



CONFERENCE

Implementing the Istanbul Convention. The role of the educational and academic system

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PARALLEL SESSIONS

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ABSTRACT AND BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

1. IMPLEMENTATION AND OBSTACLES: STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES IN THE APPLICATION OF THE ISTANBUL CONVENTION IN DIFFERENT NATIONAL CONTEXTS

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Presentations of:

Maria Giuseppina Muratore, Claudia Villante (ISTAT, Italy), *How to monitor implementation and obstacles of Istanbul Convention? The ISTAT approach*

Following the Istanbul Convention purpose to collect data and research on Violence Against Women (art.11), ISTAT has settled up an integrated system aimed at monitoring the phenomenon and producing regularly statistics and reports, by providing quality indicators and integrated information gathered from several sources of data (<https://www.istat.it/en/violence-against-women>).

The purpose of the paper is to describe the implementation of the Istanbul Convention following its 3P strategy (Prevention, Protection and Prosecution), highlighting the achieved improvements in terms of awareness, measures and results, but also the main obstacles to overcome.

The integrated system collects administrative, register and survey data sources, as regard as:

- 1** the prevention topic and more specifically gender stereotypes and stereotypes towards violence against women, that are asked to adult population and student population;
- 2** the measurement of violence against women in its several forms, as physical, sexual, psychological and economical violence inside and outside the family;
- 3** sexual harassment and violence at work, as investigated by the Citizens' safety surveys;

- 4 the “way out” of violence, concerning data register on shelters and centres for victims of violence; moreover data from the National Helpline number against violence and stalking 1522 are gathered from 2018;
- 5 the paths in the justice system, as the analysis based on the reports to the police, the proceedings, the convictions and the prisoners data.

Most of these data are produced by Istat in agreement with the Department of Equal Opportunity and in cooperation with the NGOs and other national and local administrations. This integrated system, originated from the National Plan to fight violence against women, is a privileged observatory for the government bodies and all the public and private stakeholders to monitor several aspects of the phenomenon, to fight violence against women with effective means and to progressively achieve the objectives of the Istanbul Convention. The national Law No. 53 of May 5, 2022, "Provisions on statistics on gender-based violence", further supports and underlines the need for up-to-date and talking data enabling to support the policy making process and the evaluation of the adopted measures and plans.

Finally, the outcomes of the studies conducted release important insights for the training programming of educational systems, in academies, among educators and professionals dealing with gender-based violence.

Maria Giuseppina Muratore

Sociologist, Ph.D. in Methodology of Social Research, works in Istat since 1994 and is a research manager. An expert on crime studies, justice statistics, and violence against women, she is responsible for more than 25 years of victimization surveys and violence against women surveys and from 2017 of the Integrated System on Gender-based Violence in Italy. Since 2009 works on judicial and crime statistics (police, court, convicted, prison) and since 2012 on civil and administrative justice statistics and statistics on notaries activities.

Claudia Villante

Senior Research at ISTAT from 2018 and experienced public policy analyst. PhD in Social Systems and Public Policy Analysis at the University of Rome, Claudia has been carrying out socio-economic research by adopting a gender mainstreaming approach and supporting stakeholders and policy-makers in planning, monitoring and evaluating the impact of gender-responsive programmes and projects. Currently involved in a Gender-based Violence data warehouse, created by ISTAT and the Department of Equal Opportunity, in charge of dealing with experimental statistics to study a new form of gender-based violence.

Sylwia Spurek (European Parliament), *Implementation and obstacles: Strengths and weaknesses in the application of the Istanbul Convention in different national contexts. Case of Poland*

The European Union signed the Istanbul Convention in 2017. In 2019 the European Parliament – in order to accelerate execution of the agreement while the Council was passive – requested the European Union Court of Justice to present its opinion on: the appropriate legal basis for the Council's action concerning the ratification of the Convention on behalf of the EU and the ratification compatibility with the Treaties in the absence of the Member States unanimity. In 2021, the CJEU ruled that the delay of ratification until the consent of all Member States is a purely political decision, not a legal requirement. Finally in June 2023, during the Swedish presidency, the EU ratified the Convention. Still, five Member States made separate statements, objecting the ratification, Poland in particular.

Poland ratified the Convention in 2015, and after its ratification the Convention is a source of applicable law in Poland. Nevertheless, representatives of the Polish authorities have for years pursued a campaign to discredit the goals and standards of that document. In February 2017, Polish President Andrzej Duda publicly called on it not to be implemented. In May 2020, the Deputy Minister of Justice announced that the Convention was to be denounced, as, in his opinion, it pointed to religion as a cause of violence against women. Consequently, on 30 July 2020, Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki lodged a motion with the Constitutional Tribunal to declare some of the provisions of that agreement as unconstitutional. The motion indicates, among other things, that the Convention distinguishes between the biological and social dimensions of the sexes and distorts the view of the binary roles of the human sexes, and because of its implementation, the society will lose its ability to make the distinction between a woman and a man. At the same time, the government proposed the amendments to Law of 2005 on counteracting domestic violence, which were clearly implementing the Istanbul Convention as regards to protection and barring orders and were adopted in 2020 and 2023.

Poland is an example of a country, where political and legal actions against the Convention have been taken after its ratification and the legislative measures have been taken in order to implement the Convention. What is de facto level of implementation of the Convention in Poland? Is there a real risk Poland denounces the Convention (as did Turkey)?

Sylwia Spurek, PhD - dealing with human rights of women for more than 20 years - as a lawyer in ngos assisting victims of violence, as a legislator drafting laws including the first law on counteracting domestic violence in Poland in 2003-2005, as an academic, and as a Deputy Commissioner for Human Rights in Poland (2015-2019). Her PhD thesis

concerned the isolation of the perpetrator of domestic violence from the victim. Author of a few dozens of publications on gender equality, women human rights, domestic violence and gender-based violence. In 2014-2015 responsible for government process of ratification of Istanbul Convention by Poland. Recently Member of the European Parliament, vice-chair of FEMM Committee, shadow rapporteur of ratification of Istanbul Convention by the EU and shadow rapporteur of draft EU directive on violence against women and domestic violence.

Ilaria Pretelli (Swiss Institute of Comparative Law), *Traditional gender roles*

Traditional gender roles persist in modern societies. A division would not be detrimental to women if it were not based on their subordination. Unfortunately, gender inequality is part of a burdensome historical legacy that is common to both Western and non-Western religious and social contexts. Its importance has led to the need of specific instruments to counteract violence against women as the 2011 Istanbul convention. Ironically, in patriarchal communities, women are responsible for passing on this legacy of subordination to future generations. Their role of pillars of family honour and custodians of cultural heritage highlights the ambiguity of the term "intangible cultural heritage" and the need to draw a line between what is worth protecting and what should be relegated to the past. The last sentence of Article 2 of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage draws this line, but more research is needed to clarify its content and scope. Until then, armed conflicts seem to be a decisive factor in the selection of historical legacies that survive from the devastation they cause, both in terms of tangible and intangible cultural heritage. Violence against women in armed conflict is used as a means of disrupting the enemy's community. The individual and social trauma caused by mass rape leads to the alienation and loss of social identification of the victims in their social environment. Feeling rejected by the community to which they would naturally belong, women and children lose their cultural heritage. Paradoxically, however, armed conflict can also create unexpected opportunities for the living cultural heritage. In some scenarios, the need for social reconstruction following dramatic demographic changes has led to faster progress towards women's empowerment. This paper emphasizes the potential impetus of a visible common trend towards gender equality, which makes it possible to reconcile tradition and evolution in the protection of intangible heritage. By

suggesting the adoption of a diachronic perspective, it highlights the need for future avenues of research that can demystify the opposition between the universality of women's rights and the preservation of intangible cultural heritage. The 2011 Istanbul Convention may become a game changer in this respect. However, as the withdrawal of Turkey has already and sadly shown, its implementation must be carried out in full respect of cultural diversity. This paper suggests a respectful path towards a common evolution without cultural invasion.

Ilaria Pretelli is a legal counsel and expert in private international law at the Swiss Institute of Comparative Law, Editor of the Yearbook of Private International Law, Member of the Consejo Asesor of the Cuadernos de derecho transnacional, Member of the Comité français de droit international privé, collaborator of the Revue Critique de droit international privé and Member of the European Commission's Expert Group on Parenthood. Visiting Professor at the Jean Monnet Faculty (Paris Sud University) and former Director of the Centre d'Études Juridiques Européennes (Paris-Urbino).

Cristina Oddone, Jessica Blouin (University of Strasbourg), *Preventive intervention and treatment programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence: international standards and French limitations*

Keywords: article 16, perpetrators of domestic violence, gender-based violence, professional practices, masculinities.

France is among the first European countries having ratified the Istanbul Convention in 2014. However, the GREVIO report published in 2019 highlighted several gaps, including shortcomings in the implementation of article 16 ("Preventive intervention and treatment programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence"). That same year, a national consultation launched by the French government – the *Grenelle des violences conjugales* – has paved the way for an increasing institutionalization of the treatment of perpetrators of domestic violence. Thirty regional centers for perpetrators have been opened since then, under the coordination of the Ministry of Justice together with the Ministry of Equality between women and men. Given this rapidly-evolving context, our communication will focus on the results of two qualitative researches: a post-doctoral ethnographic study and a Master degree research, conducted in France in 2018–2019 and 2020–2022 respectively. The analysis of the practices observed in the field reveals little integration of the primacy of the victim's safety and a tendency to reproduce gender hierarchies between women and men. Due to the lack of clear quality standards and national guidelines, the socio-penal treatment of domestic abusers seems to diverge in several respects from the indications of the European network Work With Perpetrators and from the recommendations of the Council of Europe expressed in the GREVIO reports published so far in the first country-monitoring cycle. Our communication will underline several challenges regarding the implementation of perpetrator programmes in the French national context: the need to adopt a gendered understanding of domestic violence, the provision

of adequate training of professionals, the need to ensure systematic data collection and to conduct systematic evaluations at set times.

Cristina Oddone, PhD in Sociology, is currently a lecturer at the University of Strasbourg in France (LinCS – Interdisciplinary Lab of Cultural Studies). She has previously worked for the GREVIO Secretariat on monitoring the implementation of the Istanbul Convention. She has authored numerous scientific publications, including the book *Uomini normali. Maschilità e violenza nell'intimità* (Rosenberg&Sellier, 2020) and a contribution to the Commentary on the Istanbul Convention edited by Sara De Vido and Micaela Frulli (Edward Elgard, *forthcoming*). As an expert on gender-based violence, she has drafted research reports for the Italian National Research Council and for the Gender Equality Division of the Council of Europe.

Jessica Blouin graduated from the University of Strasbourg in 2022 (Master on inequalities and discrimination). Her dissertation analyzed the socio-historical context of programmes for domestic violence perpetrators in France and the representations of professionals in charge of perpetrators, focusing on gender, on professional frames of reference, on the “good” achievement of a perpetrator programme. In June 2023, her work was awarded the Master's Prize by the french “GIS - *Institut du Genre*”, a CNRS organization promoting gender studies in France. She is currently working on a PhD project on the same topics and is involved in several initiatives related to the fight against domestic violence.

Alexandra Lysova (Simon Fraser University, Vancouver), *Strengthening the application of the Istanbul Convention in Western industrialized countries by addressing bidirectional violence as a risk factor for violence against women*

My more than 20 years of research on intimate partner violence in Russia and Canada suggest that to protect women more efficiently from violence in Western industrialized countries, it is crucial to recognize and address bidirectional violence. It's important to adopt a comprehensive approach that considers various factors and strategies. Specifically: (1) Promoting awareness about bidirectional violence, emphasizing that both men and women can be victims and perpetrators; (2) Implementing educational programs in schools and communities to teach healthy relationship dynamics, conflict resolution, and communication skills, and (3) Establishing safe and accessible shelters and support services for all victims, regardless of gender, and providing counseling and therapy options for both victims and perpetrators to address the underlying causes of violence.

It is also essential to review and update laws and policies to ensure gender-neutral language and equal protection for all victims, as well as to implement legal consequences for perpetrators of violence, regardless of their gender. Given that bidirectional violence is the most prevalent form of intimate abuse, it is crucial to conduct more research to better understand bidirectional violence, its causes, and its consequences. Collecting data on the prevalence and nature of bidirectional violence will inform policies and interventions.

At the same time, we must recognize that women from marginalized communities may face compounded forms of violence and discrimination. Therefore, we need to continue developing targeted support and intervention programs to address these specific needs. Additionally, it is important to continue encouraging men to be allies in the fight against gender-based violence, promoting healthy masculinity, and challenging stereotypes that contribute to violence.

Focusing on the Istanbul Convention, I emphasize the importance of international collaboration. This collaboration can help us learn from successful strategies implemented in other countries and address the root causes of violence, such as economic inequality and discrimination. By taking a holistic and gender-inclusive approach, Western industrialized countries can work toward better protecting women and all individuals from violence while recognizing and addressing bidirectional violence as a significant risk factor for violence against women.

Dr. **Alexandra Lysova** holds a Ph.D. in criminology from the University of Toronto and a Doctor of Sciences degree in sociology from the Russian Academy of Sciences. With over 20 years of research experience, Dr. Lysova has examined intimate partner violence, including violence against women and children, both in Russia and currently in Canada. She serves as a member of the Working Groups for Statistics Canada, with a focus on gender-based violence and homicide. Her research has received support from prestigious foundations, and she is the author or co-author of over 70 articles, book chapters, and books in both Russian and English. Dr. Lysova is a regular presenter at international conferences and frequently featured in the media.

Biljana Kotevska (Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Human and Fundamental Rights, Wien, Austria), *Of methods and findings: Researching and critically assessing preventive measures on gender-based violence through an intersectional perspective – the case of North Macedonia*

With the ratification of the Istanbul Convention by North Macedonia, a number of preventive measures against gender-based violence were undertaken. However, there is no system in place to enable a comprehensive overview of these measures, and with that also of an assessment of these preventive measures against international standards, in particular when it comes to trainings of professionals. This lack of information and knowledge decreases the possibility for all stakeholders working with GBV, to know where to direct their efforts which ultimately weakens the overall national effort on prevention of GBV. While the first GREVIO report by the state filled a large part of this hole in the knowledge and information, such a report is by nature wider in scope at the expense of the level of detail and critical assessment, in particular when it comes to assessing how to make the preventive measures more effective, timely, well coordinated, of a higher quality, and more appropriate in terms of its intersectional perspective. That is where this paper comes in.

The paper aims to answer the question how we can best research and critically assess GBV preventive measures through an intersectional perspective. Its final aim is to contribute to the European debate of how to best advance the prevention of gender-based violence for women in their whole diversity. The paper uses the case of North Macedonia and trainings for professionals as preventive measures. In addition to presenting and critically assessing the preventive measures undertaken in North Macedonia, the paper looks at whether there is a gap between the prevention obligations and the standards prescribed in the Istanbul Convention and what has been implemented in practice in North Macedonia and what is the nature and scope of this gap, and what it can tell us about the country's fulfillment of its obligations towards women in their whole diversity. The paper concludes that an early and consistent assessment from an intersectional perspective is crucial for advancing the prevention of gender-based violence for women in their whole diversity and makes specific proposals for practical steps that can be used by public authorities and by others. The paper contributes to the overall conference aim to "highlight the crucial role that the education and higher education system can play in the implementation of the Istanbul Convention" by reflecting on the past and possible future role for this system in putting an intersectional approach to practice.

Dr **Biljana Kotevska** is a socio-legal feminist researcher. She is currently engaged as a gender-based violence and gender-based discrimination expert by the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Human and Fundamental Rights on its "EU Support for the Rule of Law 2.0." project in North Macedonia. In the last fifteen years, Kotevska has worked on various human rights issues with international governmental, think-tanks and non-governmental organisations in South-East Europe. She holds a doctorate in law from Queen's University Belfast (UK), awarded for her doctoral research 'Equality and non-discrimination in the post-Yugoslav space: Intersectionality under law in Croatia, Macedonia, and Slovenia'.

Günes Koc (University of Koblenz), *Political Struggles Against Withdrawal of Istanbul Convention*

Turkey became the first country to ratify the Istanbul Convention, followed by 37 countries and the European Union from 2013 to 2023. Turkey was also the first country which withdrew in 2021 from Istanbul Convention. Poland's government declared 2020 to begin the process of withdrawing from the treaty, which was ratified in 2015. The critique in Istanbul Convention was to find also in other countries which ratified Istanbul Convention such as Hungary, Slovakia and Bulgaria. The period from ratification to the implementing or not fully implementing of Istanbul Convention will be discussed with reference to the political actors which are involved into the process. Political parties, women's movement, political discourses and public debates will be analysed to understand the background of the influence of Istanbul Convention, which was the case in Turkey during the process of between ratification and implementing.

Furthermore, I want to discuss backlash against Istanbul Convention from a comparative aspect with regard to the backlash discourses against Istanbul Convention in Poland, Hungary, Slovakia and Bulgaria. Another aspect of my paper will make the women's

movement's political struggles against the backlash and withdrawal of Istanbul Convention as well as women's movement's struggles against the attempt of the government to withdraw Istanbul Convention in Poland.

The backlash against Istanbul Convention uses the conservative Islamic discourse that accepting LGBT+ identities would recognize "perverted identity" and will cause decay in Islamic and Turkish family values (Şimşirgil 2020, Sayın 2020). This backlash against the Istanbul Convention and against equal rights for women and LGBT+ persons can also be seen in countries such as Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, and Bulgaria (Chesworth 2020). The discourses of backlash against Istanbul Convention will be highlighted in a comparative aspect and also the process which conducted to the withdrawal of Istanbul Convention in Turkey.

1. Academic Positions

Since 03/2022 Academic Staff at Koblenz University of Applied Sciences (Wissenschaftliche Mitarbeiterin) Teilzeit angestellt bis März 2024.

09/2014 – 01/2022 Assistant Professor (Dr. Öğretim Üyesi) at İstanbul Arel University; İstanbul, Turkey

09/2013 – 08/2014 Assistant Professor (Dr. Öğretim Üyesi) at CIU, International University of Cyprus; Nicosia, Cyprus

2. Non-Academic Employees

September 2007 – October 2011 Teaching politics and gender at bfi Wien (Institute for Vocational Education Vienna)

March 2010 – July 2010 Internship at APA (Austria Presse Agentur) Freelance Journalist at APA (Austria Presse Agentur)

September 2007 – December 2009 Freelance Journalist for diePresse Migration page with cooperation M-MEDIA (Diversity Media Watch Austria)

3. Education

2009 – 2013 Doctorate in political science at the University of Vienna, Austria

2000 – 2006 Undergraduate and Graduate (Diplomstudium) in political science at Leopold

Franzens University Innsbruck, Austria

1991-1999 Österreichische Schule St. Georg-Kolleg İstanbul

4. Academic Theses

2013 Dissertation: „Frauenmorde als Verdichtung der männlichen Gewalt. ‚Ehrenmorde‘ oder

Frauenmorde: Politische Diskurse und politische Kämpfe in der Türkei" ("Femicide as agglomeration of male violence. "Honour crime" or Femicide: Political discourses and political fights in Turkey"), supervised by Prof. Dr. Eva Kreisky.

