department of Equal Opportunities

The **length** of the projects may vary from a few months to one or two years (the majority of projects) to projects that are active since several years (a significant number).

Normally projects have produced a wealth of **materials** that range from brochures, booklets, multimedia materials, videos and cartoons, campaign posters in awareness raising interventions to manuals for teachers and parents in school education projects to parenting training manuals and guidelines for professionals in parenting programmes. Other advocacy materials include annual activity reports, press releases, manifestos, agendas for action. Moreover, some projects have produced books and published surveys and research. Most materials are available on-line.

Projects are mostly supported by public **funding** in particular thanks to national funds including the law 285/97, the Public Notice of the Department for Equal Opportunities, funds of specific Ministries, such as the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (for the project PIPPI), the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Youth and the State Police. Also regional or municipal funding, including those provided by local commission for Equal Opportunities, contribute greatly to the funding of projects. Some associations are able to support the interventions through their own funding or through other private contributions, such as those of foundations. Finally some of the larger projects are financed through EU funding, mostly through the Daphne and Safer Internet Programmes.

13. Concluding remarks

The *Multi-Country Study on the Drivers of Violence Affecting Children* in Italy and other participating countries puts forward two inter-related concepts. Firstly, understanding violence affecting children requires a holistic, gender sensitive approach attuned to children's evolving capacities as they age and grow. Acknowledging the dynamic nature of age and the importance of gender differences sheds new light on both the significance of power in children's lives and the importance of critical relationships in determining a child's risk and protective factors. Secondly, recognizing and subsequently tackling historically entrenched norms and patterns of behaviour are vital steps forward, combining *both* top-down (social policies and laws) and bottom-up approaches (working with children, families, teachers, and communities).

Here below we list some of the major trends emerging from the literature review and our findings.

At the **structural level** inequalities based on socio-economic status, ethnic discrimination and migration status emerged as potential drivers as well as efficient and embedded structures linked with organized crime and the perpetuation of commercial sexual exploitation.

At the **community level** children who live in socially isolated families are five times more likely to experience maltreatment (Bianchi & Moretti, 2006). Prevailing stereotypes of masculinity increase the risk of harsh corporal punishment at home and bullying at school.

At **interpersonal and individual level** assisted violence, previous experiences of (sexual) abuse and conflictual family environments are risk factors for violence and maltreatment. For example, Children who have witnessed violence or have been abused in the past are far more likely to experience violence and perpetrate it in the future. (Istat, 2015; Dipartimento Giustizia, 2012). Moreover, children who experience physical or sexual abuse or neglect at home are at greater risk of both becoming bullies at school, and being bullying victims. Other risk factors for victimization and bullying include parental psychological distress, parental health problems, low parental education and skills and low parental income.

In relation to **gender differences** the most evident emerging trend is that girls are much more likely to be victims of sexual abuse while the overwhelmingly majority of authors of sexual violence (both adults and minors) are male. Teenage girls, in particular migrant or girls of foreign origin, are more likely to become dependent on organizations and people involved in the sexual exploitation industry. At the same time boys are more likely to be physically abused including for corporal punishment. Gender stereotypes leading to gender inequality emerge early in life and are mediated both by family and the education system.

In relation to **age** the most vulnerable age is 7-12 years concerning bullying and sexual violence.

Based on this literature review, the most significant gaps in data collection emerged in the following areas:

- a) lack of data, in particular lack of surveys on the prevalence of the phenomenon (most surveys are retrospective) and very little data disaggregated by gender
- b) little data by place where the violence took place
- c) little data by ethnicity

Further recommendations about the development of the child protection system in relation to the prevention and monitoring of violence against children can be found in the following documents authored by Unicef OoR and University of Edinburgh: "Research to Policy Brief: Using Evidence to Inform Violence Prevention in Italy" (2016) and "Understanding the Drivers of Violence Affecting Children in Italy" (2016).

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Appendix A: Methodology

The Multi-Country Study involves three separate components: 1) a literature review of academic papers including a scoping of existing ‘grey literature’-- informally published written material (such as research reports and research briefing papers) that may be difficult to locate through conventional literature searches, 2) a mapping of the interventions landscape, particularly of evaluated prevention programs, and 3) secondary analysis of existing datasets. These three components analyzed together, allow for the identification of initial hypotheses around the drivers or determinants of violence, contributing to theories of change around what triggers violence and development and testing of intervention components. The results of this work have also been used to guide national discussions and make suggestions for adjusting existing interventions and current policies.

Systematic Literature Review

A systematic review was conducted to identify studies reporting on the risk factors of child maltreatment (emotional, physical and sexual abuse) in Italy. Key English databases were searched (PubMed/Medline, PsycINFO (EBSCOhost), CINAHL-ebSCO, ERIC, EmBase Social Work Abstracts and SocIndex) and child protection experts and local databases in Italy were also accessed to identify additional studies. The search employed a mix of both free text and controlled vocabulary of subject heading and keyword searches to identify articles via the electronic databases. To provide the broadest coverage of articles, the initial search term consisted of three components: population, type of maltreatment and country name. An example of the keyword search is ‘child’ (child OR childhood OR children OR adolescents) AND (‘maltreatment’ OR ‘sexual abuse’ OR ‘physical abuse’ OR ‘emotional abuse’) AND (‘Italy’). These keyword searches were adapted by database and the results were saved in Endnote and duplicates accounted for and removed.

