

Measuring violence against women during Covid19 period: The Italian experience

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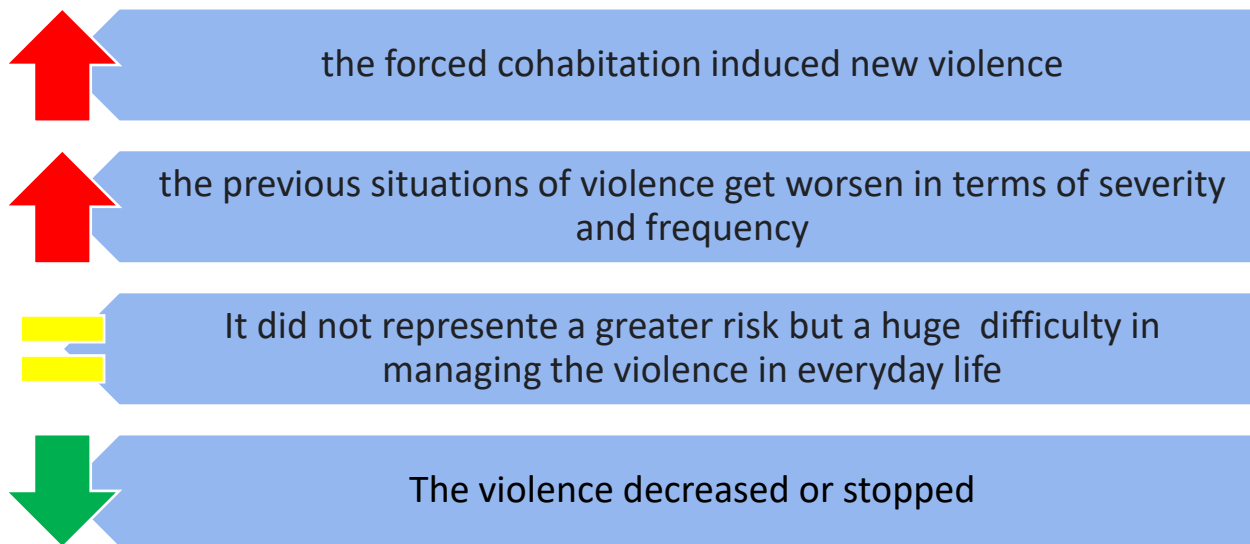
Is violence increased or not during the lockdown?

The answer is not yet possible

Only a prevalence survey will be able to provide the picture of the violence suffered by women during the pandemic:

Istat scheduled it for 2022

4 possible scenarios



During the pandemic: which data?

DIFFERENT and NEW SOURCES FOR DIFFERENT PURPOSES: BUT ONLY SOME OF THEM ARE AVAILABLE

How to understand what has really happened during lockdown?

In real time

- ➔ The calls to the helpline «1522» against violence and stalking app and telephone call
- ➔ Data from the police: homicides data, reports, app «youpol» data and emergency calls
- ➔ Data from population survey about the “climate/atmosphere” in the family during the lockdown

After few months

- ➔ Data from antiviolence crisis centers and residential shelters

For a more complete understanding, but ...

- ➔ Data from prevalence surveys, but due to the lack of time these surveys do not allow collect data and information especially during specific and dramatic periods

Istat: Social surveys during the pandemia

The social survey to monitor relationship during the pandemic assessed that (April -May 2020):

- 81.3% said relations in the family during the lockdown remained the same as before; 15.6% said were “better” comparing to the pre-Covid situation, but the 2.6% worsen

In general, there was a serene and positive family climate, but the fragility of some situations during the restrictions imposed by the lockdown should not be undervalued. For **9.1%** of the population, (about 3 million people), **the family climate was difficult to the point of generating fear of saying or doing something**

The national helpline 1522

➔ 1522 is the helpline provided by the Department for Equal Opportunities of the Presidency of the Council to **support and help victims of gender-based violence and stalking**.

➔ The analysis of data from calls to 1522, especially when compared with the same period of previous years, provide useful information on the evolution of the phenomenon during the lockdown.