2006 Master Thesis: „Geschichte der Frauenfrage, Entwicklung der Frauenbewegung und Öffentlichkeitsdiskurse in der Türkei im Laufe der Moderne und in der Gegenwart“ (History of women's movement, development of women's movement and public discourses in Turkey abroad the modernity and in the presence”, supervised by Prof. Dr. Claudia von Werlhof.

Anna Iermano (University of Salerno), *Limits of Application of the Istanbul Convention in the Case of Witnessed Violence and Protection of Children*

This focus will address the key issues on Weaknesses in the application of the Istanbul Convention regard the article 26 – *Protection and support for child witnesses*, 31 *Custody, visitation rights and safety*, and 45 *Sanctions and measures*.

At this regard, as underlined by GREVIO in the annual report published on 14 June 2022 on child custody, visitation and domestic violence, “the road ahead is long”.

On this point, many States recognise harm done to children who witness domestic violence and provide for the obligation to inform relevant authorities of suspicion or confirmed incidents witnessed by children, or where children have been direct victims of violence.

For example, In Montenegro and Italy, for example, domestic violence in the presence of children entails aggravated sentences; in both Italy and the Netherlands, committing violence against women in the presence of a child is equated to a form of child abuse. In Andorra and Montenegro, witnessing such violence is considered tantamount to experiencing it directly and legislation calls for the same level of protection and support by statutory agencies.

In particular, in Spain, GREVIO welcomed a recent change to Article 156 of the Civil Code that removes the requirement of both parents' consent for psychological counselling and support for common children. The perpetrator thus can no longer prevent his children from attending counselling sessions – a frequent obstacle to children receiving psychological support. In another positive example (Denmark), the Danish Stalking Centre offers psychological support to children who have witnessed the effects of stalking. GREVIO also praised five state-funded Children Aid Centres in Poland, created in 2018 and run by the Foundation Empowering Children, which offer free-of-charge psychological, educational and legal support to abused children and their guardians.

These positive measures would be observed in other States to improve the situation for children in order to further reaffirm their rights that are guaranteed under the Istanbul Convention.

In fact, despite such progress, gaps remain on the lack of provision of protection and support to child witnesses when violence occurs in the family unit. So it is intended to focus on actions to take in order to achieve continued progress on improving the situation for victims of domestic. At this regard State parties to the treaty should to provide appropriate and sufficient access to specialised and age-appropriate services for children under Article 26.

Another problem is the insufficient protection of domestic violence victims and their children: under the Istanbul Convention, States shall ensure that instances of domestic violence be taken into account in deciding on custody and visitation. This can be done in several ways, for example by introducing legislation making it a legal requirement to do so, for example by screening custody cases for incidents of domestic violence or by ensuring information flows between the criminal and civil law sectors. The explicit reference to domestic violence should be a legal criterion to be considered when deciding on custody and/or and visitation rights.

Besides shortcomings were observed in implementing Article 31 regarding facilities and personnel to enable supervised visitation: States – that usually give priority to maintain contact with both parents, regardless of witnessed violence – should tend the resources and infrastructure to ensure safe supervised visitation.

A interesting question also regards the “parental alienation”, that occurs when one parent wrongfully keeps a child away from the other parent. In many cases the so-called parental alienation are being used to negate allegations of domestic and sexual abuse, minimizing of domestic violence within family court processes.

In this context it is necessary also considering the development of important and fundamental principles by the European Court of Human Rights in this regard (see case of Kurt v. Austria).

Assistant Professor of International Law, Department of Legal Sciences-University of Salerno. Ph.D. in “*European Area of Freedom, Security and Justice*” (EU Law). Member of the Observatory on the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice (responsible for the section “*Judicial cooperation in criminal matters*” and “*Administrative cooperation*”) and of the Editorial Board of the online Review “*Freedom, Security and Justice: European Legal Studies*”. Adjunct Professor in EU Law-Department of Legal Sciences/Specialization School for legal professions (2013-2021). Research Fellow in EU Law and International Law (2009-2021). Teaching Staff Member of PRIN Project (2020-2023) “*International Migrations, State, Sovereignty and Human Rights: open legal issues*” and of Monnet Module EU-DRAW “*Democracy and the Rule of Law: A New Push for European Values*” (2022-2025).

Angela Toffanin (IRPPS CNR), Anna Gadda, Marta Petrobelli (University of Milano Bicocca), *Rethinking the role of universities and research centers in the anti-violence field*

What is the role of universities and research centers in the field of anti-violence? Around this question we intend to develop a reflection from our experiences as researchers within different projects with universities and research institutions in collaboration with public institutions and antiviolence centers.

The Istanbul Convention (IC) recognizes and values the Third Mission role of universities and research institutions in the field of anti-violence. Specifically, with respect to the 4 P’s of IC, their role would involve the area of prevention and integrated policies. It should be

concerned with the dissemination of culture and knowledge and the transfer of research results outside the academic context, thus contributing to cultural and social change and the development of anti-violence public policies. This is a fundamental role that should be systemic and continuous and could be represented as the engagement of universities and research institutions in an ongoing gender research-action activity.

We also question the obstacles and risks that universities and research centers face in playing this third mission role in the area of anti-violence. Certainly the fact that this role often takes the form of implementing projects - sometimes not of short duration-commissioned by the institutions themselves, opens up opportunities, but not without critical elements. In the same way, finding resources through calls can become a source of reflection on the boundaries of projects and research defined by the calls themselves and on the possibilities of carrying out critical research, nonmainstreamed research that is open to change.

Within these complexities, we finally intend to make proposals for an incisive role of universities and research centers:

- in training: how training can truly affect practice change;
- in research and evaluation: proposing new tools, in which intersectionality and a gender approach are essential elements;
- for both: propose gender action-research that is transformative and not gender neutral and implement an alliance between gender studies within universities and the practice of feminist anti-violence centers to reflect on a new role for research institutions in their Third Mission role.

Daniela Carrillo, Patrizia Farina (University of Milano-Bicocca), Livia Elisa Ortensi (University of Bologna), Enrico Ripamonti (University of Brescia), *FGM: Abandonment or New Adaptations?*

The Istanbul Convention recognises all types of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) as a form of violence (Article 38.a) and raises awareness of its presence in the European continent due to migration movements. The ratification and implementation of the Convention have provided all the signatory states with different tools to combat FGM. Indeed, there is an increasing global shift towards the abandonment of FGM thanks to the efforts of various actors at different levels, particularly in countries where there is a high prevalence of the practice. However, against this backdrop, there has been a concurrent shift towards less invasive types and the request for their medicalization that is, according to the WHO a “situation in which FGM is practised by any category of healthcare provider, whether in a public or private clinic, at home, or elsewhere” (2010 p.2). In many countries, notably in Tunisia and Nigeria, it has become a prevalent request (bib). Regardless of the divergent perspectives that scholars have adopted, favouring or rejecting the use of Western medicine to perform FGM, there is no evidence that these are bereft of side effects; the unacceptance of the practice in the medical and scientific space has impeded the elaboration of a standardized surgical protocol. Moreover, the WHO utterly contrasts even these less invasive performances.

As a part of our study on migrant women's attitudes towards FGM/C, we conducted a survey in Italy in 2016, which also aimed to explore opinions on medicalization. Out of all the participants, 10% agreed that the practice should continue only if done under medical supervision. In particular, three main elements were quite telling. To begin with, these women have received education up to at least a secondary level. Second, the reasons adopted to justify the perpetuation were connected to social approval rather than a sense of identity or belonging. Finally, the acceptance of the practice under specific conditions might be regarded as a manifestation of women's agency.

Taken in due consideration, these aspects seem to indicate that it is not only the abandonment of the practice but, also, its perpetuation under some conditions that can be interpreted as a factor of empowerment. Therefore, in view of implementing the Istanbul Convention and protecting women from violence, unexpected changes and adaptations to new scenarios need to be duly appraised.

Anna Bull (University of York), *Higher Education After #MeToo: institutional responses to disclosures and reports of sexual violence and harassment in the UK*

This paper draws on qualitative data from UK higher education to explore implementation and obstacles in the application of the Istanbul Convention, and anti-violence practices in universities, focusing on sexual harassment. The weak legislative context around sexual harassment in the UK constitutes a major obstacle to implementation of the Istanbul Convention, particularly Article 40 on sexual harassment.

However, thanks to activism and public and media pressure, there has been a sustained focus in policy and practice across the UK on sexual violence and harassment in higher education over recent years. Some UK HEIs have established special offices to tackle student-student gender-based violence, and have implemented extensive anti-violence practices particularly around handling reports and disclosures of gender-based violence from students.

This paper draws on data from qualitative research exploring institutional responses to gender-based violence and harassment since 2017. Data sources are 25 interviews across three case study institutions with staff handling reports or disclosures ('response staff'), and 27 interviews with students and staff who reported or disclosed experiences of gender-based violence/harassment to their institution, who were usually but not always the person targeted ('reporting parties'). As such, it explores more recent (2017-2021) accounts of institutional handling of reports.

Both response staff and reporting parties identified similar strengths and weaknesses in institutional handling of reports. There was some evidence of good quality, specialist support being provided to some students who were targeted for GBVH, staff in the sample did not receive any support.

18 of the 27 reporting party interviewees went through a formal reporting process at their institution. The most common outcome of a formal report among this sample was responding parties (both staff and students) leaving the institution or graduating during an

investigation/disciplinary process. However, there were no mechanisms in place for information-sharing between institutions when this occurred.

While there was some evidence of slightly improved practice since previous research on staff-student sexual misconduct in UK higher education (Bull and Rye, 2018; Bull and Page, 2022), there was evidence of major problems in formal handling of reports. These issues included the inappropriateness of the standard grievance, complaints, and disciplinary process for tackling sexual harassment; the reporting process being centred on the responding party, which includes a lack of remedy for reporting parties; the reporting party being structurally disadvantaged in reporting processes, with fewer rights than responding parties; and variation in reporting parties' rights depending on whether they are staff or students.

Dr **Anna Bull** is a Senior Lecturer in Education and Social Justice at the University of York, and co-director of [The 1752 Group](#), a research and campaigning organisation working to address staff sexual misconduct in higher education. As well as multiple academic and public-facing publications on sexual misconduct in HE, Anna was an academic advisor to the National Union of Students for their report [Power in the Academy: staff sexual misconduct in UK higher education](#). She sits on advisory boards to address gender-based violence in education in the UK and Ireland. She co-authored The 1752 Group and McAllister Olivarius' [Sector Guidance to address staff sexual misconduct in UK higher education](#). She has also carried out research into inequalities in classical music education and industry and sexual harassment in the film and television industry.

Giulia Bettin, Clio Ciaschini (Polytechnic University of Marche), *The effectiveness of Italian measures in facilitating complaints and preventing feminicides: a regional analysis*

Violence against women not only violates human rights but also places a heavy strain on society. It deteriorates physical and mental health of victims and has a negative impact on women's labor force participation, thus widening the gender pay gap. Repeated incidents of physical, sexual, or psychological abuse frequently led to an escalation ending in gender-related murder, referred to as femicide or feminicide. Different theories assess the causes and dynamics connected to feminicides. In patriarchal environments, girls and women are perceived as "usable and disposable" by men, thus justifying feminicide as the epilogue of a violent situation that aims at pursuing male control over woman. In addition, socioecological theories discuss factors belonging to four distinct dimensions (the individual, relationship, community, and society), which trigger feminicides. Within this context, the loss of dominance over a female partner may result in retaliation functioning as a "bargaining tool" to intimidate the victim, thus preventing the report of violence. At international level, most studies highlight a prevailing tendency of handling violence through mediatory behaviours without arresting the author. In other cases, the application of the judicial measures follows an automatic one-size-fits-all basis, irrespective of each victim's peculiar situation. This could induce the retaliation effect of the perpetrator against the victim and her children, especially for economically dependent women. In general,

judicial measures seem not to be effective in preventing feminicides and protection measures are effective only in case of moderate violence. Empirical studies and evidence on the Italian context are still limited, if not inexistent. Against this background, our paper provides two main contributions. After a brief description of two main extra judicial provisions adopted in Italy at regional level after the issuance of the Istanbul Convention in 2011 (Antistalking helpdesk and Codice Rosa), it analyses their impact on the share of complaints for domestic violence, i.e., criminal injuries, battering and psychological violence, over 100.000 inhabitants. By exploiting the different timing in the adoptions of such provisions across regions, we are able to set up a difference-in-difference setting, which allows to identify the impact of the introduction of both the Antistalking helpdesk and Codice Rosa on different types of complaints. Additionally, our research looks at the dynamics of feminicides across Italian regions between 2007 and 2021, by evaluating their relationship to socioeconomic factors, domestic crimes related complaints (i.e., criminal injuries, battering, and psychological violence), and recently implemented legal measures to stop feminicides like barring orders and admonitions.

Clio Ciaschini graduated in Economics at Polytechnic University of Marche, (UNIVPM) Ancona. Her thesis examined the phenomenon of violence against women, both from institutional viewpoint and in terms of its economic burden. She received her PhD at University of Ancona with a thesis entitled: “Skill Biased Technological Change and Process Innovation in QUEST III”. During a visiting period at the Department of Economics and Business, Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, she collaborated with Prof. E.Dietzenbacher and prof. A.Steenge on healthcare, gender and economic growth. At present she is post-doctoral researcher in political economy at UNIVPM and works on gender topics.

Daniela Belliti (University of Milano-Bicocca), Multiple violence against migrant women: a challenge for the Istanbul Convention

Sexual and gender-based violence against migrant, refugees and asylum-seekers women and girls is a huge issue from both a quantitative and a qualitative point of view. Nevertheless it has not yet sufficiently addressed. Only starting from last years international organizations have cared about this phenomenon thanks to studies, data collection and analysis, recommendations and guidelines addressed to destination countries.

Numbers from surveys commissioned by UN and UNHCR, namely on the Mediterranean route, are very impressive. If migration is an emergence, migrant women and girls condition is an emergence into the emergence. Violence against migrant women and girls is double, as it is added to the migration path violence. All the studies have well pointed out that migrant status increases vulnerability of women and girls, exposed to violence in the origin countries, during migration travel, arrival and reception phase in the destination country.

The Istanbul Convention addresses this issue in three articles: Art. 59 allows victims of domestic violence to leave the relationship without losing their residence status and

victims of forced marriage to regain their residence status if they left their country of residence for a longer period than legally permitted (there is an opt-out clause); Art. 60 requires states parties to recognize gender-based violence against women as a form of persecution within the meaning of the 1951 Refugee Convention; Art. 61 establishes the principle of non-refoulement for victims of violence against women, regardless of their status or residence.

But it is not enough. On the basis of a 2019 study of the Institute of Political Studies in Strasbourg, only a few of countries applied the Istanbul Convention in recognizing violence as a reason for asylum claim. In 2022 GREVIO *Mid-term Horizontal Review of baseline evaluation reports*, considerable space was given to the topic, by highlighting the issues in implementing both the articles.

A significant change could be determined after the European Union ratification of the Istanbul Convention, as EU needs to adapt its immigration legislation to the seventh part of the Istanbul Convention.

The migrant women and girls issue should be faced not as it were a special category separated from everything else, but as an objective being reached through mobilization of all the tools of the Istanbul Convention, starting from prevention, education, training and awareness-raising. The educational and academic system has to play a central role, by collecting data, strengthening research, learning and training police, reception operators, hub staff etc. and caring about the migration phenomenon theoretically and practically in support of public policies and civil society involvement.

Daniela Belliti is research fellow in Social and Political Philosophy at the University of Milano-Bicocca. Her research fields are war and peace theories, globalization, gender studies, gender-based violence against women and girls. She is coordinator of the Italian academic network UNIRE (Università in rete contro la violenza di genere, Director Prof. Marina Calloni). Last publications: *Pensare la guerra e silenziare le armi*, «CRS – Centro per la Riforma dello Stato», 8 giugno 2023: <https://centroriformastato.it/pensare-la-guerra-e-silenziare-le-armi/>; *Il Terzo assente. Problemi e rischi della perdita della neutralità statale e sovranazionale*, «Scienza e Pace», n. 2- 2022; *Quello che le Università fanno: una ricchezza da moltiplicare*, in *Il ruolo dell'università nel contrasto alla violenza di genere*, Proceedings from the Conference – Sala Capitolare, 10 May 2021, Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry into Femicide and All Forms of Gender-based Violence, in collaboration with Universities in the Network against Gender-based Violence (Un.i.Re), Senate of the Republic, pp. 127-132; Belliti, D. and Serughetti, G., *Le università italiane contro la violenza di genere, oggi: uno sguardo d'insieme*, in M. Calloni (ed.), *Il ruolo dell'università nella lotta contro la violenza di genere. Ricerca, didattica sensibilizzazione pubblica per la prevenzione del fenomeno*, Pearson, Milano 2020, pp.139-153; *The Istanbul Convention as a Moral Norm*, in L. Marchi (ed.), *UN.I.RE. - Gender Violence is also a Cultural Issue! Proceedings from the International Graduate Conference: Cultural Actions and Practices that Honor the Implementation of the Council of Europe-Istanbul Convention*, Ufficio Pubblicazioni Scientifiche-Università degli Studi di Trento 2020, pp. 79-96; Belliti, D. and Serughetti, G., *L'educazione per prevenire la violenza di genere e*

2. LEGISLATION

Chair: Susanne Nothhafft (University of München)

Presentations of:

Eleonora Volta (University San Raffaele, Milan), *'So, let's say, he was convincing you by good or bad means.'* Rape myths and epistemic injustice in trial discourse

'Women lie about sexual violence out of economic interests.' 'Sexual violence always involves overwhelming physical force.' 'Real rape victims resist to the utmost.' Rape myths are sexist narratives that operate in lots of areas of discourse, often below the surface, by systematically hindering the production and reception of knowledge related to women's lived experience of gender-based violence. The epistemic and practical authority with which the law legitimizes and entrenches a certain view of social reality and the interactional asymmetry that characterizes the legal setting (e.g., Ehrlich 2001, 2012) make criminal trials for domestic and sexual violence a context in which rape myths can be particularly pernicious and difficult to challenge. That is especially true considering that despite decades of progressive law reforms, judicial revictimization is still widespread and often normalized (see e.g., GREVIO 2021, Commissione Femminicidio 2022). In proposing a critical analysis of the hermeneutical resources and linguistic practices adopted in conducting the direct and cross-examination of three domestic and sexual violence crime trial hearings recently held in an Italian court, I will shed light on the oppressive power of the questions asked by the judge in the evaluation of the complainant's testimony, and argue that, when enacted by the court, rape myths play an important role in shaping how sexual violence is adjudicated and in undermining the social identity and epistemic agency of the rape survivor (Fricker 2007; Lackey 2023). By offering some examples, I will show that rape myths in trial discourse are often used as an epistemic lens through which to evaluate the testimony of the witness, preventing the correct application of the law and causing multiple forms of epistemic injustice that wrong the victim and, indirectly, women as a group. In particular, I will show how rape myths hinder the application of the crucial notion of sexual consent, implicit in the Italian law on sexual violence (art. 609 bis c.p.) and explicitly defined by the Istanbul Convention (art. 36).