Grey literature (e.g. informally published and in the native language) plays an important role in the Multi-country Study because national perspectives on violence are often hidden, like the social norm itself. Frequently, scholars and NGOS from the country sites have produced university level theses and dissertations or qualitative evaluations that may help interpret from the native perspective how the drivers of violence operationalize in particular cultural, historical, political and economic contexts. Grey literature was searched primarily through the library at Istituto degli Innocenti – Italy’s largest library of research and studies on childhood. The library database was searched using the following 22 headings under the library catalogue:

1. online sexual abuse (violenza sessuale on line),
2. conventions (convenzioni),
3. abuse and violence at school and in children care services (violenza e maltrattamenti a scuola e nei servizi educative),
4. violence and abuse in multicultural contexts (violenza/maltrattamento in contesti multi-etnici),
5. domestic violence and divorce (violenza intrafamiliare nella separazione e divorzio),
6. child witness to violence (violenza intrafamiliare assistita),
7. prevention of domestic violence and protection of victims (prevenzione della violenza intrafamiliare e tutela delle vittime),

8. care of abused and neglected children (presa in carico e interventi sulle vittime di violenza intrafamiliare)
9. impact of domestic abuse and violence on adults (effetti del maltrattamento/violenza intrafamiliare in età adulta)
10. impact of domestic violence and violence (effetti del maltrattamento/violenza intrafamiliare)
11. abusive parents (genitori maltrattanti)
12. domestic sexual violence (violenza sessuale intrafamiliare)
13. domestic violence (violenza intrafamiliare)
14. punishment (punizioni)
15. neglect (trascuratezza)
16. violence and abuse and adopted and out-family children (violenza/maltrattamento e minori adottati e fuori famiglia)
17. effects of violence and abuse on adults (effetti del maltrattamento/violenza in età adulta)
18. effects of violence and abuse (effetti del maltrattamento/violenza)
19. protection and prevention (prevenzione e tutela)
20. child abuse and violence (violenza e maltrattamento)
21. child pornography and sexual exploitation (pedopornografia e sfruttamento sessuale)
22. paedophilia (pedofilia)

Studies were included if: a) they were published in a scholarly peer-reviewed journal, b) they were published through 'grey literature' channels, c) the study explored the drivers of violence against children (emotional, sexual and physical abuse) before 18 years of age, whether the participants were children or adults, d) they covered one or more aspects of drivers on different levels of the socio-ecological model (socio-political, institutional, community, relationships and individual levels) and e) the study explored risk and protective factors for either perpetration or victimisation. Studies were mostly primary research studies with the exception of administrative data reports or policy reports that included data not accessible elsewhere.

All abstracts were examined to determine whether they met the inclusion criteria developed for the study and eligible papers examined in detail for key variables related to study design and findings (the review protocol is available from the authors). Where additional information was needed, the study authors were directly contacted. In addition, each article was reviewed for data quality based using a newly developed quality assessment framework designed for the study, which assessed quality across 17 domains. This quality assessment tool was based on previous tools utilized in studies exploring gender-based violence and child maltreatment and the guidelines for evaluating prevalence studies and qualitative studies.

All studies are cited in Appendix B. Each study underwent a comprehensive data extraction process that included collecting information across 54 variables in four main areas: summary information, study information (including sample size, methods, etc), ethical considerations and findings.

Secondary Analysis

In addition to the systematic literature review and interventions mapping, a secondary analysis of the existing national dataset, *Vite in Bilico*, a national household survey of women's experiences as children, was conducted. The data analysis focused on four potential drivers of violence affecting children: social isolation, family structure, family norms around silence & blame, and family stress as including the following variables:

Social Isolation

1. Family did not socialise outside the nuclear family
2. Family did not socialise regularly with other parents
3. Did not participate in associations or organisations
4. Not having anyone to go to when there are problems in the family
5. Not being able to go to family in case of need
6. Others?

Family Structure:

1. Small vs. Large family
2. Family composition
3. Civil status of parents

Family norms around silence & blame:

1. Tensions between family members tend to remain hidden and unspoken of
2. There have always been secrets in my family
3. When things went wrong we would accuse each other

Family Stress:

1. Memories of significant problems in the family
 - a) Problems with mother
 - b) Problems with father
 - c) Problems with siblings
2. Family financial difficulties

Secondary analyses included calculating bivariate odds ratios exploring the relationship between abuse experiences and potential 'drivers' variables as well as exploring frequency, severity and type of maltreatment. Analyses were conducted in SPSS version 19.0.