➔ ISTAT delivered monthly data, looking at differences with the same periods of previous years:

- From 1° of March to 16th of April 2020 in May
- From 1° of March to 30th of May in June
- From 1° of March to 28th of June in August
- From 1° of March to 30th of October in November
- **Then quarterly data since November 2020...**

1522 calls 2020: an exponential increase in valid calls

- Increase of calls during lockdown;
- Changes in reasons for call: > request for help and < request of information;
- Increase of chat messages;
- Different kind of violence: **more** physical and psychological; **less** sexual and stalking; **stable** % of violence that lasts since years; **slightly increase** of stories characterized by few episodes of violence started during the pandemic period;
- Different target of survivors: **stable** % partner as perpetrator; **increase** of other family members; **increase** of younger and older women among the survivors

Increase of awareness

Increase of violence

Different
framework

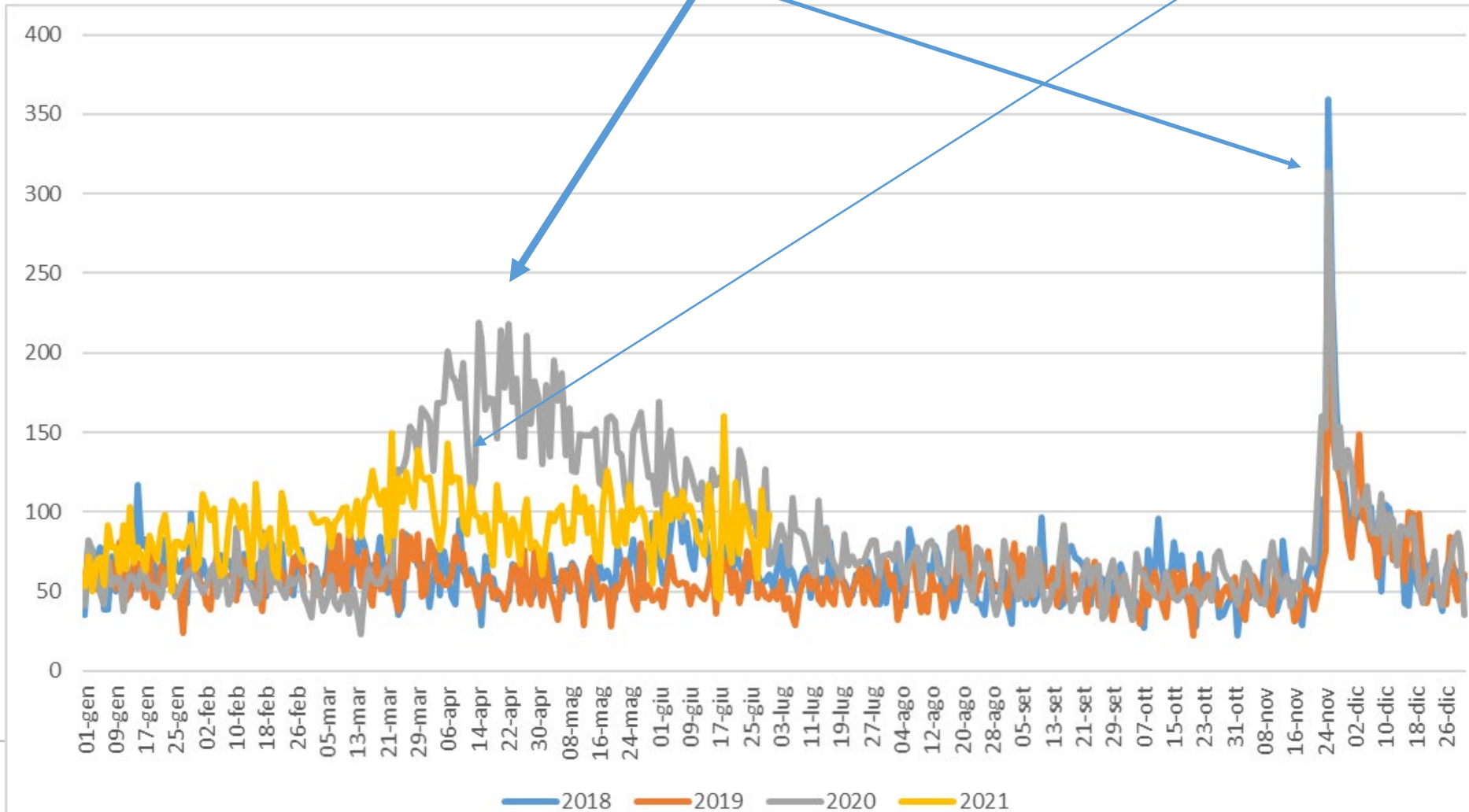
Also effect of the awareness campaign of Department of Equal Opportunity, by television and social media « #liberapuoi», etc.