My overall aim is to show that rape myths can be effectively used as a theoretical lens through which to identify the discrepancy that often exists between "law-as legislation" and "law-as-practice" (Ehrlich 2012), and to analyse and challenge those sexist concepts operative in the legal practice that prevent the correct application of the law and reinforce those very patriarchal social norms from which gender-based violence has its roots.

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Eleonora Volta, graduated in Philosophical Sciences, with honors, from the State University of Milan and currently a doctoral student in Philosophy at the Vita-Salute San Raffaele University of Milan. Project: misogyny and sexist ideology in legal discourse. My research project aims to analyze the way in which sexual violence is conceptualized in societies where formal gender equality has been achieved, and to investigate the forms of discursive and epistemic injustice in the context of trials for crimes of sexual violence. type. I am currently following three criminal trials for sexual and domestic violence at the Court of Milan, analyzing the language and epistemic resources adopted in the trial phase starting from the hearing minutes.

Katarzyna Sękowska-Kozłowska (Poznań Human Rights Centre of the Institute of Law Studies), *With or without you? Istanbul Convention and Legal Developments in Poland*

The aim of the paper is to briefly present three legal reforms in Poland concerning violence against women. These are reforms related to the prosecution of rape (2014), restraining orders (2020) and the law on domestic violence (2023). At this time, the attitude of the Polish authorities towards the Istanbul Convention has dramatically changed: from

pursuance to accede to declarations of withdrawal. The paper argues that although openly contested nowadays, the Istanbul Convention has had a real and practical impact on Polish law. By discussing the legal developments through the prism of political discourse accompanying them, it demonstrates that the political and legal existence of the Convention are somewhat separated. While in political declarations it is condemned as a symbol of „gender ideology”, in legal reality it triggers important and positive developments.

Katarzyna Sękowska-Kozłowska - Ph.D. and habilitation in law; assistant professor and head of Poznań Human Rights Centre of the Institute of Law Studies, Polish Academy of Sciences; lecturer in anti-discrimination law of SWPS University; member of Scientific Board of the Interdisciplinary Centre for Cultural Gender and Identity Studies of Adam Mickiewicz University; expert of the European Commission and the Council of Europe. Her field of research is international human rights law with a focus on gender issues (including reproductive rights, violence against women, temporary special measures, and gender stereotyping). Full profile: <http://www.phrc.pl/katarzyna-sekowska-kozłowska/?lang=en>

Costanza Nardocci (University of Milano), *The Istanbul Convention in Global Context. Gaps, Challenges, and Ways Forward*

The presentation aims at disclosing the strengths and weaknesses of the Council of Europe's Istanbul Convention (The Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence) on a global scale and in light of the latest worldwide developments.

Comparing the Council of Europe (CoE)'s approach to violence against women to that adopted by European and non-European supranational organizations, the presentation will want to unveil persistent gaps and challenges following the first decade of the implementation of the Convention within the European scenario.

The investigation will consider first the approach of the CoE towards violence against women, underlining the lack of an effective connection between the Istanbul Convention and other CoE Conventions, that similarly tackle manifestations of violence in the forms of torture and slavery-related practices (e.g. the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings by the Parties, and the European Convention on Human Rights). The enforcement of the Istanbul Convention violence will also be considered in light of the GREVIO's Reports and of the European Court of Human Rights' case-law issued after the CoE's member States' ratification of the Convention.

The presentation will, secondly, move on to examining the relationships between the Istanbul Convention and the European Union. Reference will be made to the March 2023 EU's proposal for a Directive on combating violence against women and domestic violence and, even more significantly, to the recent ratification of the Istanbul Convention by the European Union adopted on June 2023 following the signature in 2017.

As a third angle of analysis, the presentation will discuss the CoE's approach to violence against women with respect to other regional treaties on violence against women: the Belém do Pará Convention (Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women) and the Maputo Protocol to the African Charter of Human and Peoples' Rights (Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa), highlighting areas of intervention, that the Istanbul Convention will want to consider addressing in its future application.

Eventually, the presentation will argue the need for a structural exchange of knowledge among supranational organizations alongside a fruitful dialogue with other supranational treaties and conventions will provide the Istanbul Convention with more effective tools and strategies to contrast the heterogeneous and not always properly acknowledged forms of violence and discriminations suffered by women and girls.

Costanza Nardocci, is Assistant Professor in Constitutional Law, Department of Italian and Supranational Public Law, University of Milan, Italy.

She teaches "Gender Justice", "Women in Tech", and She is teaching coordinator of the Post-Grad Course on gender-based violence, University of Milan.

She is member of Steering Committee of the HAICU Lab Project, U7+Alliance.

She has been Visiting Scholar at the School of International and Public Affairs, at the Law School, Columbia University, and at Fordham Law School.

Her research activity involves: constitutional law, national and supranational constitutional justice, with a focus on: minority rights; gender studies; anti-discrimination law; artificial intelligence.

Ivana Marković (University of Belgrade), *A Gendered Criminal Law and the Evaluation of the Implementation of the Istanbul Convention*

The higher education and academic system has put in the last few years more focus than before on the problem of gender-based violence. One reason for this development was the adoption of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) in 2011 and its entry into force in 2014. State Parties had to implement the Convention, out of which some of the most important provisions make changes in criminal legislation necessary. 16 out of 20 Articles from Chapter V, titled "Substantive Law", deal with criminal matters, in accordance with the proclaimed Purpose from Article 1 to "protect women against all forms of violence, and prevent, prosecute and eliminate violence against women and domestic violence".

However, if we take a closer look at curricula that deal with gender-based violence in more general terms or if we look at gender studies in particular, we will see that the topics on "crime and gender" all basically deal with the criminological and/or victimological aspect of the problem. What remains out of the scope of the educational and academic system is the "classic" criminal law; namely its dogmatics. While fragments from the Special Part can be found in the existing literature, the General Part remained completely out of the focus of

researchers. In other words, a sub-category that can be described as “gender criminal law” has been neglected so far.

On the other side, the implementation of the Istanbul Convention has called for an approach that would comprise and unite criminal law with a gender-based understanding. This became particularly clear with the first GREVIO (Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence) Baseline Evaluation Reports on the respective countries – State Parties. In January 2020, the first such GREVIO Report on the situation in Serbia was published.

The aim of this paper is to show the importance of a gendered criminal law in terms of dogmatics and (a changed?) criminal policy as a consequence, based on the analysis of the content of this Report on Serbia, and the importance of its inclusion in the existing scheme of gender studies, as this is the main point of contact within the higher education and academic system.

Keywords: Criminal Law. – Gender. – Istanbul Convention. – Offence. – GREVIO Report.

Ivana Marković is Assistant Professor of Criminal Law at the University of Belgrade, Faculty of Law. She has a PhD in Criminal Law from the University of Belgrade, Faculty of Law (2017) and holds a Master degree in Criminal Law (2011), a Master degree in International Law (2018), both from the University of Belgrade, Faculty of Law, as well as an LL.M. degree in Competition Law and Regulation (2021) from the University of Mannheim. She teaches Criminal Law at undergraduate and postgraduate studies at the University of Belgrade, Faculty of Law. She has participated in various international and national scientific projects and has published in German, English and Serbian on topics of Substantial Criminal Law (General and Special Part), European Criminal Law, Criminal Politics, and others.

Ivana Krstic (University of Belgrade), *The importance of incorporation of values of the Istanbul Convention in legal education*

The higher education and academic system has put in the last few years more focus than before on the problem of gender-based violence. One reason for this development was the adoption of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) in 2011 and its entry into force in 2014. State Parties had to implement the Convention, out of which some of the most important provisions make changes in criminal legislation necessary. 16 out of 20 Articles from Chapter V, titled “Substantive Law”, deal with criminal matters, in accordance with the proclaimed Purpose from Article 1 to “protect women against all forms of violence, and prevent, prosecute and eliminate violence against women and domestic violence”.

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Magdalena Grzyb (Jagiellonian University, Cracow), *Istanbul Convention and challenges of reforming Polish rape laws*

Poland ratified the Istanbul Convention in 2015. Just before the ratification, as part of the adjustment of the Polish legal system to the Convention, the mode of prosecution for the crime of rape was modified to *ex officio* prosecution. However, the definition of rape itself remained intact, even though Polish law requires the use of violence, threat or deception to constitute the crime, which is not fully consistent with Article 36 of the Convention.

In 2021, left-wing deputies submitted a bill proposal to amend the definition of rape in accordance with Istanbul Convention, to include the non-consensual element. In my presentation, I would like to present the circumstances of the attempt to change the Polish definition of rape and the reasons why the project was rejected.

In addition, I would like to discuss the prospects for a possible change to this definition in the future, and present the practical difficulties involved in the prosecution and punishment

of perpetrators of rape by the Polish justice system. Lawmakers considering possible legislative changes should always anticipate how the changes will be applied in practice.

Magdalena Grzyb is an Assistant Professor of Criminology at the Faculty of Law and Administration at the Jagiellonian University in Cracow, Poland. She received her doctorate in law and penal sciences from Jagiellonian University and Universite de Bordeaux, France (2015). The doctoral dissertation was on criminological issues of culturally motivated crimes in Western countries.

Her latest research project *Female homicide victimization* is the first ever conducted study in Poland on femicide. Between 2013 and 2017 she served as a member of COST Action IS 1206 "Femicide across Europe". She authored several publications in Polish, English and Spanish on domestic violence, violence against women, femicide and criminal policy regarding gender-based violence.

Andrea Garcia Ortiz (University of Valencia), *Ex Parte Prosecution of Sexual Offenses*

This paper reflects on the need for reforms in the national legislation of the member states of the Council of Europe about the private prosecution regime for sexual offenses. In many countries of the European Union, including Italy and Spain, the criminal prosecution of the crime of rape depends on the victim's complaint (meaning it is not prosecuted *ex officio*). However, the Istanbul Convention establishes in its Article 55 that "Parties shall ensure that investigations into or prosecution of offences established in accordance with Articles 35, 36, 37, 38 and 39 of this Convention shall not be wholly dependant upon a report or complaint filed by a victim if the offence was committed in whole or in part on its territory, and that the proceedings may continue even if the victim withdraws her or his statement or complaint".

As it is well known, human rights do not only impact on the relations between the State and its citizens, but their effectiveness extends to the relations that individuals have with each other. The feminist movement succeeded in making violence against women, which had traditionally been conceived as a private problem, a matter of public interest. Nowadays, we have numerous international instruments which understand that violence against women is just the tip of the iceberg of a wider problem of discrimination against women and, as a result, is a violation of human rights. Through these instruments, the well-known standard of "due diligence" has been consolidated. The aforementioned standard establishes the obligation of states to prevent, investigate, punish, and provide compensation for acts of violence against women committed by both state and non-state agents (Article 5 Istanbul Convention).

In this context, we ask ourselves why many sexual crimes still go unreported today and how we can end the high number of dark figures that still exist in this type of crime. How can we achieve greater protection for the victims? Should we prosecute these crimes *ex officio* and investigate them in any case? Or could this be even more revictimizing for them? Should we not first eliminate the stereotypes by which women victims of sexual crimes are judged so that they feel more comfortable to report them? To answer these

questions, we will analyze the arguments for and against *ex parte* prosecution of sexual crimes and try to bring a new feminist and intersectional perspective. In my opinion, it seems that solving social and cultural problems through Criminal Law could be putting the cart before the horse.

Andrea García Ortiz is a PhD student at the Institute of Criminology and Criminal Sciences of the University of Valencia (Spain). She has a double degree in Law and Criminology and a Master's in Criminology and Security. In addition, she is an Expert in Sexual Violence in Contexts of Peace and Armed Conflict. In the last years, she has published various scientific articles related to violence against women and especially to the use of AI for its prevention. She is currently working on her doctoral thesis on the *ex parte* prosecution of sexual crimes from a feminist perspective.

Gaia Fiorinelli (Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies of Pisa), *Gender-based cyber-violence in Italian criminal law: the road to theoretical and practical synergy between the Istanbul and Budapest CoE Conventions*

Tasked with monitoring the implementation of the Istanbul Convention, GREVIO adopted its first General Recommendation (No. 1: on the digital dimension of violence against women) in October 2021, identifying key steps to be taken to ensure prevention, protection, prosecution and policy coordination against digital forms of gender-based violence against women. Although the Istanbul Convention does not specifically mention "cyber-violence", GREVIO highlighted how this particular phenomenon should be addressed both (i) as a piece of a continuum of gender-based violence, and (ii) as a distinct form of serious violence that cannot be underestimated or simplistically equated with its offline version.

At the same time, GREVIO also emphasized that while States Parties are interestingly making efforts to criminalize and prosecute "digital violence", they often fail to recognize the multiple dimensions and layers of harm and tend to limit the scope of protection to "safety, reputation or property"; also, the lack of technical skills and adequate investigative tools negatively affects law enforcement and prosecution. GREVIO therefore calls upon States Parties to develop an integrated rather than fragmented understanding of gender-based cyberviolence, to be understood (and criminalized) as a manifestation of "gender-based violence against women covered by the Istanbul Convention", but also as a criminal manifestation potentially falling within the scope of the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime and involving the ICT sector.

Based on this premise, the aim of this presentation is to analyze the current state of "digital violence" in the Italian legal system, specifically in the area of criminal law. As a first step, it will examine whether and how the three forms of "digital violence" identified by GREVIO as crimes that States Parties are required to criminalize (online sexual harassment, online and technology facilitated stalking, digital dimension of psychological violence) are actually conceptualized and punished in Italy; moreover, it will examine whether the powers and tools for investigating and prosecuting gender-based violence against women actually take

into account its digital dimension and allow for effective prevention, protection and prosecution when violence occurs in the digital sphere.

Since the research findings indicate wide room for improvement, academic researchers can play a crucial role in developing a theoretical and practical understanding of the synergies and overlaps between the (not-so-distinct) phenomena of gender-based violence and cybercrime, as a basis for developing a better implementation of the Istanbul Convention, through an integrated strategy to both prosecute "digital violence" and raise awareness among citizens and private sector/ICT providers of the risks and preventive measures to be taken to avoid misuse of digital and online services.

Gaia Fiorinelli is Research Fellow in Criminal Law at Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies (Pisa) and is working on the project SERICS (SEcurity and RIghts in CybeRSpace - Spoke1: CybeRIghts), funded by NextGenerationEU. She holds a PhD in Law earned in November 2021 from Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies defending a dissertation on "Technological Transformations and Paradigms of Imputation of Criminal Responsibility" (criminal law, law&technology). She has published several articles on cybercrimes, ISPs (criminal) liability, cyber-compliance, the inter-legality of cyber-regulation and has participated as a speaker in conferences at a national and international level.

Roberta De Paolis (Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies of Pisa), *Witnessing Domestic Violence and Child Custody: The Italian Case*

Italy has progressively introduced a set of reforms to overcome a rigid patriarchal criminal system based on discriminatory criteria between spouses. Such reforms were motivated by the need to overcome anachronistic measures and principles and comply with the increasingly international sensitiveness and demand for countering violence against women. For this reason, Italy ratified the Istanbul Convention, the first legally binding international tool to create a comprehensive legal framework to protect women.

Despite these efforts, the Italian legal system seems not to respond comprehensively to the Convention's constraints, especially when witnessing domestic violence and child custody are at stake.

More specifically, the connection between criminal and civil proceedings is limited to the mere communication of the existence of criminal proceedings to the juvenile prosecutor's office¹. As a result, in cases of divorce or separation in which one of the spouses has been violent, there is resistance to issuing measures limiting or abrogating parental responsibility. Such widespread attitude is justified by the need to guarantee the right to co-parenting and the belief that an abusive spouse is not necessarily an abusive parent.

Such a situation not only leads to an unacceptable internal inconsistency of the Italian justice system -recently condemned by the Strasbourg Court²- but also to a violation of

¹ Art. 609 decies, Italian Criminal Code.

² The European Court of Human Rights-Affaire I.M. Et Autres C. Italie- Requête no 25426/2: *The application concerns an alleged failure by the respondent State to protect and assist the first applicant and her children (the second and third applicants) during meetings with the latter's father, a drug addict*

Article 31 of the Istanbul Convention, requiring States to take measures to ensure that, when determining child custody and visitation rights, incidents of violence along with the rights and safety of the victim are considered.

The paper aims to clear the state of the art and outline possible legislative and non legislative measures to resolve the gap between criminal proceedings and those aimed at child custody in cases of witnessing domestic violence.

Roberta De Paolis (1995) is a post-Doc researcher in criminal law at Sant'Anna's School of Advanced Studies of Pisa, under the EU project ENGINE: Engaging Men and Boys against Gender-based Violence and Discrimination through Technology based Trainings. She has been a Sant'Anna's Honor Student and Ph.D. Student, earning her degree in 2019 and her PhD in February 2023, both with honors. During her experience, she has been Visiting Student at the École Normale Supérieure in Paris, New York University and Torcuato di Tella in Buenos Aires; and Visiting Researcher at Duke Law School and Harvard Law School.

Shazia Choudhry (University of Oxford), *The Istanbul Convention, Child Custody, Access and Domestic Violence*

Domestic abuse is one of the most serious and pervasive forms of violence against women and girls and constitutes a violation of their human rights. When placed against evidence of the significant risks to victims and their children associated with post separation contact, including an alarming number of homicides, the need for the legal system to make the safest decision when considering such applications from perpetrators becomes apparent.

The phenomena of domestic abuse perpetrators using family law proceedings as a tool to continue the abuse and coercion has also been demonstrated by a substantial body of research. This paper will first set out the gendered nature of this phenomenon and its significant implications for gender equality and the rights of women. It will then examine and analyse how the European Court of Human Rights has dealt with the increasing awareness of these issues in its case law and in the development of principles in this area, setting out the progress made and the future challenges that remain.

Shazia Choudhry is Professor of Law at the University of Oxford. Her research interests lie in the broad field of the human rights of women.

She regularly engages in advisory work including appointments as Specialist Adviser to the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights Inquiry into Violence against Women (2014-15), to the Joint Committee on the Draft Domestic Abuse Bill (2019) and to the

and alcoholic accused of ill-treatment and threats against the first applicant. It also concerns the decision of the domestic courts to suspend the parental authority of the first applicant, considered by them to be a parent "hostile to meetings with the father" because she had invoked facts of domestic violence and the lack of security at the meetings to refuse to take part.

Women and Equalities Committee (2022)), as an expert evaluator for the European Commission, as an expert consultant for the Council of Europe (including participating in the GREVIO monitoring mission to Serbia), for the UNFPA and for the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women and Girls.

Cristiana Carletti (University of Roma Tre), *The signing of the Istanbul Convention by the European Union*

The process that strenuously led to the signing of the Istanbul Convention by the European Union represents a significant step in the consolidation of the regional system for the prevention and countering of gender-based violence and domestic violence, a phenomenon that is almost diffused in all the States parties to the Convention as well as members of the European Union.