Appendix B: Included Studies

Bibliographic Information	Type of Study and Sample Size	Summary
Ainsaar, M. et al., <i>Adolescents' strategies for avoiding online sexual violence</i> , in «Maltrattamento e abuso all'infanzia», vol. 14, n. 3 (nov. 2012), p. 53-71	Focus group discussions with 120 young people in 19 focus groups	The aim of this paper is to analyse the most successful sexual violence avoidance strategies on Internet, as expressed by adolescents. Paper gives an overview about main practices that children consider effective in avoiding sexual violence related harm.
Bacchini, D., Esposito, G. and Affuso, G., 2009. <i>Social Experience and School Bullying</i> in Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology, 19: 17–32	Cross-sectional study in Ercolano, near Naples, an area with high unemployment and a history of mob culture, with a sample of 734 of 7th, 10th and 13th grade students.	The study showed that bullying role is significantly associated with the way subjects perceive their exposure to dangerous and violent situations within the neighbourhood, their relationship with classmates and their relationship with teachers. Pure bullies and bully victims are especially likely to experience dangerous and violent situations in the neighbourhood where they live and have a more negative perception of their relationship with teachers; for pure victims and bully victims, a significant association is obtained with negative perceptions of relationships with classmates.
Baker, A. J. L. & Verrocchio, M. C. 2013. <i>Italian College Student-Reported Childhood Exposure to Parental Alienation: Correlates With Well-Being</i> . Journal of Divorce & Remarriage, 54, 609-628.	Survey of 257 undergraduate psychology students in Chieti, Italy	The study explored childhood exposure to parental alienation, psychological maltreatment, and measures of current functioning among undergraduate students.

Bibliographic Information	Type of Study and Sample Size	Summary
Baldry, A. , 2003. <i>"Bullying in schools and exposure to domestic violence."</i> In Child Abuse & Neglect 27 (2003) 713–732	Cross-sectional study with a sample of 1059 Italian elementary and middle school students in the city and province of Rome. Participants completed a self-report anonymous questionnaire measuring bullying and victimization and exposure to interparental violence.	The survey showed that half of all students had involvement in either bullying or victimization. It also revealed gender differences: for example boys often reported bullying in the form of 'spreading rumours' and direct physical aggression with intent to harm. Exposure to interparental physical violence and direct bullying were significantly associated especially for girls: girls exposed to father's violence against the mother and those exposed to mother's violence against the father were among the most likely to bully directly others compared with girls who had not been exposed to any interparental violence.
Baldry, A. (2005) <i>"Bystander Behaviour Among Italian Students"</i> , in Pastoral Care in Education: An International Journal of Personal, Social and Emotional Development, 23:2, 30-35	The study was conducted with 594 students (51.9% boys and 48.1% girls), aged 12–16 years old, with a mean age of 13.1 (SD50.87). They were recruited from six different middle schools, two in each of three different sites in Italy: Northern Italy (Vercelli), Central Italy (Rome) and Southern Italy (Catania).	Results showed that though the most likely reaction is supporting the victim by trying to discourage the bully, gender differences emerged, with girls more likely than boys to support the victim and boys more likely to encourage the bully or simply ignore.
Bardi, M. & Borgognini-Tarli, S. M. , 2001. <i>A survey on parent-child conflict resolution: intrafamily violence in Italy.</i> Child Abuse & Neglect, 25, 839-853.	Survey of 2,388 families in Tuscany, Italy	The purpose of this paper was to investigate factors associated with intrafamily violence toward children in Italy. Family structure and the characteristics of both caretakers and children were explored. Their association with the incidence of minor and severe violence was analyzed to test the hypothesis that child physical abuse is related to a combination of different factors involving the family as a whole.

Bibliographic Information	Type of Study and Sample Size	Summary
Bianchi, D., Ciccotti, E., Ricciotti, R., <i>Misurare i maltrattamenti: un contributo alla comprensione della violenza</i> , in «Famiglia oggi», a. 28, n. 1 (genn. 2006), p. 49-60.	Qualitative study	This study looks at social representations on child abuse of professionals working with abuse (policemen, social workers, psychologists, doctors). The qualitative analysis looks at professional's views of child victims, perpetrators and abusive dynamics.
Bianchi, D., Moretti, E. (a cura di), <i>Vite in bilico: indagine retrospettiva su maltrattamenti e abusi in età infantile</i> , Firenze, Istituto degli Innocenti, 2006	National retrospective quantitative survey of 2,320 women	This retrospective study investigates the prevalence of previous cases of child abuse among the Italian female population between 19 and 60 years of age. Through the use of variables such as 'adverse childhood experience'; the study looks at the relationship between different types of abuse and maltreatment as well as risk factors and consequences of abuse.
Bollini, A., Giannotta, F., Angeli, A. (a cura di), <i>Maltrattamento sui bambini: quante le vittime in Italia?: Prima Indagine nazionale quali-quantitativa sul maltrattamento a danno di bambini</i> , 2013.	Administrative data for the time period 2012-2013 was collected from 31 municipalities. This report includes data on 4,963,626 people of whom 758,932 (15.28%) are minors.	A qualitative study on risk and protective factors in young child victims. The research aims to better understand what is the number of child abuse and maltreatment victims being assisted by social services in Italy?
Camera dei Deputati, <i>Indagine conoscitiva sulla prostituzione minorile</i> , 2012	Administrative data and documentary analysis from government documents. Input from representatives of the CRC group for Italy and other NGO's involved in assisting prostitution child victims.	This investigation explores child prostitution by looking at 1) national and international legislation on child prostitution 2) nature and drivers of child prostitution 3) typologies of child prostitution and characteristics of the phenomenon and 4) child trafficking for sexual exploitation purposes.
Caffo, E., Guardli, G. P., Magnani, G. & Tassi, R. 1982. <i>Prevention of child abuse and neglect through early diagnosis of serious disturbances in the mother-child relationship in Italy</i> . Child Abuse & Neglect, 6, 453-463.	Surveys with 33 expectant mothers at three time points (during pregnancy and two points after childbirth) in Modena	The purpose of this study is to examine the mother-child relationship and risk factors which may lead to child abuse and neglect.