Dayly calls over the year 2018-2021 (2021, till 30 of June)

2020 general lockdown;
25 November celebration day: also
effect of awareness campaign

2021: remain high,
but \leq than 2020;
local lockdown



Looking for safety... during 2020, less in 2021

- ✓ Slightly increase of the calls in the night and in the early morning
- ✓ More interruptions during the calls
- ✓ More children called for help
- ✓ Victims suffered more fear in 2020, also in 2021, but less than in 2020
- ✓ More exits of calls as transfer of women to specialized services, above all shelters and refugees

Data from shelters and refugees

- ✓ Annual Census of services provided by shelter and refugees for survivors from 2018. Agreement between Istat and the Department of Equal Opportunity (DEO) – Italian Presidency of Council

Istanbul Convention
Recommendation

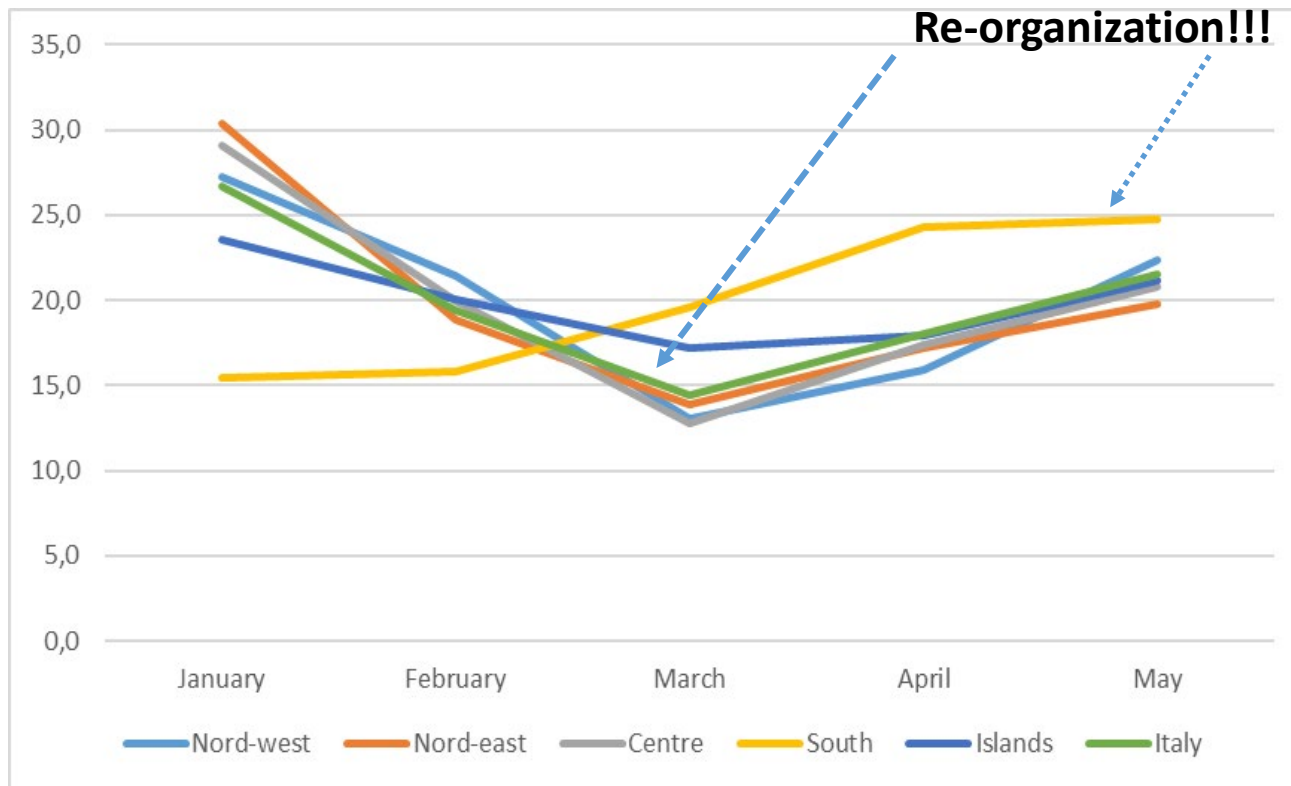
*Action Plan Against
Violence 2017-2020*