This process was concluded in a timeframe featured, still at the European level, by a complementary significant legislative process which rests mainly upon the need for a comprehensive criminal regulation about cases and related criminal conducts to be prosecuted, taking into due consideration also new dynamics of gender-based violence such as those ones facilitated by digital technologies.

The contribution initially intends to analyse this evolving context to provide an multi-regional level overview. Consequently, as it concerns some member states yet parties to the Istanbul Convention and therefore required to ensure its full implementation (with due exceptions due to reservations and interpretative declarations and considering criticalities recorded during monitoring cycles carried out by competent bodies in charge to assess the domestic compliance with the Convention), a preliminary assessment of their role and contribution in the negotiation process aimed at the adoption of a directive on the subject will be provided. This analysis will ultimately focus on the creation of a domestic framework as for the legislation and codes in force for the Italian case, pre established and gradually amended to ensure the effective implementation of the Istanbul Convention: in the last part of the contribution this legal framework will be put under test to assess the domestic compliance with the Convention through the European Union system as well the support for the negotiation towards an EU directive as the definitive action to confirm values, substantive contents, operational and structural features to enhance the protection of women and girls from gender-based violence and domestic violence.

Cristiana Carletti is Associate Professor of International Public Law at Roma Tre University and has been charged with teaching assignments for high specialization courses, Masters and PhD lectures. She is senior legal expert at the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and has worked as adviser at the Department for Equal Opportunities – Prime Minister’s Office. She has also been member of the IDLO Board of Advisers and EIGE Experts’ Forum. She is author of several books and articles on specialized reviews covering topics such as IOs law, peace and security, development cooperation, human rights, privacy law, children rights and women rights.

Teresa Manente (Differenza Donna), Ilaria Boiano (Differenza Donna and Roma Tre University), *Gaps in Italian legislation in the light of the obligations of the Istanbul convention and new feminist approaches to law and justice in the light of the experiences of women emerging from violence*

This paper will provide an overview of the Istanbul Convention and its significance in addressing violence against women and promoting gender equality on the base of international strategic litigation of women's rights and will introduce the concept of feminist approaches to law and justice, highlighting how these approaches can challenge traditional legal paradigms.

After identifying specific gaps in the Italian legal framework that need to be addressed to fully align with the obligations of the Istanbul Convention and examining shortcomings in existing laws related to domestic violence, sexual harassment, stalking, and other forms of gender-based violence, the authors will explore evolving feminist perspectives on law and justice, emphasizing how these approaches challenge and reframe traditional legal concepts.

The authors will share a case study based on experiences of women who have survived gender-based violence and have engaged with the legal system to highlight challenges they faced in accessing justice, support, and protection within the existing legal framework, and will show case instances where new feminist approaches have made a positive impact on the experiences of these women.

The authors will conduct this analysis through a *Comparative Analysis* of the gaps in Italian legislation with the provisions of the Istanbul Convention, showcasing areas where alignment is lacking to evaluate how the adoption of feminist approaches to law and justice could bridge these gaps and provide more effective solutions for survivors.

Ilaria Boiano, a feminist lawyer, is a member of the legal department of the Differenza Donna association and a research fellow in sociology of deviance and social change at Università Roma Tre. She works as a lawyer specialised in the legal assistance of women's rights in criminal proceedings and provides assistance to migrant, asylum-seeking and refugee women. She obtained her PhD in Criminal Law at the Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna in Pisa with a thesis on criminal legal discourse on male violence against women, published by Ediesse in the series "sessismo&razzismo" with the title *Femminismo e processo penale* (2015). Recent publications include *Donne senza stato. La figura della rifugiata tra politica e diritto*, with Giorgia Serughetti published by Futura, and *Femminismo giuridico. Teorie e problemi*, published by Mondadori Università, edited with Anna Simone and Angela Condello. She is the author, together with Teresa Manente, of the communication *F. c. Italy before the CEDAW Committee*.

Teresa Manente, criminal lawyer and head of the legal office of the association Differenza Donna participated in the collection of signatures for the presentation of the popular initiative bill on sexual violence in the context of the promoter committee created in the context of the Roman feminist movement and since 1989, she has been actively involved in the conception and opening of anti-violence centres in Rome. After years of experience

as head of the anti-violence centre of the Municipality of Rome, she set up the association's legal office, of which she is currently in charge. Consulted as an expert by national and international bodies, she constantly monitors laws and their application to ensure that women's right to access to justice is effective. She is the author, together with Ilaria Boiano, of the communication F. c. Italy before the CEDAW Committee.

Ludovica Bargellini (University of Palermo), *Housing as a nodal topic in DV discourse and experiences*

Etymologically speaking, domestic violence (DV) is a type of violence that occurs in the home (domus) and/or between individuals in intimate and domestic relationships, regardless of whether they share the same residency. It tends to occur in what we are used to conceiving as the safest place of all – hence the pervasiveness of the phenomenon. Housing recurs as a nodal topic in DV discourse and experiences. Yet legal instruments – including the Istanbul Convention – seldom take survivors' housing needs into account. However, it would be preferable to drift away from emergency-dictated approaches (i.e., sheltering) and foster survivors' housing-oriented solutions. The proposed study is based on partial findings from qualitative fieldwork interviews conducted with housing practitioners and women's shelter operators in Italy and the Netherlands (2019-present). Its main purpose is to tackle the issue of housing rights of domestic violence survivors.

In discussing Italy's implementation of the Istanbul Convention, the 2018 "Shadow Report of Women's NGOs" states that a "significant delay involves the entire sphere of promoting independent [...] housing for women [...] The financial support provided to find a home and work are wholly insufficient and, in a country beleaguered by a severe economic crisis, measures have not been adopted to increase the autonomy of women and their economic independence." Article 20 of the Istanbul Convention requires all States Parties to provide access to general support services, including housing. Article 23 states that "Parties shall [supply] appropriate, easily accessible shelters in sufficient numbers to provide safe accommodation for and to reach out pro-actively to victims, especially women and their children". In Italy, there are not enough women's shelters to accommodate all severe cases; the total number of available shelters – 431 according to the 2023 ISTAT report – is well below the threshold of "one family place per 10,000 head of population." (Explanatory report, 2011) Moreover, the blatant discrepancy in the number of shelter facilities available in North vs. South and urban vs. rural settings is alarming. Nonetheless, women's shelters, albeit provisional accommodations with restricted access, constitute the only viable solution for women who are seeking protection from domestic violence. Based on these premises, shall we instead consider and promote long-term housing solutions? The present study engages with the following questions: How does domestic violence constitute a violation of the right to housing? How are we to rethink the application of the Istanbul Convention to accommodate the housing rights of DV survivors?

Ludovica Bargellini is a Human Rights Ph.D. student at the University of Palermo. She obtained her Law degree from the University of Florence. Her research focuses on the

right to adequate housing for domestic violence victims. Other areas of interest include ecofeminist Indigenous movements; alternative methodologies such as game-based research; and abolitionist approaches to violence. She presented her work at the 2023 Ethnography and Qualitative Conference and will be presenting at the upcoming European Conference on Domestic Violence. She is an invited lecturer in “Gender-based violence in national and international legislations” for the University of Bologna’s “Women and Law” course.

3. PREVENTION AND AWARENESS-CAMPAIGN - 1

Chair: Giorgia Serughetti (University of Milano-Bicocca)

Presentations of:

Dragica Vujadinovic (Faculty of Law UB), *Deconstructing Gender-based Violence – “Old” and “New” Patriarchy*

The mainstream higher education, the judiciary, international human rights organizations etc. have to adopt and further develop a well-articulated knowledge about the role of the “old” patriarchy in producing and generating violence in private and public life not only in the case of pre-modern societies but also nowadays. It is especially important to emanate the knowledge about the dialectic of patriarchy and emancipation in contemporary times as the specific source of the rising trends of gender-based violence. However, new forms of patriarchy have been formed with appearances of consumerism, mass media and their tabloidization, some negative effects of sexual revolution, and social media and networks. In addition, new forms of (“new”) patriarchy have emerged, which are linked to neoliberal logic of capitalism and they result even in an intensification of violence against women across the globe.

Training of future lawyers, judges, prosecutors and public administrators for better understanding of gender-based violence as deeply rooted in the “old” and “new” patriarchy, and also in the clashes between combined “new” and “old” patriarchal germs with the germs of anti-patriarchy, are extremely important. Equally important is the work on the feminist judgements` projects which will reconsider gender based violence from the point of the mentioned complex dialectic of patriarchy and emancipation.

Patriarchal trends inherently contain gender-based violence, on the one hand, and the clash between emancipatory tendencies and the combination of “old” and “new” patriarchy contains also and even more this form of violence. This clash of civilizations as expressed through gender-based violence will be explored and will hopefully be beneficial for the background in-depth understanding of sense and purpose of Istanbul Convention.

Dragica Vujadinović is full professor at the Faculty of Law, University of Belgrade, teaching Political and Legal Theories and Gender Studies in undergraduate studies, and

Introduction into the EU Political System in the Masters in European Integration (MEI) program. She is the Head of MEI. She was the coordinator of University of Belgrade for the Erasmus Mundus project for the development of Master's Study Program Law and Gender – LAWGEM, lawgem.ius.bg.ac.rs. The consortium universities were LUMSA, Saarland, Cadiz and Orebro. LAWGEM project was evaluated by the EC evaluator with 95 of 100 points, and as the good example project.

She published 7 monographies and more than 10 edited volumes. She is the co-editor with Ivana Krstic of the Springer book series GENDER PERSPECTIVES IN LAW, in which 4 book are already published (for the book *Feminist Approaches to Law* is the co-editor), 4 more books are in the publishing process.

Nicky Stanley, Nicola Farrelly, Christine Barter, Zain Kurdi, AnnMarie Millar, Ugur Ozdemir, John Devaney (University of Central Lancashire), *Learning about Domestic Violence for Primary School Children in the Context of an Integrated Programme*

This study examined the emergence and implementation of community touchpoints established in the UK during the COVID-19 pandemic for victims/survivors of domestic abuse (DA). Community touchpoints are designated places, both online and in accessible settings such as pharmacies and banks, where victims/survivors can seek confidential advice and be directed to expert DA services. The research adopted a case study approach and explored a range of perspectives through expert interviews, document analysis, consultation with survivors and stakeholders and a survey of DA co-ordinators. Four national community touchpoint schemes were identified and, of these, three were implemented rapidly and were available 2020-21 when the UK experienced lockdowns. Partnerships between Government/voluntary organisations and commercial businesses assisted design and implementation. Some stakeholders considered that the schemes lacked responsivity to local context and noted challenges in providing a confidential service in rural areas. While pharmacies, banks and online spaces were identified as non-stigmatised and trusted places to seek advice, community touchpoints were judged less accessible for some groups including those experiencing digital poverty and victims whose movements were heavily scrutinised. Most of the touchpoint schemes targeted adults only. There were also concerns about whether frontline staff in commercial businesses received sufficient training. While robust evidence of outcomes was limited, there were indications that the schemes had achieved good reach with some early evidence of take-up. Testimonials indicated that victims/survivors were using the touchpoints in flexible ways which met their needs. Moreover, the wide reach and visibility of these initiatives delivered in non-stigmatised settings may have served to raise public awareness of DA, reducing the silence that has traditionally surrounded it. Further research into the use and impact of these initiatives is required and there may be future potential to extend community touchpoints to include children and young people experiencing DA.

Background

Speak Out. Stay Safe is a violence and abuse prevention programme delivered to children under 11 in UK schools by the NSPCC. It aims to increase children's knowledge and ability to seek help for all types of abuse and harm, including domestic violence. This paper

explores children's learning about domestic violence in the context of an integrated programme.

Methods

The mixed-methods evaluation surveyed 1553 children in 36 primary schools at baseline and 6 months; children, school staff and programme facilitators completed focus groups and interviews.

Results

Children's knowledge of domestic violence was lower at baseline than for other forms of harm and abuse. Schools were less likely to cover domestic violence in the teaching they already delivered than other forms of harm. School staff were less confident in dealing with this topic and saw teaching on domestic violence as addressing harm that occurred in the home and therefore out of their remit.

Conclusion

Those designing/delivering education on domestic violence as part of an integrated prevention programme need to take account of the lower levels of awareness and barriers to implementing and sustaining this learning in schools. However, integrated violence prevention programmes offer opportunities for raising awareness of domestic violence among younger children in the general population. Delivering these programmes in school settings can build teachers' skills and confidence in delivering violence prevention and children's disclosures can be responded to appropriately in this setting.

Nicky Stanley is Professor of Social Work and Co-Director of the Connect Centre for International Research on Interpersonal Violence and Harm at the University of Central Lancashire, UK. Her research examines gender-based and interpersonal violence against adults and children. Nicky has led international and national research studies on children's and families' experience of domestic violence and she has evaluated interventions and programmes addressing violence and abuse. She publishes widely and has produced books on domestic violence and child protection, health and social care inquiries and mothers' mental health needs. She has contributed to national guidelines and policy on domestic violence.

Laura Saporito (University of Milano-Bicocca), *The relevance of storytelling in gender roles construction in Primary School*

Reading article 1 of the first chapter of Istanbul Convention, we can find the following purpose (among all the others): "Contribute to eliminating all forms of discrimination against women and promote concrete equality between the sexes, including the strengthening of women's autonomy and self-determination". If we talk about self-determination, we can't exclude considering the role of the storytelling, which we build our own identities on. Different forms of storytelling are built and reproduced by all the different educational contexts that everyone meets during his own personal growth. We can find the same idea in the fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995), in which educational

system was recognized as one of the main sources of gender stereotypes. As it was written in Platform for Action, produced after the Conference, educational system could have a big role in changing gender roles, if just educational programs promoted an open identity for everyone, despite their sexual belonging; that means basically giving children self-determining storytelling that can free them from gender cages they meet during their life. Gender stereotypes are brought in school by different forms of storytelling: from books, to children's literature; from all the misconceptions teachers tell about intellectual disposition of females and males, to the content selection we make in choosing knowledges.

The purpose of this abstract is to analyze how crucial is the role of Primary School in gender roles constructions, and how those stereotypes affect gender equality in classes and the sense of self efficacy, with an important impact on the school choices for their future. After a critical analysis of the Italian context from the Seventies to our days, the paper gives concrete suggestions to teacher in order to plan educational context with a gender-oriented approach.

KEYWORDS Storytelling; gender roles; Primary School; self-determination; teacher training.

Laura Saporito studied “Scienze della Formazione Primaria” in University of Milano-Bicocca, and graduated with a final score of 110L/110. “The relevance of storytelling in gender roles construction in Primary School” was the title of her final thesis, supervised by Gabriella Seveso and Martino Negri.

She cooperated with her University in different projects (Tutoring Online Project; freshman tutoring) and she's now waiting for the nomination as M-PED/02 subject expert.

She has been teaching for two years in Primary School. During the current year she teaches in a Montessori method classroom.

Marco Poli (University of Turin), *Training Future Professionals at the University of Turin: The “Violence Against Women: from Recognition to Operational Response” Course*

According to Article 15 of the Istanbul Convention, comprehensive training for professionals dealing with gender-based violence is crucial. Universities have a key role to play in fulfilling this mandate. This paper focuses on the University of Turin's (UniTO) forthcoming course ‘*Violence Against Women: from Recognition to Operational Response*’. It aims to explore how this course fits in with the Convention. How will it provide students with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively recognise and respond to male violence against women?

The course was developed as a result of the collaboration between academics and volunteers under the Framework Agreement on Combating Male Violence against Women signed by UniTO and the ‘Associazione Volontarie del Telefono Rosa Piemonte di Torino’. The main objective of the course is to provide students with comprehensive

multidisciplinary knowledge and skills to identify, combat and prevent male violence against women. The course is open to all students enrolled at the University of Turin.

The course adopts a multidisciplinary approach to gender-based violence, encompassing historical, sociological, economic, psychological, medical, and legal perspectives. In particular, in order to contextualise this phenomenon, the course examines the historical background of male violence against women, with a particular focus on classical antiquity. Contemporary feminist theories and the emergence of anti-violence centres are also explored to provide a deeper understanding of this phenomenon. In addition, the causes and ways of preventing and combating male violence against women will be critically examined from psychological, sociological, economic and medical perspectives. The programme will also examine legal aspects, such as the private and criminal law responses to the phenomenon of male violence against women, as well as the procedural innovations introduced by the so-called 'Cartabia Reform'. Finally, an overview will be given of the structures and services of the University of Turin dedicated to the fight against gender-based violence.

At the end of the 40-hour course, students will be able to recognise and deal with violence against women. Students will develop critical analysis skills from historical, sociological, economic, psychological, medical, and legal perspectives. In addition, the course places particular emphasis on preventing and responding to violence in the context of public administration and private enterprise. By developing a nuanced understanding of the complex nature of gender-based violence, students will be equipped with the necessary tools to effectively intervene and consciously contribute to its eradication in their future careers.

Marco Poli is an early stage researcher at the Department of Law of the University of Turin, working on the project '*Male Violence against Women: from research to university teaching*'. This project has been developed within the framework agreement signed in May 2022 between the University of Turin and the 'Associazione Volontarie del Telefono Rosa Piemonte di Torino'. Marco is a joint PhD candidate of the University of Turin (Italy) and the University of Antwerp (Belgium). His research interests include Family Law and Children's Rights from a socio-legal and gender perspective.

Paola Profeta, Graziella Romeo, Eleonora Montani (Università Bocconi), *Empowering Women: Bocconi University's Comprehensive Approach to Addressing Violence Against Women and Promoting Gender Equality*

Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence have their origins in deeply ingrained social and cultural norms, gender stereotypes, and biased customs or traditions. The Istanbul Convention urges Nations to address a culture where violence against women is condoned and normalized.

Effectively addressing this issue requires confronting attitudes, prejudices, gender roles, and stereotypes through educational materials and professional training. A comprehensive

prevention approach is crucial, involving all segments of society to promote changes in mindset and attitudes (Articles 12; 13; 14; 15 IC).

In light of these challenges, Bocconi University has charted a course along three pivotal directions:

- Cultivating education in non-violence and gender equality
- Challenging prevailing gender norms and stereotypes
- Empowering women

To meet the first challenge, Bocconi has thoughtfully integrated the course on Gender Law and Women's Rights into its curriculum. This course, convened by a professor in Constitutional Law, is organized into three modules and delves into various aspects of women's rights, encompassing public, private and criminal dimensions of gender issues.

With a view to address the second challenge, Bocconi has established a dedicated Vice-Rectorate, among the first of its kind in Europe, to emphasize diversity and inclusion as fundamental pillars of the University's strategic priorities. By appointing a Vice-Rector for Diversity, Inclusion, and Sustainability, the university ensures centralized coordination for all related activities. Furthermore, an Equal Opportunities Committee operates within the University's governance. The EOC has developed inclusive communication guidelines aimed at promoting formal and informal communication that respect diversity and foster inclusion in everyday university life. Besides the EOC, each department has appointed diversity delegates to enhance collaboration and information exchange on diversity-related matters. To uphold its commitment to fostering an academic environment devoid of violence and discrimination based on race, religion, gender, nationality, age, disability, or sexual orientation, Bocconi also disseminates and upholds the Honor Code.