Bibliographic Information	Type of Study and Sample Size	Summary
Caravita, S., Gini, G., Pozzoli, T. 2012 <i>"Main and Moderated Effects of Moral Cognition and Status on Bullying and Defending"</i> in <i>Aggressive Behavior</i> , Volume 38, pages 456–468	Mixed methods study with two age groups from 9 to 11 (n=235) and 12 to 15 (n=305).	The study found the association between moral disengagement and bullying only manifested in early adolescents. It also found that social status influenced the relationship between individual characteristics, in this case, morality, and social behaviour: high social status, or popularity, was positively correlated with bullying behaviour, particularly among boys.
Caravita, S., Sijtsema J., Rambaran A., Gini, G. 2014. <i>"Peer Influences on Moral Disengagement in Late Childhood and Early Adolescence"</i> in <i>J Youth Adolescence</i> 43:193–207	Mixed method study with a sample of children aged 9-10, n=133 and aged 11-14, n=236.	The study found that self-justification processes among early adolescents were susceptible to change under peer influence. Gender, bullying, and perceived popularity did not moderate the friends' influence on moral disengagement over time. Results indicate that self-justification processes change over time already in late childhood, but only in early adolescence this change is likely to be dependent upon peers' moral disengagement.
Carchedi, F. , <i>Piccoli schiavi senza frontiere: il traffico dei minori stranieri in Italia</i> , Roma, Ediesse, 2004.	Qualitative interviews with 70 social workers in Italy	This qualitative study looks into the dynamics of sexual exploitation of women and minors in Italy. Data was collected in Italy and Albania as to look into drivers and characteristics of the trafficking phenomenon.
Caso, L., Vitale, F., Boni, M. , <i>La violenza assistita intrafamiliare: uno studio qualitativo sui fattori di rischio e di protezione nei minori vittime</i> , in «Maltrattamento e abuso all'infanzia», vol. 13, n. 1 (mar. 2011), p. 87-109.	Qualitative interviews with 24 women (16 live in shelters in the Lombardia region) who are victims of domestic violence and live in shelters. The study also collected information about their 45 children.	A qualitative study on risk and protective factors in young child victims witnessing family violence. The research aims at knowing the domestic violence phenomenon through the study of the risk and protective factors of the child witnesses.
Centro nazionale di documentazione e analisi per l'infanzia e l'adolescenza , <i>Uscire dal silenzio: lo stato di attuazione della legge 269/98</i> , Firenze, Istituto degli Innocenti, 2002	Administrative data from the Ministry of Interior about sexual violence against children for the years 2000-2001 also includes data from a study of 90 prosecutors involved in trials of sexual exploitation	The investigation focuses on victims, crime referrals and reporting. It also goes deeper into variables such as the type of relationship between victims and perpetrators, victim age group. As data is gathered from offices of different regions, researchers can comment on the geographic distribution of crime reporting.

Bibliographic Information	Type of Study and Sample Size	Summary
Centro nazionale di documentazione e analisi per l'infanzia e l'adolescenza, <i>Le violenze sessuali sui bambini: lo stato di attuazione della legge 269/98</i>, Firenze, Istituto degli Innocenti, 2001	Survey of 43 centres and services working on maltreatment covering 702 child victims of sexual abuse	This study aimed to explore the characteristics of violence and sexual exploitation against children in Italy. The document illustrates further findings on the type of sexual abuse reported, age of victims and details on the perpetrators for cases seen by service providers.
CISMAI, Bocconi e Terre des Hommes, <i>Studio nazionale Tagliare sui Bambini è davvero un risparmio?: Spesa pubblica: impatto della mancata prevenzione della violenza sui bambini</i>, 2013	Secondary analysis of data to estimate the cost of child maltreatment in Italy.	The study looks at costs of public spending generated by maltreatment in Italy. The study seeks to estimate costs for the prevalence of the phenomenon among the Italian population (using the findings from a previous study of CISMAI on the prevalence of maltreatment in Italy). It also takes into consideration costs related to the incidence of the phenomenon. Costs are divided into direct costs and indirect costs, looking at different services such as mental care for victims or loss of productivity in the society. The study finds that for the year 2011, it is possible to estimate an expenditure of 338,616,294 euro for direct costs and 12,717,513 euro for indirect costs. That leads to a total estimate of over 13 billion Euro public spending on maltreatment.
Crisma M., Bascelli E., Paci D., Romito P., 2004. <i>Adolescents who experienced sexual abuse: fears, needs and impediments to disclosure</i>. In Child Abuse & Neglect 28 1035–1048	Qualitative study on disclosure of sexual abuse part of a European Daphne project: "Counseling and Support Services for Young People Aged 12–16 Years Who Have Experienced Sexual Abuse"	A high proportion of the 36 adolescents who experienced sexual abuse in Italy were reluctant to seek help from professionals. Moreover, those who did seek the services of professionals were in the receipt of poor help. All abusers identified by participants were male, abuse perpetrated by a family member lasted over a year and the majority of reported abuse was 'severe'. Barriers to family support identified in the study include pathological, disrupted or unstable family relations, the desire to protect family members or the perception that parents were non-protective or insensitive