- ✓ Since 2020 survey: also questions about women requests during the lockdown and strategies to cope with pandemic problems
- ✓ On May 2021, Istat delivered a report on antiviolence crisis centers and residential shelters during the lockdown



The role of Institutions is very important in helping women in going out from violence: this is an outcome from the 2006 and 2014 Istat VAW surveys

Data from antiviolence crisis centers and residential shelters



78.3% of centers changed their habits to welcome women:

- 95.4% telephone calls
- 66.5% e-mail
- 67.3% in person talks/visits, respecting the protection measures of distance

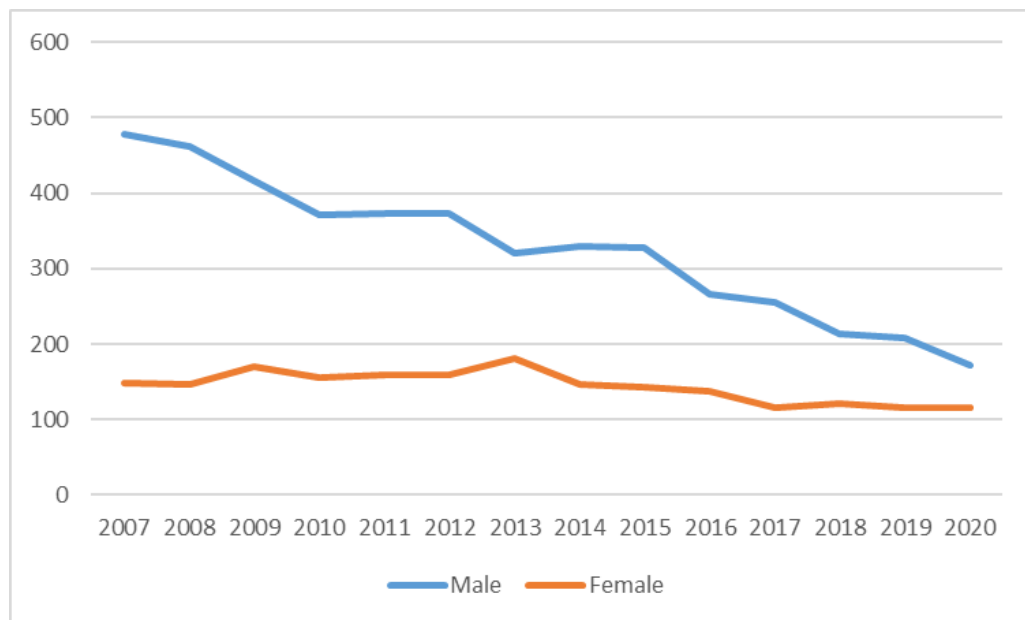
Requests for help linked to pandemic COVID-19:

- 8.6% of survivors asked help to antiviolence crisis centers as a consequence of pandemic situation
- 6% of survivors asked hospitality to residential shelters for this reason

Only 6 (out of 281) centers closed during the lockdown

The **role of the territorial antiviolence network** is and was very important in general and above all during the emergency period to help shelters and refugees

What happened about homicides?



Women do not benefit from remaining at home

Women homicides remained stable: 115 cases in 2019 and 115 in 2020

Men homicides continued to decrease: of **-17%** from 2019 to 2020, from 208 to 172 cases

For women data are also very stable in the first 9 months (January-September) of 2021

- 61.7% of these women were killed by partners (current or former)
- 86.4% in the family context (included partners)

In conclusion

- A multisource approach is very important to understand the violence situation
- It is very important to establish a good relationship with stakeholders
- It is very important to improve administrative data
- It is very important to have timely data
- It is very important to evaluate the planned and implemented policies: *for instance, 34.5% of anti-violence centers and 30.7% of residential shelters reported the activation by the prefecture of new forms of hospitality for victims of violence*
- It is very important to have an open approach

For more information:

<https://www.istat.it/en/violence-against-women>

<https://www.istat.it/it/violenza-sulle-donne/speciale-covid-19>