As an integral part of Bocconi's identity and in pursuit of genuine integration, the university promotes research and education as an amalgamation of physical and intellectual contexts. Bocconi is committed to provide all members of its community are with equal opportunities and treatment. This commitment is embodied in the Inclusive Gender Equality Plan, which maps diversity within the Bocconi community and acknowledges the interconnectedness of various dimensions.

In line with its commitment to promoting women's empowerment, the University implements various programs to ensure equal growth and development opportunities for all Bocconi students, faculty, and staff, regardless of gender.

Paola Profeta is the Dean for Diversity, Inclusion, and Sustainability, Full Professor of Public Economics and the Director of the Axa Research Lab on Gender Equality at Bocconi. Her areas of interest focus on gender economics, women in politics, policies for promoting gender equality and female leadership.

Graziella Romeo is an Associate Professor at Bocconi. In 2023, she joined the Bocconi Equal Opportunities Committee. Her research areas concern constitutional theory and comparative constitutional law. She is course convenor for Gender Law and Women's Rights at UB.

Eleonora Montani is an Academic Fellow at Bocconi, where she teaches in the courses of Gender Law and Women's Rights. Her research interests revolve around Compliance 231, Business Ethics and Sustainability. As a lawyer, she has dealt with VAW and DV cases.

Andreea Gruev-Vintila (Université Paris Nanterre), *A(nother) tale of love and darkness? Shedding light on the unclear training on gender-based violence in social work, psychology and law in one of France's largest universities' curricula*

Objective. Based on: 1) the obligation to train future professionals working with victims or perpetrators to recognise and respond to violence against women/domestic violence (of which children are covictims), and to make appropriate referrals (pillar 1 Prevention of the Istanbul Convention; law of July 9, 2010); 2) questions about the absence of such training in the academic curricula in psychology, sometimes up to Doctoral degrees; and 3) questions about the relevance of the introduction of such training in various Master degree curricula, we sought to identify the traces of such training of future social work, psychology and law professionals in an internationally recognized university which presents itself as "one of the largest French universities of human and social sciences".

This investigation is imperative because several reports (HAS, 2021; GREVIO, 2019, 2022; Chandler & Vérien, 2023) highlight the lack of training for professionals, which often has devastating, if not lethal, effects, especially for women and children victims (Meier, 2020; Join-Lambert et al., 2022; Protéger l'enfant et al., 2022; UN Reports A/74/148 on domestic violence and torture, 2019; A/HRC/53/36 on domestic violence and children custody, 2023). Indeed, Stark (2007, 2023, *in press*) "*identifies coercive control of women as the most important cause and context of "child abuse" and child homicide outside a war zone, including deliberate injury to children, nonaccidental child death and the sexual abuse, denigration, exploitation, isolation, and subordination of children*".

Methodology. We carried out a preliminary content analysis of the curriculum for a Bachelor's degree in educational sciences - social work (N to be communicated), a Bachelor's degree in psychology (N to be communicated), and a Bachelor's degree in law (N=3,500 students) from a large French university (N=20,000 students).

Results. The analysis of the three curricula reveals a visible absence of training to recognise and respond to violence against women/domestic violence, and to make appropriate referrals in the Law curriculum, and a lack of clarity on such training in the Social Work (see Deram, 2023, in this conference) and Psychology curricula. The results of the content analysis be presented qualitatively and quantitatively in detail for each of the three curricula and their implications will be discussed with regard to the current prevalent (non-gendered, physical, adult-only, ending with separation) misrepresentation of domestic violence among various French professionals, its reflection in the French criminal code, civil courts and child protection services (Auslander, 2019 ; Gruev-Vintila, 2023 ; Lavedrine & Gruev-Vintila, 2023).

Key message. These alerting findings lead to "urging" to improve the three curricula in this university and to extend the research to the other French universities and vocational schools who train future professionals, in order to clearly include the training as an

obligation under the Istanbul Convention and its ratification by France, in order to prepare professionals in this and the next generation to effectively prevent, protect, prosecute, and build integrated policies regarding violence against women/domestic violence and its sustained impact on children.

Andreea GRUEV-VINTILA, PhD, is senior lecturer in social psychology at the University Paris-Nanterre, School of Social Sciences and Administration, Parisian Laboratory of Social Psychology, scientific co-director for France of the HORIZON-RESPONSIVE project *Increasing the responsiveness of social services in Europe to citizen's voices*. Andreea conducts interdisciplinary research on the psychosocial processes, the impact and the criminalization of coercive control, a global approach to domestic violence as a violation of the human rights of victims, especially women and children. She is the author of *Coercive Control at the Heart of Domestic Violence. From scientific advances to legal advances* (Dunod, 2023).

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Gender-based violence (GBV) is a multifaceted social phenomenon. It constitutes violence directed against a person because of their gender or violence that disproportionately affects persons of a particular gender. The terms GBV and violence against women (VAW) are often confused with each other, but they are not synonymous. The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993) defines VAW as a sub-category of GBV (Terry, 2007). As argued in the literature, there are problems with the term GBV, both in itself and in how the international development community uses it (Terry, 2007). Nowadays, gender is viewed as a multi-level and complex cultural construct that denotes being female or male in a given situation (Russo & Pirlott, 2006). However, for the aim of this contribution, we overlook the debate about the term "gender", and we focus our attention on gender-based violence against women that occurs in all societies and at all stages of a woman's life cycle. As defined by the United Nations General Assembly (1993), *"the term violence against women means any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life"*.

Although women and girls are the primary victims of GBV, it also inflicts serious harm on families and communities. GBV also permeates the workplace, where women may experience discrimination, harassment, intimidation, mobbing, or abuse from colleagues or supervisors (OHCHR). Therefore, this contribution investigates organizations' role in preventing and combating gender-based violence.

We assume that organizations must pay attention to the problem and take action to prevent and address GBV. However, are organizations doing enough to pursue this goal?

Based on the existing evidence and literature, we argue that organizations can play an essential role in combating GBV, both internally and externally (e.g., Bott et al., 2005; Michau et al., 2015; True, 2012; World Health Organization, 2012). Internally, organizations must provide a safe, respectful, and inclusive work environment for women and promote a culture of equality and non-discrimination. Externally, organizations can also contribute to the prevention and fight against GBV through their social and institutional role. More specifically, they can adopt corporate social responsibility (CSR) policies that include objectives and indicators for the prevention and fight against GBV. Moreover, they can support projects or campaigns to raise awareness of GBV in collaboration with public authorities or third-sector associations. They can fund or participate in research or studies on the phenomenon of GBV, contributing to generating knowledge and empirical evidence (here emerges the role of academic institutions) and sharing with other organizations the best practices or the innovative models they adopt to achieve this aim.

Hence, in our contribution, we contend that gender-based violence (GBV) constitutes a severe and pervasive issue that demands the engagement and cooperation of all social actors. In this scenario, organizations have the opportunity and the obligation to take personal action to prevent and combat GBV within and beyond their sphere of activity. This is the sole way to ensure respect for women's rights and dignity and foster their personal and professional development.

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Jorge García Marín (University of Santiago de Compostela), *Preventing gender-based violence in the classroom through future pre-school and primary school teachers*

The Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, also known as the Istanbul Convention, in the Article 14.1 says " Parties shall take, where appropriate, the necessary steps to include teaching material on issues such as equality between women and men, non-stereotyped gender roles, mutual respect, non-violent conflict resolution in interpersonal relationships, gender-based violence against women and the right to personal integrity, adapted to the evolving capacity of learners, in formal curricula and at all levels of education".

As Stanley, N., & Devaney (2017: 330) say “ While the Istanbul Convention has been welcomed as an important legal and policy commitment, it must also be recognized that it is only a framework, as yet unevenly implemented across the EU. A combination of austerity policies, deeply embedded gender inequalities, and a continuing perception that interpersonal violence belongs in the private realm rather than the public has meant that women’s experience of violence and abuse continues to be widespread across Europe”. In our view we have to go to education in order to move forward.

An essential step is therefore the coeducational training of future pre-school and primary school teachers. The experience that will be discussed here has to do with the strategies aimed at the feminist training of these future professionals from the subject sociology of education in the Faculty of Education Sciences at the University of Santiago de Compostela.

Gender identities begin to take shape in the first years of life, which is why the classroom should reflect on different elements of the explicit curriculum (stories, books, content such as affective and sexual education, etc.) and the hidden curriculum (games, occupied spaces, non-sexist language, etc.). The proposed pedagogical work therefore has several dimensions to work on subjectivities that break with the expected model through what we have called Homo sapiens, Homo Ludens and Homo ambulans.

We are particularly interested in working on non-violent, caring and affective masculinities from a feminist point of view.

Starting from principles inspired by bell hooks' classroom as a safe space, Paulo Freire's critical pedagogies and Henry Giroux's transformative intellectual, we worked with the students in several directions:

- Feminist theoretical work
- Didactic strategies for the prevention of violence in infant and primary classrooms
- Construction of new masculinities
- Performances as learning strategies
- Critical community on Instagram

In this work we will briefly comment on the work carried out and the feedback received over the years.

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Different research and teaching stays in different universities as visiting professor in gender issues: University of Toluca (UAEM-Mexico), National University of Rosario (Argentina), Federal University of Bahia (Brazil), State University of Southwest Bahia (Brazil), Indira Gandhi University (India), University of Cape Verde, University of Nagoya (Japan).

Anna Di Giusto (University of Florence), *From Istanbul to Florence. Experiments and proposals from a middle school*

Italy ratified the Istanbul Convention in 2013 with Decree Law 93/2013, which provides the Extraordinary Plan against Sexual and Gender-based Violence. The document contemplates school involvement through specific training of teachers, from preschool to high school. Ten years later, this part still awaits the implementation phase.

The Law 92/2019 on Civic Education also appears today to be a missed opportunity because the text does not transpose the Convention, except marginally. The directive focuses on three developing topics to offer students an education for active citizenship. The focus is on the acquisition of digital skills, the understanding of constitutional principles, and the commitments in the 2030 Agenda. Only one point of the Agenda and Article 3 of the Italian Constitution are about gender equality, a concept that is nonetheless generic and therefore does not overlap with the Istanbul Convention.

Having worked for years at the public Institute Masaccio in Florence as the referent for Civic Education, I would like to contribute to the debate by bringing the example of my school. After consulting all the teachers, we established a cross-curricular program to deal with the gender perspective in each subject. The *fil rouge* of the plan is the figure of the constituent mother Teresa Mattei, both for her commitment and contribution to the drafting of Article 3, and for the great interest she showed throughout her life in childhood. Therefore, my testimony is about a middle school coordinated from below. We are interested in deepening these issues and dismantling gender stereotypes. We also benefit of educational offerings of the territory, such as the courses organized by the Historical Institute of the Resistance in Tuscany and the Italian Society of Historian Women, with which I have been collaborating for a few years in organizing workshops on gender. Our school collaborates with two feminist organizations, one using the language of cinema, the

other a workshop about graphic novel, to help students with troubles expressing themselves.

In addition, in recent years we have expanded the educational strategies in response to numerous requests from students. The increased number of problematic cases, from gender dysphoria to self-harm, has shown how policy is unable to provide the teachers with the necessary and immediate training, to deal with such complex cases. Collaboration among teachers, on the other hand, has so far made it possible to find strategies that, although still perfectible, have at least partially responded to the discomfort of students.

Anna Di Giusto is a teacher and researcher from Florence, Italy. After a four-year degree in Philosophy (Trieste) and Anthropology (Udine), she earned a Master's degree in Gender Studies at the University of Florence on feminist comics in 2023. She holds a master's degree in Organization of Multicultural Institutions (University of Florence) and a master's degree in Multicultural Diversity Management (University of Siena). She has been invited to participate in conferences both nationally and internationally at the Universities of Oxford, London, Sydney, Brussels, Budapest, Istanbul, Vienna, Gotenborg, Lisbon, Pisa and others. Some papers are published as conference proceedings.

Donata Chiricò (University of Cagliari), *The wise warrior in the head of Zeus. Starting afresh from Athena to implement the Istanbul Convention*

Athens is the city where the best of Western culture was born. In Athens, philosophy, dramatic art, historiography and architecture were born. In Athens, the art of eloquence and politics was born, and precisely the words of politics. First and foremost, the word democracy. The word 'Europe' itself, when it was first uttered, had the sound of the ancient Greek language: Εὐρώπη. Europa, «daughter of the glorious Phoenix [...] who bore children equal to the gods 'is» first mentioned in Homeric hexameter (Homer, *Iliad*, XIV, 315-316 and 321-323). This is the verse invented by Phemonoe, the first Pythia to whom the maxim "know thyself" is also attributed. From Hesiod (*Catalogue of Women*, Fr. [141 M.W. 56 H]) onwards, many poets have contributed to make immortal the name of that maiden 'drawn' from a nameless land for which Zeus disposes that she should bear his name (Moschus, *Europa*, vv. 1-166). A princess of Tyre, Europa was the most famous of the women loved by Zeus and after her death, divine honours were bestowed upon her and lunar cults were traced back to her. It was the time when, as Hesiod narrates, «the lineage of women [...] united with the gods, god-like children procreated.» (*Catalogue of Women*, fr. 1). Thus, from the union of Zeus and Europa, three sons were born: Sarpedon, king of Lycia; Radamanto, judge of the underworld; and Minos. The latter became king of Crete and gave birth to the civilisation that was the cradle of Greek and, therefore, European culture. After all, the first king of this city was Asterio, the "Lord of the Stars" through whom the then-known world understood that the children of others are always our children too.

It was he, in fact, who took Europa in marriage after she had been seduced by Zeus; he adopted her children and named them his heirs (Diodorus Siculus, *Biblioteca Historica*, IV,

60.3; Pausanias, *Greciae Descriptio*, II, 31, I). Therefore, he made Minos a king, and Ariadne, the latter's daughter, a princess; indeed, the princess whose intervention ensured Theseus's success in his request to kill the Minotaur. It was not the first time that the name and destiny of Athens crossed that of a female figure distinguished for generosity and shrewdness. If to Ariadne Attica owed its political unification and the foundation of the institutions that made it so important and influential, it is thanks to the goddess Athena that it is called upon to become the symbolic, linguistic and political-cultural leader of the controversial entity we now call Europe. Precisely, Athena represents an extraordinary balancing point between a world governed by primordial forces in fierce conflict with each other and the regulating and ordering intervention of the Olympian gods.

Indeed, when Olympus was not yet there and primordial Chaos was slowly beginning to make a way for other entities, it was the primordial goddess Gaea who watched over mankind. Creator principle by definition it is she who, by parthenogenesis, gives rise to Uranus, the Mountains and Pontus. Uranus then fertilises Gaea; thus, Titans and Titanids, Cyclopes and Hecatonchires are begotten. Uranus, however, does not wish his children to be born and, therefore, drives them back into the depths of Gaea so that the latter, having built a toothed sickle, invites the children to dispose of their father. Only the last of the Titans, Kronos, responded to his mother's call: as soon as Uranus lay on Gaea again, Kronos emasculated him. Kronos, in turn, developed a fear that his children would deprive him of his power and would devour them as they were born. Rhea, who by then was pregnant with her last child, Zeus, decided to give birth in secret and thus deceive Kronos by handing him a stone wrapped in swaddling clothes to devour instead of her own son. Once Zeus has grown up, he makes his father vomit up the swallowed brothers and then engages in a battle against this.

Thus began the era of Zeus, who was, however, the victim of the fear that was Kronos and, before him, Uranus. Despite the fact that the oceanids Metis had provided him with the substance that induced vomiting in Kronos, Zeus ended up swallowing it. But Metis became one with his body and, indeed, took its place in the head. Hence the specific form of intelligence attributed to Zeus, who was referred to as the Metis. And Athena is precisely the child of this maternal sagacity. Metis knew that occupying her head, Zeus would not be slow to wish out what had entered it. And so it was. The severe headache that this forced cohabitation with Metis' body gave him led him to summon Hephaestus and order him to break his head in two. From the skull of Zeus thus leaps 'an armed maiden' who 'dances the pyrrhic, shakes the shield, swings the spear and is inspired by the god and, what is extraordinary, has also become beautiful and flourishing in a short time' (Lucian of Samosata, *Dialogues of the Gods*, 13, 8). Athena is thus born, adult, armed and beautiful. Athena is a warrior but not a bloodthirsty one. As Plato writes in the *Cratylus*, Athena is «she whose nature lies in thinking» (XIII, 406b-408b). She is the guardian of laws and the state, of science and philosophy.

Despite this all-female origin of civilisation where philosophy and practically all Western knowledge was born, misogyny soon became a fundamental axis of all metaphysics and politics that have historically been established. On the basis of what has been briefly reconstructed so far, our aim is to show that one of the possible ways through which we can contribute to the implementation of the *Istanbul Convention* and defuse stereotypes

and prejudices concerning women could be to write and rewrite our history starting from Athena. Specifically, it is a matter of bringing to light the fact that our cultural history could and should be “told” from the deeds of those who have in history demonstrated the capacity for dialogue, shrewdness and non-violence rather than strength and belligerence. We would then finally have new heroes and heroines, new myths, words and knowledge capable of being a home for otherness as well. And perhaps it might be possible to imagine a new educational and academic system.

Donata CHIRICÒ teaches Philosophy of Language and Communication at the University of Calabria (Italy). Her main field of research is the study of the relationships between body, language and power. Furthermore, she has a particular interest in the philosophical history of discrimination. She currently deals with linguistic philosophy of the modern age and with the philosophical history of women's thought. Hers is the Italian translation (*Il destino delle immagini*, Pellegrini, 2007) of Jacques Rancière's text *Le destin des images* (La Fabrique éditions, 2003) and *Fermata non richiesta*, a theatrical text dedicated to Alda Merini's internment to the asylum. She co-directs the series of philosophical and theatrical studies “Scena di Ildegarda”.

Valeria Bucchetti, Francesca Casnati (Politecnico of Milan), *Communication design against gender violence. Fostering virtuous circles within and from the educational field*

Among the general obligations (Article 12) of the Istanbul Convention is an emphasis on the need to promote «changes in the social and cultural patterns of behaviour of women and men with a view to eradicating prejudices, customs, traditions and all other practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority of women or on stereotyped roles for women and men» and the need to encourage «all members of society, especially men and boys, to contribute actively to preventing all forms of violence».

Within this framework Communication Design represents an area that can be strongly involved in terms of social responsibility in the production and dissemination of campaigns that inform, spread awareness and denounce discriminations and all forms of violence, ultimately working towards their prevention and elimination. If nowadays it is more than ever evident that is not possible to practice design without taking a position, without ethics, without politics, then this makes every action, every design choice, a political act, and design a double-edged sword that if used responsibly and consciously through a critical and positive approach can become a powerful medium of social activism, challenging social and cultural behaviors based on the idea of gender inferiority and breaking stereotyped roles for men and women.