Bibliographic Information	Type of Study and Sample Size	Summary
Di Blasio, P. Milani, L. , Acquistapace V., <i>Bambini con molti problemi: violenza all'infanzia e intervento dei servizi</i> . In <<Maltrattamento e Abuso all'Infanzia>>, vol. 5, n. 1, luglio 2003	Survey of service providers about 55 children referred multiple times (total of 117 referrals) equal to 11.2% of the total sample of referrals received during 2000 by the Services of the same area (Varese and Province).	This research analyses the characteristics of children who are victims of violence and who have been referred to various services more than one time. The aim is to understand whether the reasons for multiple referrals are constituted by the organisation of the network of services, by the characteristics of the children and/or by the seriousness of the victimisation.
Di Blasio, P. et al., <i>Children's resilience, protective and risk factors in therapy with abusing families</i> , in «Maltrattamento e abuso all'infanzia», vol. 7, n. 3 (dic. 2005), p. 89-104.	Clinical case-control study of 52 maltreated children of low social class and 58 non-maltreated children of low and middle social class.	The purpose of this study was to analyse which individual dimensions (attachment bonds, intellectual level, internalising or externalising problems, coping strategies) favour the resilience in maltreated compared with non-maltreated children. A further purpose is to verify whether these individual dimensions are connected with the positive or negative outcome of the family psychological treatment.
Di Blasio, P., Camisasca, E., Procaccia, R., <i>Fattori di mediazione dell'esperienza traumatica nei bambini maltrattati</i> , in «Maltrattamento e abuso all'infanzia», vol. 9, n. 2 (giugno 2007), p. 33-59.	Clinical case-control study with 118 children of whom 60 were victims of confirmed abuse and 58 were non-abused and an unspecified number of caregivers.	This research forms part of the group of studies which analyses which individual and relational factors perform a mediational role in reducing or amplifying the negative impact of abuse on psychological adjustment.. The psychological dimension analysed in both groups were: attachment bonds, intellectual level, coping strategies and internalizing and externalizing behaviours.
Dipartimento Giustizia Minorile Direzione Generale per l'attuazione dei provvedimenti giudiziari Ufficio I - III Minori vittime e minori autori di reati a sfondo sessuale, Attività svolte dagli Uffici di Servizio Sociale per i Minorenni Rilevazione anno 2012	Administrative data from 29 Juvenile Justice Social Services Offices for Minors in Italy	Taking into account a broader need to understand changing patterns of the phenomenon of sexual violence affecting minors as it is managed by the Juvenile Justice Systems, this research explores data on children victims of sexual abuse that is available in the records of the Ministry of Justice. The article also discusses psychosocial factors driving children to enact abusive behaviors on other minors.

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Di Vita A.; Garraffo, V.; Fincontati G.; Romano A., <i>La prevenzione del bullismo: un'indagine comparativa degli indicatori di rischio a Palermo</i> , Psicologia di Comunità, n2 2009, pag 83- 93	Survey of 208 teachers	This study looks at teachers and parents perception of risk behaviours in their children or students.
Gini G., 2006. "Social Cognition and Moral Cognition in Bullying: What's Wrong?" in <i>Aggressive Behavior</i> , Volume 32, pages 528–539	Qualitative research with sample of 204 of 8–11-year-olds children	The study found that moral disengagement was positively correlated with aggressive behavior.
Gini G., 2008b. "Italian Elementary and Middle School Students' Blaming the Victim of Bullying and Perception of School Moral Atmosphere" in <i>The Elementary School Journal</i> Volume 108, Number 4	Sample size of 409 of 14 to 16 year old males.	14 to 16 year old males were more likely to be overtly victimised than their female peers. However, there was no difference between genders in relational victimisation, which is predominantly considered to be a female experience.
Gini G. and Pozzoli T., 2006. "The Role of Masculinity in Children's Bullying" in <i>Sex Roles</i> . 54:585–588	Mixed methods study sampling a population of 6 to 10 year old children (n=113)	The study found associations between typically masculine traits – such as independence, self-affirmation, risk-taking, social dominance and aggressiveness – and active bullying behaviour, regardless of sex.
Gini et al., 2011 "Bullies have enhanced moral competence to judge relative to victims, but lack moral compassion" in <i>Personality and Individual Differences</i> 50 (2011) 603–608	Cross-sectional study with a sample of 719 children aged 9 to 13	The study found that bullying behaviour was associated with a lack of empathy, a lack of guilt and moral disengagement, or self-justification of behaviours that violate social norms.
<i>Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children (HBSC) World Health Organization Collaborative Cross-National Survey, Italia, 2010</i>	Nationally representative sample of 59,000 students	Explores a range of health variables and behaviours among school-aged children and includes questions on bullying experiences.

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Ionio, C. & Di Blasio, P. , 2014. <i>Post-traumatic stress symptoms after childbirth and early mother–child interactions: an exploratory study</i> . Journal of Reproductive & Infant Psychology, 32, 163–181	Survey of 19 pregnant women who attended the four phases of the research, from the seventh month of pregnancy.	The aim of this exploratory work is to investigate whether postpartum stress symptoms may affect mother–child relationships. The underlying hypothesis is that the persistence of postpartum stress symptoms may have a negative outcome on the mother’s tuning with the child.
Jones, S., Bombieri L., Livingstone a., and Manstead A. , 2012. <i>The influence of norms and social identities on children’s responses to bullying in British</i> . Journal of Educational Psychology, 82, 241–256	Sample of Italian schoolchildren, 10–13 years old (N = 128, 65 males). The study focused on how children’s peer group membership affects their group-based emotions in response to an intergroup bullying incident	The study showed that identification in a social group affected the response to bullying: if a child felt strongly included within a group, one of whom was victimised, they were more likely to feel anger toward the bullying and in turn were more likely to tell a teacher about the incident.
Lansford et al. , 2010. <i>Corporal Punishment of Children in Nine Countries as a Function of Child Gender and Parent Gender</i> . In International Journal of Pediatrics , p. 1-12	Multi-country study with a sample of 1417 examining ethnic and cultural differences in the use of corporal punishment in China, Columbia, Italy, Jordan, Kenya, the Philippines, Sweden, Thailand and the United States.	Gender differences in corporal punishment have been reported to be dependent on the family’s cultural context (Lansford et al, 2010). Figures from Italy showed that even though corporal punishment was reportedly high, Italian parents were second to Swedish parents in their belief that it was necessary to use corporal punishment to raise children
Lansford et al. , 2005. <i>Physical Discipline and Children’s Adjustment: Cultural Normativeness as a Moderator</i> ”. In Child Development, November/December 2005, Volume 76, Number 6, Pages 1234 – 1246	Qualitative study with 336 mother – child dyads (children’s ages ranged from 6 to 17 years; mothers’ ages ranged from 20 to 59 years) in China, India, Italy, Kenya, the Philippines, and Thailand to examine whether normativeness of physical discipline moderates the link between mothers’ use of physical discipline and children’s adjustment.	The study showed that there was a large amount of variance in parents’ belief that the use of corporal punishment is necessary to raise a child. The results of the study showed that mothers used corporal punishment more often than fathers and that male children were corporally punished more often than female children.

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Laneve, C. and Pagano, R., <i>Il Bullismo nella scuola, una ricerca nella provincia ionica</i> . Pensa Multimedia, 2010	Mixed methods (qualitative and quantitative) study with 429 students and 111 teachers	This study explores the relationship between juvenile deviance, maladjustment at school and distress correlating with bullying. The analysis of students' and teachers' perceptions, experiences and behavioural strategies concerning different kinds of psychological suffering, academic maladjustment and distress show how these can represent both drivers and consequences of bullying.
Lenzi, et al., 2014. "Perceived Teacher Unfairness, Instrumental Goals, and Bullying Behavior in Early Adolescence" in <i>Journal of Interpersonal Violence</i> 2014, Vol. 29(10) 1834–1849	Mixed methods study with a sample of 662 11 to 13 year old students (mean age = 12.55, SD = 0.99; 50.6% males).	Students, both girls and boys were more likely to display bullying behaviours if they believed their teacher treated them unfairly
Mauceri, S., <i>Omofobia come costruzione sociale. Processi generativi del pregiudizio in età adolescenziale</i> , FrancoAngeli, 2015	Mixed methods (quantitative and qualitative) study with a total sample of 920 students in 10 Roman schools (five academic and five technical high schools), including in each of them one section of the 5-year scholastic cycle.	The aim of the research was to identify contextual, relational and individual factors that activate homophobic prejudice during adolescence. The research identifies the acritical adhesion to heterosexist norms of the dominant culture as the main driver. It also discusses the role of parents' religious and political attitudes as well as the typology
May-Chahal, et al., 2006. "Child maltreatment in the family: a European perspective" in <i>European Journal of Social Work</i> , 9:1, 3-20	Eight European country study (including Italy) with a sample of 2356 examining child maltreatment in the family	The study found out that the mother or the father of the child was identified most frequently as the perpetrator of harm. In just over 10% of the cases reviewed in the study, the father substitute was also identified as the perpetrator and one of the most commonly cited actions of violence was that of absent parenting.