This contribution is intended to focus on actions and strategies developed in the field of design education with the aim of activating virtuous circles of awareness to fight gender violence. On this purpose a case study is then presented: the project “We say stop. Graphic design to counter violence against women”, providing an example of “call to action” aimed at design students from the Italian university network, asking them to

deepen the theme in order to design communication campaigns against gender-based violence. The project was launched by the DCxCG (Communication Design for Gender Cultures) research group of the Design Department, Politecnico di Milano, in March 2023 and it acts on a twofold level. On the one hand, the purpose was to empower the participants and to enable them to deepen their understanding of the issues related to the different forms of gender-based violence as well as to experiment with innovative languages and communication strategies. On the other hand, the project, which will give rise to a widespread exhibition in the university venues, has important impacts on the information and awareness of the entire community, triggering a virtuous circle from the university to the university.

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Full Professor at the Design Department (Politecnico di Milano), coordinator of the Corso di Studi in Design della comunicazione. She founded the dcxgc (Communication Design for Gender Cultures) research group and is one of the founders of the Interuniversity Research Centre for Gender Cultures. Her research activity is particularly oriented in the areas of visual identity and product identity, gender identity and communication stereotypes and, more generally, is aimed at visual communication systems. She won the Compasso d'Oro award (1998) as co-author of the multimedia catalogue for the Poldi Pezzoli Museum.

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PhD student at the Design Department of Politecnico di Milano, her area of interest lies at the intersection where communication design and feminist studies cross. Since 2017 she has been working with the dcxgc research group and occasionally collaborates with the Interuniversity Research Centre for Gender Cultures on interdisciplinary projects. She is a subject expert at the School of Design in the courses *Communication Design and Gender Cultures* and the *Laboratorio finale di sintesi*, oriented towards design for welfare and social design.

Mariasole Bannò, Camilla Federici (University of Brescia), Valeria Perdonò (Actress, co-founder of Amleta), *Harnessing the Power of Theatre: Theatre as an Educational Tool to Address Gender Violence*

Gender violence, a pervasive social issue with far-reaching consequences, continues to challenge societies across the globe. To combat this alarming problem, educators, activists, and artists are exploring innovative methods of raising awareness and fostering empathy among the general public (Boal, 2014; Brown *et al.*, 2005). As an expressive and immersive art form, theatre has emerged as a compelling medium for educating audiences about gender violence and promoting societal change (Christensen, 2013; Mondolfi Miguel & Pino-Juste, 2021; Davidhizar & Lonser, 2003).

In particular, theatre is a potent instrument for challenging and redefining harmful stereotypes surrounding gender (Arias *et al.*, 2020). By breaking away from traditional narratives, theatre productions can dismantle toxic masculinity and challenge conventional notions of femininity, fostering a more inclusive and equitable society (Kilmartin & Berkowitz, 2014; Mitchell & Freitag, 2011). This approach encourages spectators to question their preconceived notions and biases, thus paving the way for greater acceptance and respect for all gender identities (Arias *et al.*, 2020).

This abstract delves into the use of theatre as an educational tool to address gender violence to academic staff, students and community. The proposal falls under Gender Equality Plan activities because ensuring that theatre initiatives are accessible to diverse communities in terms of audience demographics and geographic locations is crucial for widespread impact. The activity consists of three classrooms and one in-theatre performance of Valeria Perdonò's *Amorosi Assassini*.

Playwright Valeria Perdonò has been crafting a piece that centres on a real case of gender violence crime, reflecting the reality faced by a woman survivor and highlighting the dynamics that perpetuate such violence. Through vivid portrayals of the woman and her struggles, theatre fosters a deeper understanding of the underlying societal norms and beliefs perpetuating gender-based abuse. By grounding the narratives in real-life experiences, integrating an authentic survivor story and expert insights brings authenticity to the performance, empowering survivors to reclaim their narratives and inspiring audiences to advocate for change.

By combining the power of storytelling, emotional engagement, and live performance, *Amorosi Assassini* offers a unique platform to create empathetic connections between the audience and the character portrayed. The use of theatre facilitates open dialogues and discussions about gender violence, as post-performance interactions with the student audience allow for a more personalized exploration of the themes presented. In addition to providing emotional catharsis for survivors, these discussions encourage student audience members to critically reflect on their attitudes and behaviours and reconsider their roles in dismantling the structures of gender violence.

In conclusion, theatre is a dynamic and transformative medium for educating communities about gender violence. By provoking thought, empathy, and dialogue, theatre productions can challenge ingrained social norms, foster inclusivity, and empower individuals to take collective action against gender-based violence.

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Mariasole Bannò is Associate Professor at University of Brescia, Italy, where she teaches in the fields of economics and management. She holds a PhD in Economics and Management of Technology at University of Bergamo, Italy. She is the Equity manager for the Cost Action CA20101 PRIORITY. She published several articles in journals such as *Journal of Small Business Management*, *Journal of Family Business Strategy*. Her research interests concern diversity management, gender issues and family business.

Camilla Federici is Research Fellow at University of Brescia where she works for the GenderEqualityPlan implementation.

Valeria Perdonò is Actress and Cofounder of Amleta.

Ana-Luana Stoicea-Deram (IRFASE, France), *A suspended exemplariness: «violence against women» in the social work curricula (France)*

1. In France, the need to provide training on violence against women to staff likely to be in contact with victims (including social workers) was laid down in the law of 9 July 2010. The triennial (from 2005 to 2016) and inter-ministerial (since 2017) plans to combat violence against women stipulate that no violence should go unanswered and that society as a whole should be mobilised. To achieve this, the informed and competent intervention of social workers is a prerequisite.

France's ratification of the Istanbul Convention (2014) has strengthened the training obligation for social workers. The primary objective of the Convention, that of prevention, explicitly provides for it.

In France, both the legislative and institutional arrangements for combating violence against women were in place before the Convention came into force (in November 2014). The commitments made by the State through the application of this international instrument presuppose, among other things, the effectiveness of training.

2. Moreover, if violence against women has become an issue for public policy, it is as a result of observations made by social workers from the 1970s onwards, and under the impetus of women's rights associations, as well as those active in the field of housing. The professionals who came into contact with women victims of violence were the ones who first had to adapt their professional practices and inform the public authorities about the particularities of this new group. The emergence of a specialised professional field to care for and support female victims of violence has therefore benefited greatly from this feminist awareness on the ground.

3. When the Istanbul Convention came into force in France, both the legislative basis for preventing and combating violence against women and the professional practice of social work in supporting women victims existed and had been consolidated.

It is paradoxical that this exemplary role played by the legislator on the one hand, and by professionals in the specialised field on the other, is absent - one might say, suspended - when it comes to formalising the introduction of the subject of "violence against women" into social work training curricula.

4. Intrigued by this absence in the curricula, in 2011 I initiated a study day on the fight against violence against women at the social work institute where I teach, and I ran and led this event until 2022. I would like to share with you the lessons I've learnt from this educational and partnership experience.

Ana-Luana Stoicea-Deram is a sociologist. She teaches Social and Family Policies at the Institut de recherche et de formation à l'action sociale de l'Essonne (IRFASE, France) since 2010. Previously she taught Political sociology at the University of Bucharest, Sociology at University Paris12 and Women and armed conflicts (20th-21st centuries) at Institut of European Studies Paris. For several years, she did training for [Agence pour le Développement des Relations Interculturelles pour la Citoyenneté](#) on initial and ongoing support for migrant women victims of discrimination and violence. From 2015, she's interested on women health and rights and violence against women in surrogacy, and published on this topic ([2016](#), [2021](#), [2022](#), [2022](#)).

3. PREVENTION AND AWARENESS-CAMPAIGN - 2

Chair: Maria Grazia Riva (University of Milano-Bicocca)

Alessandra Viviani (University of Siena), *Educational activities: the role of the CUG-Comitato Unico di Garanzia at the University of Siena*

In the last few years, the Comitato Unico di Garanzia (CUG) at the University of Siena has increased its direct activities and structural support to several initiatives raising awareness on gender discrimination and gender violence. Among such activities three are particularly worth mentioning as capable of building breaches within the academic community. The first one refers to the multidisciplinary course on Gender discrimination and gender violence organized since 2018 by a group of researchers in various disciplines, among which law, economics, medicine, history, and anthropology. The course is part to the master degree in international relations, but is open to the participation of students from all the degrees at the university of Siena as well as to administrative staff and the local community. Since the beginning the course has been fruitfully attended by students, staff, and persons outside the university such as teachers, lawyers, social workers, and local municipality employees. The synergy between researchers and CUG has proven particularly effective for it has enabled the academic community to offer a unique opportunity for awareness raising within and outside the university. Along the same lines, and based on the experience of the course, the CUG has organized in 2022 and 2023 specific training activities dedicated to the administrative staff focusing on gender discrimination. In particular, such trainings have been devoted to the use of inclusive administrative language as well as to the existing means to fight against gender-based violence within and outside the university. In doing so, the CUG has also involved entities within the university, such as the Consigliera di fiducia, as well as outside it, such as the Consigliera provinciale di parità. Finally, the CUG in 2023 has organized, in partnership with the Provincia di Siena, a training addressed to secondary school teachers on how to implement a gender-based within their various school disciplines, promoting the use of non-formal education activities and of the instruments of Council of Europe manuals (Gender Matters and COMPASS).

The feedback received in all these occasions has been valuable and encouraging. It points out to a clear need for creating spaces for debate within the academic community where people can engage and reflect on issues which are particularly sensitive and divisive for the public opinion. The recent increase in cases of violence against women in Italy and the presence of recent judgments on the role of consent in sexual violence makes it urgent to continue to develop a sound understanding on the consequences of the persistent existence of gender prejudices and gender discrimination.

Prof. Alessandra Viviani, Phd MJur, University of Siena

Alessandra Viviani is an international human rights lawyer with publications on human and children rights. Since 2019 is full professor of International Law, Economic Law and Gender Discrimination at the Department of Political and International Sciences at the University of Siena. She is Rector's delegate for Inclusion and Equity as well as member of the University Observatory on Gender. She coordinates several Erasmus KA2 Strategic Partnership projects on human rights education and social inclusion. Among these, the Off Book project was selected by EACEA in 2021 as a "best practice" on inclusion and the Together project, which focuses on welcoming refugee students to the university, was awarded as the best project on inclusion in 2020 by the Portuguese National Agency.

Karen Venturini, Maria Elena d'Amelio (University of San Marino), *Developing innovative educational approaches to gender-based violence: the case of the University of San Marino*

The study aims to investigate the effectiveness of an innovative approach in the academic education against gender-based violence (GBV). According to the Istanbul Convention, prevention and education are key factors in countering gender-based violence (Belliti and Sereghetti, 2019). Over the past few decades numerous educational programs have been developed to support the social and emotional wellbeing of young people (Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011). Also, today there is a proliferation of sensibilization projects on GBV: cultural associations, trade unions, public offices, private businesses are interested in advancing their knowledge on the matter and offer training to their employees. A smaller number of educational programs have also focused on the prevention of Gender-Based Violence (GBV). The issue of violence against women in Italy is quite pressing and topical, and many actors want to contribute. Unfortunately, the lack of skills and knowledge and the absence of coordination among all these initiatives is likely to be detrimental to the goal.

The State of San Marino, through a government decree, has since the early 2000s invested the University of San Marino with the task to coordinate all gender equality initiatives in its territory. The University in recent years has decided to adopt an interdisciplinary and innovative approach in educational and professionalizing projects related to the prevention of GBV, establishing in this regard a working group of professors and scholars working in different disciplines. The aim of this paper is to trace the contribution of the University in GBV prevention education with a special focus on interdisciplinary and innovative projects. In particular, this paper will focus on projects that combine different skills and knowledge and will evaluate their effectiveness.

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Karen Venturini is a professor of management and a scientific board member of the phd program in management engineering at the University of San Marino. She is the Rector's delegate for innovative academic projects. She was visiting professor at the Indian Institute of Science of Bangalore (India) and actually she is visiting professor at the Indian Institute of Technology of Kanpur (India). Her major research interests are the fields of innovation management, technology transfer and design-driven innovation. She is a member of the

research group L.E.I (gender identity education Lab) with which collaborates to develop educational proposals on the topic.

Maria Elena D'Amelio (Doctorate, University of San Marino; Ph.D., State University of New York – Stony Brook) is professor of media studies at the University of San Marino, where she also coordinates the Research Center for International Relations. She is a member of the University interdisciplinary group L.E.I. –gender identity education lab. She is the author of *Ercole, il divo* (AIEP 2013), and the co-editor, with Giovanna Faleschini Lerner, of *Italian Motherhood on Screen* (Palgrave 2017). She published essays and peer-reviewed articles on genre cinema, film stardom, and film history, and authored the entry *Stardom* in the Oxford Bibliography Online. Her research interests are focused on stardom and celebrity, feminist media theories, transnational tv series, gender and digital media.

Elisabetta Strickland (Gender Interuniversity Observatory, Rome), *An overview on university initiatives against violence on women*

Universities are among the most important institutions where actions against violence on women can be promoted.

As a matter of fact, since the creation in 2012 of the CUG, (Committee for the Guarantee of Equal Opportunities, Workers' well-being and Anti-discrimination), which was intended for students and personnel, many initiatives have been carried out to prevent and settle all forms of violence inside the campus.

A large number of Athenaeums in Italy have organized specific listening and counselling desks and, wherever courses of studies in medicine are present among the range of faculties, collaborations have been organized and in many cases also proper anti-violence centers have been created in order to help in extreme cases.

But it should be understood that the university community has to be informed and prepared in order to be aware of any form of violence, therefore besides organizing specific courses and seminars, a very good idea should be to create in university libraries a section devoted to gender studies and specifically violence against women, in any form. In fact many interesting books have been written in recent years on the subject and reading them is quite useful to raise awareness. About these issues, some specific examples can be presented.

Elisabetta Strickland is honorary professor at the Department of Mathematics of the University of Rome "Tor Vergata". She has been Vice-President of the National Institute of Advanced Mathematics (INdAM) from 2007 to 2015. Since 2014 she is a member of the Women in Mathematics Committee (WIM) of the European Mathematical Society. She is Honorary President of the Central Committee for the promotion of equal opportunities, workers' welfare and non discrimination (CUG) of the University of Rome "Tor Vergata". She is also co-founder of the Gender Interuniversity Observatory GIO over the state Universities in Rome. Since 2016 she is Ambassador of Italy in the Committee of Women in Mathematics (CWM) of the International Mathematical Union.

In 2013 she has been awarded from the Capitoline Administration the Prize “Excellent Women in Rome”.

Cristina Quartararo (University of Milano-Bicocca), *Gender Equality Plans: preventing and contrasting Violence Against Women in Academia. The experience of the University of Milano-Bicocca*

Gender-based violence (GBV)³ represents an increasingly recognised critical issue in academic institutions and research organizations. Several studies indicate that workplace harassment is extremely high in universities - at all levels and among all disciplines (Henning, M.A., et al. 2017; Benya, F. et al. 2018; Bondestam, F., & Lundqvist, M., 2020). International research (Bondestam, F. & Lundqvist, M. 2019; Voth Schrag, R.J. 2017; Lipinsky, A. et al. 2019) shows how - in the higher education environment - women continue to face institutional biases as well as GBV. On average - depending on the context - 25% of female students experienced GBV during their time in the higher education sector (Vladutiu, C.J. et al., 2011; Voth Schrag, R.J., 2017; Benya, F., et al. 2018).

The negative effects and consequences of not preventing this pressing issue are considerable (Henning, M.A., et al., 2017; Benya, F. et al. 2018) and the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women (Istanbul Convention) provides an imperative for higher education institutions to address different forms of violence against women.

The introduction of mandatory GEPs (Gender Equality Plans) provided academic institutions with a strategic and systemic approach to assess and address structural barriers to gender equity. The Convention's principles are embedded into gender equality plans (GEPs) and their implementation can play a paradigmatic key role through actions, policies, procedures, organizational culture and attitudes. Indeed, the 5th thematic area of Gender Equality Plans explicitly includes measures against gender-based violence including sexual harassment (GEAR, 2016; EIGE, 2019) and comprehensive GEPs treat violence prevention and its contrast as an integral part of reforming and transforming institutional environments.

In 2021, the University of Milano-Bicocca elaborated its first GEP. GEPs are also tools that promote reflexivity by encompassing monitoring and evaluation activities. The University of Milano-Bicocca case study will be a starting point for discussion. The framework of GBV targeted actions combined multi-level actions. Measures such as data collection, sensibilization, training, dedicated resources and high-level endorsement have involved actors, different research centres and engaged networks. This complex structure and its history will be illustrated as an educational example within the academic context in achieving discrimination-free academic spaces.

CRISTINA INCORONATA QUARTARARO

³ Here including gender harassment, sexual harassment, and sexual assault.

PhD, Sociology and Methodology of Social Research - NASP (Network for the Advancement of Social and Political Studies) - Universities of Milan and Turin. Since 2020, post-doc Research Fellow at the Department of Sociology and Social Sciences of the University of Milano-Bicocca, working at the Centro Interdepartmental - Center for Gender Studies-ABCD and at the Comitato Unico di Garanzia (CUG). Her research interests focus on gender inequalities in academic institutions, Gender Budgeting (Bilancio di Genere - BdG) and Gender Equality Plan (GEP).

Sara Pilia, Pil Maria Saugmann, Anna Pavelieva (EuroDOC), *“Women in Research”: a social media campaign to empower women researchers and challenge stereotypes*

How can women who work in research self-represent themselves, their image, their aspirations, challenging the existing stereotyped roles and models for women, and for researchers, are these questions we as female researchers have often asked ourselves through our work in Eurodoc and elsewhere?

As active in an organisation that works for advocating for “positive change in the policies, culture and environment that affect the quality of training, well-being and employment conditions of early career researchers”, we often struggled to find pictures that represent women who are researchers that go beyond a white, blond hair woman in front of a microscope. At the same time, as women and researchers, we have not struggled with a lack of role models but with the feeling of not fitting in. We’d like to advocate for a right to be “a normal researcher”, who also is a multifaceted person, each one with different aspirations, desires, difficulties and resources.

The Istanbul Convention (IC) states that violence against women “shall mean all acts of gender-based violence that result in, or are likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering to women”(IC, chapter 1, art.3.a); in this we also believe it’s included the reduction of the ability of women to speak for themselves and to self-represent. The IC also recommends to promote changes in the social and cultural patterns based on stereotyped roles (chapter 3, art.12.1) and promote programs and activities for the empowerment of women (IC, chapter 3, art.12.3). Starting from this awareness, we planned a social media campaign to tackle:

- 1) the ability of women who work in research to self-represent both in words and in visuals (empowerment);
- 2) to show to the public how diverse “Women in Research” are and can be (awareness-raising campaign, and promotion of changes in the stereotyped role models);
- 3) to create a “database” of images and texts that can be taken up by other actors active within the Education sector and beyond to promote other teaching activities and awareness raising campaigns on the topic.