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McCloskey, L., Treviso, M., Scionti, T. & Pozzo, G., 2002. <i>A Comparative Study of Battered Women and Their Children in Italy and the United States.</i> Journal of Family Violence, 17, 53-74.	Survey of 82 battered women with children who sought counselling in Italy and in the U.S.	Italian women who contacted the telephone hotline for wife abuse in Rome were interviewed about relationship violence, social support and extended family, potential risk factors for their partners' violence (drinking, unemployment), their own, and their children's mental health.
Menesini, E. Nocentini, A., <i>Le traiettorie del Bullismo in Adolescenza, Età Evolutiva,</i> n90 giugno 2008, p. 78-103	Longitudinal three-year survey of 1,300 secondary high school students	The study explores bullying trajectories in adolescence. Moving from a developmental contextual approach, the study investigates the following aims: 1) the relationship between seriousness and diffusion of bullying 2) the relation between bullying and other types of aggression; 3) the interaction between individual and social influences on bullying; 4) the longitudinal nature of the phenomenon and the possible relations with school and psycho-social problems.
Menesini, E. Nocentini, A., Fonzi, A. <i>Analisi Longitudinale e Differenze di genere nei Comportamenti aggressivi in Adolescenza.</i> Età Evolutiva . N 87 giugno 2007. p.78 -85	Sub-sample of 875 adolescents involved in longitudinal three-year study	This paper explores longitudinal analysis and gender differences in adolescent aggressive behaviour. The study aims at describing the extent of bullying, relational and physical aggression outside school, their continuity in the period considered and the level of association in the same sample.
Meter onlus, <i>Rapporto annuale 2015</i>	Monitoring data covering 9,872 websites across Italy	Report on the activities of Meter ONLUS a non-profit monitoring websites containing pedopornographic material. The report also gives data on the usage of pornographic material in order to identify sexual exploitation and abuse victims.
Miano, P. et al., <i>Le rappresentazioni sociali dell'abuso: i protagonisti e i contesti,</i> in «Minori giustizia», 2010, n. 4, p. 162-174	Qualitative study with 87 professionals working with abuse victims.	This qualitative study looks at different professionals working with abuse and explores their social representations on abuse: views about victims, perpetrators and place where violence typically occurs.

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Ministero per le pari opportunità , <i>Relazione al parlamento sull'attività di coordinamento di cui all'art. 17, comma 1, della legge 3 agosto 1998, n. 269 "norme contro lo sfruttamento della prostituzione, della pornografia, del turismo sessuale in danno di minori, quali nuove forme di riduzione in schiavitù"</i> , Roma, Presidenza del Consiglio dei ministri, 2006.	Administrative data from 2002-2004/5 for the crimes specified by law 66/1996: against sexual violence and the crimes specified by subsequent law 269/1998: against types of sexual exploitation including prostitution, pornography, and sex tourism involving children.	This article analyses data collected by the ministry of Justice, Police Forces and the Ministry of Interior on phenomena relating to laws against sexual exploitation and abuse of minors in Italy.
Miragoli, S., Di Blasio, P. , <i>Propensione al maltrattamento fisico in padri e madri di bambini in età prescolare</i> , in «Maltrattamento e abuso all'infanzia», vol. 14, n. 1 (mar. 2012), p. 57-75.	Clinical case-control study of 59 parents at high risk of physical maltreatment and 59 at low risk matched to age, status, education level, children age and gender.	This study explored potential physical abuse in preschool children by fathers and mothers. This study compared some psychological characteristics (personal distress, parenting stress, parenting alliance and perception of child adjustment) of preschool children father and mothers at low/high risk of child physical maltreatment (measured by Abuse Scale of Child Abuse Potential Inventory Form VI - CAPI).
Nation, M., Vieno, A., Douglas D., Santinello, M. , 2008. <i>Bullying in School and Adolescent Sense of Empowerment: An Analysis of Relationships with Parents, Friends, and Teachers</i> . In Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology, 18: 211–232.	Mixed methods study using a nationally representative sample of 11-, 13- and 15-year old students (n=4386).	The study found out that while the teacher-student relationship was an important predictor of bullying behaviour among younger students, the parent-child relationship became a more significant factor in predicting bullying behaviour as children aged into adolescence. Children who did not participate in decision-making with their parents were more likely to engage in bullying behaviour.
Pellai et al ; <i>Quanti sono i minori vittime di abuso sessuale? Risultati di uno studio di prevalenza su un campione di 3000 studenti frequentanti le classi V delle scuole superiori della città di Milano</i> , Abuso e Maltrattamento all' Infanzia, vol3 2004	Survey of 3,000 students in secondary schools in Milan	This paper presents the results of a retrospective epidemiological study realized during school year 2001-2002 and was aimed at determining the prevalence rate of previous child sexual abuse in this sample population.

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Pozzoli, T, Gini, G, Vieno, A. 2012, <i>Individual and Class Moral Disengagement in Bullying Among Elementary School Children in Aggressive Behavior</i> , Volume 38, pages 378–388	A cross-sectional study from a sample of 663 elementary school children aged 8 to 10 years.	The study found that moral disengagement was already present in children at a young age. Moreover, between-class variability of pro-bullying behavior was positively related to minimizing one's agentive role and blaming/dehumanizing the victim at the class level. Conversely, class disregarding/distorting the consequences was negatively associated with between-class variation in the outcome behavior.
Pozzoli, T and Gini, G, 2010 <i>Active Defending and Passive Bystanding Behavior in Bullying: The Role of Personal Characteristics and Perceived Peer Pressure In Child Psychol</i> 38:815–827	A mixed methods study which sampled 462 seventh and eighth grade students in a mid-sized city in northern Italy, examined the interaction between individual characteristics and peer pressure.	The study found out that while students who displayed problem-solving coping strategies and personal responsibility were more likely to assist a bullied peer, they could be deterred from intervening if they perceived peer pressure not to do so.
Rangone, G., Lombardi, S., <i>Gli operatori di fronte alle sfide della rete: una ricerca sull'abuso sessuale online</i> , in «Maltrattamento e abuso all'infanzia», vol. 14, n. 3 (nov. 2012), p. 17-30.	Mixed methods study exploring 29 cases of online child sexual abuse referred to CISMAI centers conducted by Save the Children and CISMAI.	The goal of the study was to explore more in-depth using a mixed methods case study approach of online sexual abuse. Data was collected on young victims' age, gender, psychological problems, how the sexual abuse had been perpetrated, who the sexual offenders were, how children, adolescents and their parents had been taken care of by professionals and with what outcomes. Based on those outcomes, the authors suggest some basic preconditions to prevent online child sexual abuse and to help the young victims.
Romito P. and Beltramini L., 2011. <i>Watching Pornography: Gender Differences, Violence and Victimization. An Exploratory Study in Italy</i> . In <i>Violence Against Women</i> 17(10) 1313 –1326	Sample of 303 students (49.2% female) through a questionnaire	Almost all male students and 67% of female students had ever watched pornography; 42% and 32%, respectively, had watched violence against women. Female students exposed to family psychological violence and to sexual violence were significantly more likely to watch pornography, especially violent pornography than those who had not been exposed. No such association was found among male students.

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Save the Children Italia, / <i>piccoli schiavi invisibili: dossier tratta 2013</i> , Roma, Save the Children Italia, 2013	Qualitative study of 29 child victims of sexual exploitation	This qualitative study focuses on the stories of child victims of sexual exploitation in Italy.
Save the Children Italia, / <i>metodi educativi e il ricorso a punizioni fisiche: vissuto e opinioni di genitori e figli</i> , Milano, Ipsos, 2012.	Online interviews with 1000 parents representative of Italian population of parents with children between 3 and 16 years old and 250 interviews with children representative of the Italian population between 11 and 16 years old.	This study explores parents' education strategies, perception and use of physical punishment.
Telefono Azzurro and 114 Emergenza Infanzia, / <i>dati del 114 emergenza infanzia: analisi della casistica nel periodo 2003-2013</i>	Helpline data statistics for the time period 2006 to 2013. The investigation analyzes information on approximately 12,000 emergency cases involving children.	This report analyses data collected through the work of the 114 helpline dealing with emergencies concerning children.
Telefono Azzurro and Eurispes, / <i>Indagine conoscitiva sulla condizione dell'infanzia</i> , 2011.	Survey of 1,496 children and 1,266 parents	This investigation looks at children's and parent's ideas, attitudes and behaviours with regards to bullying.
Verrecchia, F., La Rosa, M., Corso, D. (a cura di), <i>Report annuale: contrasto della pedofilia online: anno 2011</i> , Telefono Arcobaleno, 2011	Monitoring data covering 71,806 websites in 37 countries in 2011	This reports discusses data collected by Telefono Arcobaleno in 2011 through its activity of online monitoring of pedopornographic material.
Vieno, A., Gini, G., Santinello, M., Lenzi, M. and Nation, M., <i>Violent behavior and unfairness in school: Multilevel analysis of Italian schools</i> . Journal of Community Psychology, 39, 534-550.	6,744 students nested within 348 classes	This study examines the role of school unfairness in predicting violent behavior among Italian early adolescents. Hierarchical linear modeling was used to examine the relations between individual (demographics, psychosocial and relational characteristics, and perception of procedural and relational school unfairness), and class characteristics (mean school unfairness and socioeconomic status) and students' violent behavior.

Bibliographic Information	Type of Study and Sample Size	Summary
<p>Vieno A, Lenzi M, Gini G, Pozzoli T, Cavallo F, Santinello M, 2015. <i>Time Trends in Bullying Behavior in Italy</i>. Journal of School Health, Vol. 85, No. 7</p>	<p>The survey reported is part of the larger population-based cross-sectional (2002, 2006, and 2010) “Health Behaviour in School Aged Children” (HBSC) transnational study. The sample was comprised of 13,174 Italian middle and secondary school students (11- to 15-year-olds; 50.3% girls).</p>	<p>Findings yielded from this study over a period of 8 years suggest that both bullying and victimization, mild and severe, are decreasing in Italy. The reported decreases could be both a consequence of ongoing efforts to address school bullying and the increased awareness about the phenomenon. However, the decrease observed could derive from changes in the forms of bullying behaviors and reflect an increase in other forms of bullying (eg, cyberbullying).</p>
<p>Zomero C., <i>I maltrattamenti sui minori una ricerca qualitativa</i>, tesi di laurea Metodologia della Ricerca Psicosociale, Università degli Studi di Trieste, 2002</p>	<p>Interviews with 18 victims of maltreatment or witnessing violence</p>	<p>This master thesis illustrates the result of a qualitative study conducted with victims of violence or witnessing violence in the family. The investigation explores physical and emotional consequences of violence as well as coping strategies enacted by children. The response of different institutions and social services is also explored.</p>