The campaign ran from the 11th of February 2023 (International Day of Girls and Women in Science) to the 8th of March 2023 on Instagram and other social media.

Our presentation at the Conference will explain how the campaign was planned, what type of challenges and difficulties we encountered, the results obtained, and potential improvements for a new edition.

PhD. **Anna Pavelieva** holds a PhD in philology (literary studies), but her scientific interests also include linguistics and translation studies. She is External Communication Coordinator at the European Council of Doctoral Candidates and Junior Researchers (Eurodoc). In this capacity, she co-authored the “Women in Research” campaign, managing its social media implementation. In Eurodoc she also works on issues related to the conditions of higher education and research in Ukraine.

Maria Paola Paladino, Laura Lorenzato, Boglarka Nyul (University of Trento), *On the role of school in prevention of gender-based violence against women and girls: A research on teachers’ perspectives, educational needs and perceived barriers*

Prevention is one of the main pillars outlined in the “Istanbul Convention”. Formal education is a key context for this preventative work. School can in fact play an important role in challenging attitudes and behaviors contributing to gender-based violence against women and girls (VAWG), and in promoting healthy gender relationships and gender equality. It is thus crucial to investigate teachers’ perspectives on the issue as well as to get a better understanding of their educational needs and potential barriers to engage in activities aimed at raising awareness and educate students to end VAWG. With this aim, we conducted a research that employed a mixed methods approach. Qualitative focus group data (N = 10 teachers in Italian schools) were used as a basis to design a questionnaire that investigated the following topics: teachers’ knowledge on VAWG and related topics; self-efficacy in their preventative work, specifically in creating a safe and equitable class environment and in organizing/implementing curricular and/or extra-curricular activities related to such gender-based violence; perceived barriers; their past experience and future intention to organize some school activity to prevent VAWG. A convenient sample of Italian school teachers (N = 467; Female = 412; High school = 208; Middle school = 148; Elementary school = 110) responded to the questionnaire. Participants attributed the most important role in educating young people to family, followed by school and teachers, and then mass-media. On average, they reported having good knowledge on gender-based violence (e.g. specific forms of gender-based violence) and related topics (e.g. gender stereotypes and norms), but low knowledge on sexual objectification and legislation on gender-violence. Self-efficacy in their preventative work was however relatively low, especially in designing, organizing and implementing curricular and/or extra-curricular activities related to gender-based violence. On average, time (e.g. not enough time to prepare the activities or to implement them in class) was not pointed out as a barrier, whereas lack of training and fear of reprisal were perceived as obstacles to some extent. In addition to self-efficacy, perceiving a personal moral obligation to prevent and combat VAWG turned out to be the best predictor of intention to organize a school activity to raise awareness and/or to educate to prevent VAWG in the next school

year. Implications of these results for the implementation of the Istanbul Convention in educational contexts are discussed.

Maria Paola Paladino is professor in Social Psychology at the University of Trento. Her research focuses on socio-psychological processes involved in social inequalities. She is part of the StandByMe2.0 - STop gender-bAsed violeNce by aDdressing masculinities and changing Behaviour of Young people through huMan rights Education - project funded by the EU. Part of this research was conducted within this project.

Gaia Del Negro, Maria Grazia Gambardella, Silvia Luraschi, Sveva Magaraggia (University of Milano-Bicocca), *GENdERAcTION: Stereotypes and gender discrimination in young males in marginalised communities in the North of Italy*

The aim of the research GENdERAcTION - Deconstructing Stereotypes and Countering Homophobia and Gender Discrimination, conducted by the Department of Sociology at the University of Milano Bicocca, was to shed light on the ways in which gender relations are constructed and negotiated - both in the public and private spheres. In particular, the research team proposed to the lecturers an analysis of gender practices within the relational spaces that constitute the experiences of the students encountered, of the ways in which young men negotiate modes of identity construction (models of masculinity). Between January 2020 and February 2021, in addition to a questionnaire, five focus groups were carried out (3 with 20 students, 2 with 8 teachers) in a technical vocational school in Brianza (industrial area north of Milan), led by two of the authors and supervised by one of us. The students were mostly males with a migrant background.

The study showed that boys do not talk to adults except in routine situations within boundaries drawn by the pivotal institutions of social life (school, family, work). They still recognize the family as a pinnacle of their value orientation and do not question gender roles. The peer relationship that is central to young people as a passage in the life cycle, however, does not seem from the research to allow for the establishment of broad spaces of sociability, partly because of the Covid period and the social and cultural marginality in which second generations may find themselves. Without dialogue or opportunities to get together and have experiences, including conflict, how does one explore the meanings of gender differences? Representations of the masculine and feminine, specifically, seem to be strongly linked to the incidence of gender-based violence, as a stereotypical view of gender, as well as the rigid attribution of complementary and hierarchical roles, still corresponds to a devaluation of the feminine or of anything that deviates from a dominant model of masculinity.

Gaia Del Negro, PhD, is a researcher in Adult Education. She works as evaluator of social projects and trainer in community welfare with a participatory practice-based approach. She collaborates with the University of Milano Bicocca as Secretary of RUIAP Italian Network of Universities for Lifelong Learning.

Maria Grazia Gambardella, PhD, is a research fellow at the Department of Sociology and Social Research of the University of Milan Bicocca; she is a founding member and research fellow of the IASSC (Institute for Advanced Study of Social Change) and of the Interuniversity Research Center 'Culture di Genere'. She has published papers on several subjects, among them: gender and generation differences, youth experiences, forms of political participation, qualitative research methods.

Silvia Luraschi, PhD, is a pedagogist, Feldenkrais method practitioner, counsellor, and researcher in Adult Education. She works as a coordinator of a social service in Milan, and collaborates with the University of Milano Bicocca as a tutor of the course in Family Pedagogy at the Department of Human Studies for Education.

Sveva Magaraggia, PhD, Associate Professor at the Department of Sociology and Social Research, University of Milan - Bicocca. In previous years she has worked at the University of Roma Tre and at Macquarie University in Sydney (Australia). Her recent publications include the book *Male and female violence in popular media*, Bloomsbury Academic, London (with Elisa Giomi in 2022).

Anna Loretoni, Federica Merenda (Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies of Pisa), *Engaging Men and Boys against Gender-based Violence and Discrimination through Technology-based Trainings (ENGINE): a European Project to prevent VAW*

Almost ten years after the entry into force of the Istanbul Convention and as the European Union approves its accession to the Convention, gender-based violence is still a major challenge in EU societies.

Although no thorough assessment of violence against women in Europe has been performed in most recent years due to a lack of comparable EU-data, the last EU-wide investigation (EIGE, 2017) shows that one out of three women in Europe experienced physical and/or sexual violence since age 15 and almost one out of twenty has undergone sexual and/or physical violence.

In such a context, the European Gender Equality Index shows that gender-based discrimination still heavily affects the participation of women to domains like work, healthcare, time, power, knowledge and money with gender equality not to be reached in the EU for at least sixty years still.

In this framework of widespread violence and structural sexism, coherently with the first pillar of the Istanbul Convention (Prevention) and thanks to a strong cooperation between social sciences and STEM, Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna (SSSA) coordinates the ENGINE project, a EU CERV-DAPHNE funded project carried out in partnership with ARTES 4.0 and CAM Firenze aimed at preventing gender-based violence by addressing toxic masculinities and fostering the engagement of men and boys studying and teaching in high schools, university colleges and sport organizations in order to promote a critical attitude towards the mainstream models of masculinity and to educate male individuals as allies.

In line with the goals stated in the EU Gender Equality Strategy, the project pursues effective prevention of violence in communities of practice, i.e. in educational as well as in

recreational context. ENGINE thus acts on teenage boys and on male educators and coaches in order to change the gender role models that boys encounter in their daily life and that are conveyed by social language narratives, and to undermine the imagery and the dynamics of epistemic injustice and sexist structures that contribute to the normalization of violence against women and to secondary victimization of individuals who experienced gender-based violence.

In order to do that, the ENGINE project performs a series of awareness-raising activities (including a devoted podcast) and high-impact training courses for students and professionals, privileging mutual learning and very innovative educational tools, such as simulations, role playing and new education tools based on immersive experiences of virtual reality developed in cooperation with the Sant'Anna Institute of Mechanical Intelligence.

Anna Loretoni is Full Professor of Political Philosophy, Dean of the Social Sciences Department and Principal Investigator of the ENGINE Project at SSSA, where she is the founder of the Research Group in Gender Studies and where she also served as the Coordinator of the Ph.D. Programme in Politics, Human Rights and Sustainability. She has an extensive record of publications in national and international journals and her main research interests involve Gender Studies, War and Peace Studies, European Integration and the Universalism/Relativism debate in Fundamental Rights. She also has a remarkable track record in teaching and training activities related to GBV.

Girerd L., Paladino M. P., Nyúl B., Schiavo G., Marconi A., Roumelioti E., Gini F., Zancanaro M. (University of Trento), *The StandByMe.2 project: A multi-country educational program against gender-based violence against women and girls*

Gender-based violence remains a pervasive issue across the globe (UN Women, 2022). Specific actions such as the Istanbul Convention have been put in place in order to combat this issue. One of the pillars of the convention focuses on prevention. To support this objective an educational technological platform has been developed by Foundation Bruno Kessler and the University of Trento in partnership with Amnesty International in four European countries (Italy, Slovenia, Hungary, Poland) as part of the StandByMe.2 (STop gender-bAsed violeNce by aDdressing masculinities and changing Behaviour of Young people through huMan rights Education) European Commission-funded project. The goal of this project is to educate and empower young people to become aware and take action against gender-based violence against women and girls through a set of activities: 1) seminars for teachers to help them identify their own gender biases and engage them in the empowerment of students; 2) an online course about online and offline gender-based violence; 3) workshops for high-school students aimed at increasing their awareness of gender-based violence; 4) a web platform with gamified activities aimed at raising awareness, fostering empathy and at promoting action against this phenomenon. This platform also includes a digital story-telling reflection tool. The gamified activities' content relies on the social psychology literature on gender-based violence. Notably, the activities focus on contributing factors to gender-based violence (i.e., gender stereotypes, norms,

and ideologies). For example, some activities focus on deconstructing the “traditional masculinity” and on educating young people about consent. The activities also rely on technological innovations and on gamification elements to adapt the content and platform to young people. Feedbacks on the activities and the platform have been received by relevant actors (e.g. educators) in the different countries as well as from social psychologists.

At this stage, 24 activities have been implemented on the gamified platform which should be experimented by the end of the year in high-school and university settings to test the effectiveness. The StandByMe.2 project is a comprehensive project benefiting from the skills of a multidisciplinary team. This project represents an important educational and prevention program tackling gender-based violence and it could be useful to many actors in the future.

Lola Girerd is a postdoc at the University of Trento working on the Standbyme.2 project. Her research looks at collective action in favor of women, neoliberal ideology, politicized identities and system justification.

Lorella Franzoni (University of Parma), Rossana Cecchi (Center on organization, quality, and sustainability of health systems, Parma), Tullio Ghi (University Hospital AOU, Parma), Nadia Monacelli (University of Parma), Emilia Solinas (University Hospital AOU, Parma), Carla Verrotti di Pianella (Women Health Unit, Local Health Unit, Parma), Bettina Pfleiderer (Münster University), Maria Cristina Baroni, Antonella Vezzani (Medical Women Italian Association), *Effective transdisciplinary programmes in the prevention and intervention against gender-based violence: from early educational stages to high-level training courses*

With reference to Articles 14 and 15 of the Istanbul Convention, educational initiatives play a crucial role in eradicating discrimination and violence against women; gender education should be considered at many levels, in all age groups and in all curricula.

Here we present transdisciplinary and inter-institutional programmes of Parma University, in the prevention and intervention against gender-based violence.

In addition to the long lasting courses delivered to undergraduate students in Psychology and Social Work, since 2015 the Department of Medicine and Surgery has been organizing a training optional course to Medical students aimed at raising awareness on combating gender-based violence and discrimination. The course was attended by students regardless of their gender; part of the course was dedicated to the deconstruction of gender stereotypes and the patriarchal values that underline them.

Moreover, since childhood is the ideal timespan for promoting the prevention of gender-based violence and abuse, starting from the academic year 2022-2023 we have met children in primary school, within a program named Researcher@School, with the aim of addressing gender stereotypes, which can encourage violent behaviour.

Based on these experiences, an additional cross-curricular and interdisciplinary larger elective programme was designed, which will be available in the coming a.y. 2023-2024. Students enrolled at Parma University will be able to include the course in their curriculum, regardless of their specific field of study. The didactic initiative aim to: (a) discuss the phenomenon of gender-based violence and violence against people in general, in its various manifestations; (b) raise students' awareness on contrasting and preventing gender-based violence; (b) describe and discuss the integrated protocols for welcoming and taking care of people who have experienced violence, with reference to the activities and responsibilities of the multidisciplinary team and of the individual operator. The course is based on active learning, using techniques such as story-telling and role playing.

In the academic year 2023-2024, gender-based violence will be also discussed in the new postgraduate Master course "Gender-specific medicine: an innovative push in the development of personalized medicine and a challenge for healthcare systems".

The feedback of these preventive intervention and treatment programmes will be available in the near future.

Such academic initiatives, coordinated by the Department of Medicine and Surgery, involve professionals of the University Hospital (AOU), the Local Health Unit (USL) and the Medical Women Italian Association (AIDM), as partners.

Finally, Parma University and University Hospital are partners of the EU Project VIPROM (Victim Protection in Medicine), <https://viprom-cerv.eu> (see the specific Abstract).

Lorella Franzoni Born in Parma, 1959.

She graduated with full marks and honours at the University of Parma, first in Pharmaceutical Chemistry and then in Pharmacy.

PhD in Biophysics at the University of Genova.

Associate Professor of Biochemistry, Department of Medicine and Surgery.

Former Rector Delegate for the "Right to education and student welfare".

Former President of the Degree Course in Medicine and Surgery.

Board member of the "Gender Medicine" project.

President of the Master in "Clinical risk governance and promotion of healthcare safety".

Director of the Training and research Center on organization, quality and sustainability of health systems.

Member of the Quality Assurance Board of Parma University.

Member of the Project "VIPROM: victim protection in Medicine" (exploiting practical knowledge of medical staff to enhance the multi-professional contact with victims of domestic violence), funded by the European Union's CERV-2022-DAPHNE.

(see the full CV at <https://personale.unipr.it/it/ugovdocenti/person/21334>)

Immacolata Di Napoli, Barbara Agueli, Caterina Arcidiacono (University of Naples Federico II), **Ciro Esposito (University of Foggia),** *Preventing and promoting equality of health in university context*

In Italy, the research on sexual harassment in university contexts is still very limited (Bastiani et al., 2018; Romito et al., 2017; Barro, 2013). A recent review (Klein & Martin, 2021) on sexual harassment in university contexts highlighted that most students do not report it because they do not recognize sexual harassment as a form of violence (Spencer et al., 2017).

Studies demonstrated the impact of sexual harassment on perceived well-being (Richman et al., 1999; Huerta et al., 2006; Buchanan et al., 2018). Sexual objectification (Galdi & Guizzo, 2021) and authoritarianism (Spaccatini et al., 2019) are risk factors facilitating tolerance towards sexual harassment. Few studies on sexual harassment (Banyard et al., 2020; Edwards et al., 2021) have investigated the relationship between sexual objectification and authoritarianism as risk factors and mattering, that is, the individual perception of being recognized and of being important in the context of own life contexts, as a protective factor. The research aims to explore risk factors (sexual objectification and authoritarianism) and protective factors (mattering) in university contexts that can facilitate or inhibit a climate of tolerance towards female sexual harassment.

The research includes students and workers of the University of Naples Federico II. We conducted a study with 835 participants (60% female), including 703 students.

To test the connection between the investigated factors and academic well-being, we tested a multiple linear regression model using authoritarianism, sexual objectification, mattering, and climate tolerance towards sexual harassment as predictors of seven dimensions of well-being: interpersonal, community, occupational, physical, psychological, economic and overall. Results show that mattering and a climate of tolerance can mediate between authoritarianism, sexual objectification, and dimensions of well-being. Furthermore, there are several differences in levels of well-being based on gender and the role played in the academy (student or worker). The limitations, strengths and practical implications of such research will be extensively discussed.

Immacolata Di Napoli, a researcher at the Department of Humanities of the University of Naples, Federico II.

She has a broad background in community psychology, with specific expertise in action participatory research. Her main research topic is domestic violence in an ecological approach to promote a multidimensional intervention and measures to combat and contrast the violence against women. She published several papers on this specific issue.

Another issue of her research is developing a measurement tool for community trust.

She worked on a European project and is a member of the Central Project Office for projects funded by the European Commission.

Giussy Barbara (SVSeD, University of Milan), Laila Micci, Mitia Rendiniello, Gaia Spinelli, Alessandra Granata, Cristina Paocchi, Vera Merelli, Donatella Galloni, Fanny Marchese (SVSeD), Cristina Cattaneo (SVSeD, University of Milan), Alessandra Kustermann (SVSeD), Edgardo Somigliana (SVSeD, University of Milan),
Health care system and prevention of gender-based violence: Initiatives from a multidisciplinary academic medical centre against gender-based violence

As acknowledged by the World Health Organization (WHO), health system has a critical role in preventing and minimizing the impact of gender-based violence, for several reasons. Women and girls experiencing violence are more likely to use health services, health care providers are often women's first point of professional contact and, last but not least, all women are likely to seek health services at some points of their life, putting physicians in a unique position for a prompt identification of the phenomenon. In this context, several key elements characterize an effective health response to violence against women, such as women centred-care, identification of survivors of intimate partner violence (IPV), clinical care for survivors of sexual violence (SV), training of health care providers on IPV and SV, and mandatory reporting if required.

Given this background, there is an increasing need to integrate gender violence issues into clinical practice and training for health care providers, as also recommended by the Istanbul Convention of the Council of Europe (articles 14 and 15). According to this perspective, the SVSeD - Service for Sexual and Domestic Violence - a multidisciplinary academic medical centre against gender-based violence localised at Fondazione IRCCS Ca' Granda, Ospedale Maggiore Policlinico, and University of Milan, is constantly involved in developing training and educational programs for different professional figures of the Policlinico of Milan, such as gynaecologists, nurses, midwives, and physicians working in the hospital Emergency Room (ER). Moreover, SVSeD professionals are also involved in organizing training courses on gender-based violence for other hospitals of the Lombardia Region, as well as academic courses on gender-based issues for medical students of the University of Milan.

The main aim of all these educational activities is not only to provide health care professionals a broad perspective on psychological, social and juridical aspects of gender-based violence, including non-stereotyped gender roles, mutual respect and equality issues, but also to specifically focus on practical clinical elements of a multidisciplinary/integrated care for women who experienced SV and/or IPV, such as for example skills on gynaecological examination in cases of SV, forensic procedures for the collection of evidence (biological materials, pictures of the physical injuries), elements of psychological trauma-care and of social/legal support. Moreover, particular attention is paid to the identification of all possible symptoms and signs of violence, particularly if the woman does not openly declare the violence in the ER setting, and to the assessment of the risk of revictimization.

Giussy Barbara: I am a researcher in Obstetrics and Gynecology at the University of Milan, and the Director of the Service for Sexual and Domestic Violence (SVSeD), a

multidisciplinary academic medical center against gender-based violence (Fondazione IRCCS Ca' Granda, Ospedale Maggiore Policlinico, Milan).

My scientific activity is related to the study of the phenomenon of gender violence, in particular as regard to health, social and psychological aspects. I am also involved in several research projects as regard to the treatment of endometriosis and other gynecological diseases.

My research activities are documented in several papers published in peer-reviewed scientific journals. H-index: 29 (Scopus).

Tindara Addabbo, Carlotta Barra (University of Modena-Reggio Emilia), Ester Cois (University of Cagliari), Ilenia Picardi (University of Naples Federico II), *Preventing and contrasting gender based violence. The role of universities and their equal opportunities bodies*

The main focus of this paper is on the policies carried out by Italian universities and by their equal opportunities bodies in preventing and contrasting gender-based violence (GBV).

According to the UniSAFE survey (Lipinsky, A., Schredl, C., Baumann, H., Humbert, A., Tanwar, J. (2022). Gender-based violence and its consequences in European Academia, Summary results from the UniSAFE survey. Report, November 2022. UniSAFE project no.101006261), submitted in 2022 to 46 universities and research organisations in 15 countries in Europe, with 42,186 respondents, considering different forms of GBV including physical, psychological, economic, and sexual violence, sexual harassment, and online violence, 62% of the survey respondents have experienced at least one form of gender-based violence since they started working or studying at their institution. Women and non-binary people have higher probability of experiencing GBV within universities.

The starting point of the analysis is a literature review on the different models of intervention in universities taking into account actions that aim at preventing and contrasting gender-based violence, with the purpose of eradicating gender based violence tolerant academic environments.

We then turn to analyse the situation in Italian universities by using data made available by the Conference of Italian Universities Equal Opportunities Bodies survey (Counipar, 2022) on a sample of 35 Italian Universities, which allow to evaluate their sensitiveness to this issue by observing the effectiveness of specific policies, like the presence of a Code against sexual harassment and gender-based violence, free psychological counselling service (listening area, psychology desk, counselling,...), trusted counsellor and guidelines on non-sexist administrative language, especially on the basis of a wider analysis on the actions included in their Gender Equality Plans. First results from the Counipar (2022) survey show that among the 35 universities that participated in the survey 63% have a harassment code; 34% have adopted guidelines on non-sexist administrative language; 57% have a trusted counsellor and 69% of the 35 University equal opportunities bodies expressed interest in attending courses on gender-based violence. Only 11% of the universities that took part in the survey do not have a psychological counselling service,

and, amongst those that do, 64% are dedicated to students and staff components, 3% only for staff, and the remaining only to the student component.

Special attention is devoted to programmes that involve universities' participation in networks established in their area, together with actions dedicated to increase awareness of gender-based violence by the different universities' components and also outside thanks to public engagement activities.

Tindara Addabbo

Full Professor in Economic Policy at the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia (Unimore) e-mail: tindara.addabbo@unimore.it

Current main Research Areas: gender economics, labour economics, gender gap in education, employment and wage discrimination by gender & sexual orientation, well-being (measurement and evaluation of the effect of public policies on different dimensions, in a gender perspective and in the capability approach), gender budgeting and policies evaluation. Coordinator of the ongoing Project: Leading Towards Sustainable Gender Equality Plans in research institutions– LeTSGEPs (H2020-SwafS-2019– 873072) coordinated by Unimore within the Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Framework. President of the National Conference of Italian Universities Equal Opportunities Bodies.

website: <http://personale.unimore.it/rubrica/curriculum/addabbo>

Carlotta Barra is a second-year PhD student in “Labour, Development and Innovation” at University of Modena and Reggio Emilia–“Marco Biagi” Foundation and Department of Economics Marco Biagi and member of the Marco Biagi Foundation Gender Equality Lab. Her main research interests are focused on gender (in)equality as expressed within the fields of pre-labour market and labour market gender discrimination- with a particular focus on gender stereotypes and inequalities in the STEM area- gender-based violence and its socio-economic effects, gender equality measurement in organisations and gender budgeting.

Ester Cois is Permanent Researcher in Sociology of Environment and Territory at the University of Cagliari. Rector's Delegate for Gender Equality and President of Guarantee Committee for Equal Opportunities at University of Cagliari since 2021, her research interests focus on gender inequalities in the use of public space, and on gender dynamics in the labor market, with a specific focus on Higher Education sector. She is PI of the Erasmus+ project SMILE. Social Meaning Impact through LLL Universities in Europe, and expert advisor of the project UNISafe (Ending Gender-Based Violence. Gender-based violence and institutional responses: Building a knowledge base and operational tools to make universities and research organisations safe). She's a member of the national CRUI sub-commission for Geps, and Managing Editor of the band A scientific journal “Sociologica. International Journal for Sociological Debate”.

Ilenia Picardi is Assistant Professor in Sociology at the University of Naples Federico II (UNINA), Italy. Her research activity focuses on Social Studies of Science and Technology, mainly on issues related to the social impact of techno-science, environmental sustainability, intersectionality in scientific research and academia. Currently she is in

charge of the Gender Studies in Science and Technology area at the Gender Observatory on university and research at University of Naples Federico II.

4. ANTIVIOLENCE SERVICES AND PRACTICES

Chair: Elena Brodeala (University of Zurich, Switzerland)

Presentations of:

Marta Picardi, Giovanna Vingelli (University of Calabria), *Sportelli antiviolenza as safe dialogue spaces: the experience of the University of Calabria*

Colleges and universities have responded to the issue of gender violence and sexual harassment by implementing different types of sexual assault awareness programming, ranging from poster campaigns to rallies and resistance training programs (Hayes-Smith & Levett, 2010; Vladutiu, Martin, & Macy, 2011). However, research in the past few years has indicated that the campus sexual assault resources colleges offered were inconsistent in terms of their content and availability to students (Hayes-Smith & Hayes-Smith, 2009). On the other hand, peer support interventions, such as peer hotlines, peer counselling, and peer advocacy, have played a longstanding role in campus response to sexual violence. Peer supporters and safe spaces on college campuses are in a unique position to reach students survivors who would not otherwise seek support.

The University of Calabria has been developing a comprehensive program in response to gender violence and harassment, in collaboration with the Anti-violence centre “R. Lanzino” (Cosenza). The paper will focus on the first results of this experience, and in particular on the role and methodologies adopted by the “Sportello antiviolenza” on campus. Therefore, the presentation will:

- provide context research about the experience of the “Sportello”;
- present the experience of the internships as a pilot for a peer support proposed methodology of intervention;
- present the practice of safe dialogue spaces, involving not only participants, but also other relevant stakeholders within the University (students’ association; counselling).

Marta Picardi is a sociologist and a gender policy expert. Since 2012, she works as a women counsellor at the Antiviolence Centre “R. Lanzino”, Cosenza. Since 2022, she is the coordinator of the Equal Opportunities Office, University of Calabria.

Giovanna Vingelli holds a PhD from the University of Calabria (2004). She is a Senior Researcher and Assistant Professor of Gender Studies at the University of Calabria (Italy) where she is Rector’s Delegate for Equal opportunities and Director of the Centre of Women’s Studies.

Nicky Stanley, Helen Richardson Foster, Sarah Shorrock, Christine Barter, Nicola Farrelly (University of Central Lancashire), Leah McCabe, Claire Houghton, Franziska Meinck (University of Edinburgh), *Developing New Portals to Safety for Domestic Abuse Survivors in the Context of the Pandemic*

This study examined the emergence and implementation of community touchpoints established in the UK during the COVID-19 pandemic for victims/survivors of domestic abuse (DA). Community touchpoints are designated places, both online and in accessible settings such as pharmacies and banks, where victims/survivors can seek confidential advice and be directed to expert DA services. The research adopted a case study approach and explored a range of perspectives through expert interviews, document analysis, consultation with survivors and stakeholders and a survey of DA co-ordinators. Four national community touchpoint schemes were identified and, of these, three were implemented rapidly and were available 2020-21 when the UK experienced lockdowns. Partnerships between Government/voluntary organisations and commercial businesses assisted design and implementation. Some stakeholders considered that the schemes lacked responsiveness to local context and noted challenges in providing a confidential service in rural areas. While pharmacies, banks and online spaces were identified as non-stigmatised and trusted places to seek advice, community touchpoints were judged less accessible for some groups including those experiencing digital poverty and victims whose movements were heavily scrutinised. Most of the touchpoint schemes targeted adults only. There were also concerns about whether frontline staff in commercial businesses received sufficient training. While robust evidence of outcomes was limited, there were indications that the schemes had achieved good reach with some early evidence of take-up. Testimonials indicated that victims/survivors were using the touchpoints in flexible ways which met their needs. Moreover, the wide reach and visibility of these initiatives delivered in non-stigmatised settings may have served to raise public awareness of DA, reducing the silence that has traditionally surrounded it. Further research into the use and impact of these initiatives is required and there may be future potential to extend community touchpoints to include children and young people experiencing DA.

Patrizia Romito, Mariachiara Feresin (University of Trieste), *Addressing male violence against women at the University of Trieste: our first 30 years*

Our first research project on Violence against Women (VAW), “VAW and the response of social institutions”, funded by the Regional EO Committee and the Health Agency, with the collaboration of the AntiViolence Center (AVC), was launched in 1993. The collaboration between University of Trieste (UniTs), women's associations and local governments characterized most subsequent research, that focused on various aspects of VAW: the response of health services and criminal law, the consequences on health, sexual harassment, post-separation violence and child custody, partner violence during COVID-19 epidemic.

Research and teaching activities were strongly intertwined. The first course on VAW was launched in 2003 at the Faculty of Medicine; from 2013 to 2021 similar courses were offered to students in Social Work, Nursing, Midwifery, Dental hygiene, Dentistry. From

2023, a teaching on VAW will be integrated into the new degree course for Health care assistants. Teachings are characterized by a multidisciplinary approach and involve the AVCs, as recommended by the WHO Guidelines. These teachings attracted many students and "produced" many dissertations, which won national and local awards. From 2016 to 2020, we implemented a doctoral fellowship dedicated to VAW, which over the years concerned various disciplines. In 2017-18, we developed a post-graduate course, inspired by the Istanbul Convention.

Outreaching activities included training for different professionals (health and social workers, lawyers, magistrates, teachers, journalists, the police), consultancies to politicians, school-based projects, and the development and implementation of the web site "NoAllaViolenza!Scelgoil rispetto" (2012), dedicated to violence against and among adolescents.

To explore changes in experiences, knowledge, and attitudes among university students, with M.Feresin and M.J.Saurel-Cubizolles we are analyzing data from two questionnaire studies at UniTs, confronting students' answers to the same questions in 2013 and 2023. The same questionnaire will be used at the University of Strasbourg. In Trieste, students held fewer sexist prejudices in 2023 than in 2013 and declare themselves feminists more often in 2023 than in 2013 (women twice as many men), but less than 2% in both years are involved in feminist associations. In 2023, 23% of women and only 5% of men attended a course on VAW at university.

In conclusion: we did a lot of work, but there is still much to do!

Patrizia Romito, PhD, is a psychologist, senior scholar at the University of Trieste, Italy, where she teaches and does research on violence against women and children, social responses to it, consequences on health, and sexual harassment. She has written several books, the latest of which (with M.Pellegrini and M.J.Saurel-Cubizolles) is "*Pensare la violenza contro le donne. Una ricerca al tempo del Covid* (2021). Her book "*Un silenzio assordante. La violenza occultata su donne e minori*" (2005/2017) was translated into French, English and Spanish.

Mariachiara Feresin has a PhD in Social psychology. She has written several research articles; with P.Romito, she edited the book "Le molestie sessuali. Riconoscerle, combatterle, prevenirle" (2019). She is research fellow in Special Pedagogy and lecturer of Community Psychology and Psychology for teaching at the University of Trieste. Her research topics concern violence against women, child custody in situations of domestic violence, gender-based violence and health, sexual harassment, and disability.

Elvira Reale (Cardarelli Hospital, Naples), *The first Psychological Assistance Centre for women victims of violence in the emergency department*

Injury is not the most common physical health outcome of gender-based abuse. The most common is "psychological disorders". Many women come to the ED with severe injuries, but the link between injuries and domestic violence is often not recognised and women don't receive appropriate treatment.

The working group coordinated by Elvira Reale tested and then certified a model of psychological intervention applied in the emergency room for women victims of violence. The data collected in recent years concerned the assistance of around 1,800 women. The path for women who suffer violence in Italy, established by the 2017 national guidelines, was thus implemented in Campania and then in Emilia Romagna with the activation of psychological assistance after the medical intervention. We are talking about the creation of a totally innovative emergency health service dedicated exclusively to women victims of violence, which is part of the health path of hospital assistance.

Below are the tasks of this new service:

- listening, information about resources that must be activated to stop violence;
- observation of emotional state,
- dynamic collection of the last event /trauma,
- collection of events about previous violence,
- indication of the presence of children with possible shock state and accompanying them to Pediatric observation
 - mortality risk assessment for women and children,
 - psychological diagnosis and report for woman and child (if this has been observed in the pediatric department,
 - sending to the police and to legal support for complaint,
 - sending to social resources (anti-violence center, social assistance)

The psychological intervention in ED consists of two parts:

- 1 one part: welcoming and supporting the woman, with an initial treatment to reduce traumatic outcomes which includes various actions:
 - 1.a to reconstruction of traumatic events with a focus on its harmful effects on health (for women and children) and on personal autonomy
 - 1.b de-blaming of the victim and identification of all responsibility, including responsibility for the assisted maltreatment, totally in the perpetrator (without references to incongruous theories of the circularity of responsibility);
 - 1.c restitution through the reading of traumatic facts, of image of a 'strong' woman surviving the violence;
 - 1.d evaluation of the point of no return, represented by the request for help in PS;
 - e. appropriate assessment of present and future risks for women and children;
 - 1.e support for the motivation of a personal path out of violence.
- 2 a second part of in-depth observation of the woman's psychological conditions with the drafting of a report: the psychological report, which documents and attests, integrating the medical observation and the medical report, both the psychological violence (the so-called invisible violence, which leaves no traces) and the

psychological results of any other type of violence (physical, sexual, economic, verbal, material, stalking).

Elvira Reale

- She is a psychologist, an expert in women's health from a gender perspective
- Head of the first psychological assistance center for victims of violence at the Cardarelli hospital in Naples
- Femicide Commission consultant to the XVIII legislature Senate
- Scientific director of the Gender Studies Center of the Ass. Women's Health
- Professor of the specialization course of the Federico II University, in "Psychological report, expert witness and psychological report for the fight against gender-based violence against women and witnessing violence (IPV and WDV)" years 2021-23 –

Former director of the UOC of Clinical Psychology of ASL Napoli 1 until 2016 and head psychologist of the former psychiatric hospital

- She collaborated for 15 years with the CNR in research on women's mental health
- Collaborated with the WHO on issues of the effects of violence on women's mental health.

She is the author of numerous books, including:

Maltrattamento e violenza sulle donne (Maltreatment and violence against women) Vol.1 e 2, Edited by Franco Angeli, Milan 2011.

Psychological consequences of violence: the intervention in the Emergency Department (ED) In "Escaping Gender Violence", La Camera Blu, Journal of gender Studies, N.16 (2017)

La violenza invisibile sulle donne. (Invisible violence against women. The psychological report: guidelines and clinical tools). Franco Angeli Ed. 2021

Panagiota Polykarpou (Yellow Window Belgium), *UniSAFE – Gender-based violence and institutional responses: Building a knowledge base and operational tools to make universities and research organisations safe*

Higher education and research institutions are particularly prone to high levels of gender-based violence with severe negative consequences for institutions, individuals and societies (Anitha and Lewis, 2018; Bondestam and Lundqvist, 2020; Humbert et al., 2022). Research shows that in the context of academia already marginalised groups, including ethnic and sexual minorities, migrants and younger people are at increased risk of gender-based violence (Gonçalves and Matos, 2020; Messinger, 2011; Roudsari et al., 2009; Wemrell et al., 2019; Voth Schrag, 2017). These institutions, with their unique characteristics such as imbalanced power dynamics and a concentration of young adults,

are particularly susceptible to experiencing higher incidence rates of gender-based violence compared to other settings.

The EU-funded Horizon 2020 project UniSAFE has produced in-depth knowledge on gender-based violence and sexual harassment in higher education and research organisations and has translated this research into operational tools. The study involved quantitative and qualitative analysis on micro, meso, and macro levels, following an ambitious and holistic 7P model. The 7 Ps stand for prevalence, prevention, protection, prosecution, provision of services, partnerships, and policy. In 2022, UniSAFE collected empirical evidence of the prevalence of gender-based violence and insights into its determinants and consequences through the largest ever European survey covering 46 research organisations and universities in 15 countries, with over 42,000 responses. The survey focused on gendered experiences of violence, whether physical, sexual, psychological, or economic, including online forms of gender-based violence. The survey also investigated intersections with respondents' individual situation, such as their sexual orientation, age, ethnic minority status, disability, and international mobility. In addition, qualitative work, consisting of in-depth interviews, case studies and workshops has yielded further insights.

UniSAFE operationalised these insights through the development of a toolkit for higher education institutions and research organisations, with the aim to guide them in the design and implementation of an effective policy framework, with clear guidance, tips and suggestions, and inspiring practices. Among others, a self-assessment tool is developed, allowing organisations to identify the strengths and weaknesses of their policies for addressing gender-based violence along the 7Ps. The toolkit and assessment framework will be presented in the Conference, with the aim to empower institutions to strengthen their policies towards ending gender-based violence and fostering safe working and learning environments where everyone can thrive.

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Panagiota Polykarpou is a Consultant at Yellow Window Belgium. Yellow Window is a multi disciplinary consultancy specializing in product, service and policy design, with considerable expertise in the fields of gender equality and social innovation. They have extensive experience in designing research methodologies, collecting and analysing complex and comprehensive data, drafting thorough and accessible reports communicating the research findings, and translating them into concrete (policy) recommendations. Yellow Window has developed various toolkits in support of policy implementation, including the GEAR tool for the European Commission and EIGE.

Claudia Pividori (University of Padua), “*Violence against women and human rights*”, the first ever curricular course promoted by an antiviolence centre: the experience of the University of Padua

The cooperation between the University of Padua (UNIPD) and the Centro Veneto Progetti Donna (CVPD) – the women’s organization running the antiviolence centres in the Province of Padua - is longstanding and multifaceted.

In the last decade, the UNIPD Human Rights Centre and the CVPD had positively cooperated in numerous projects, training initiatives and awareness-raising events on different topics related to violence against women within the human rights legal and policy frameworks.

An important breakthrough was made in the academic year 2022/2023. With the aim to expand the educational offer of the Bachelor Degree in “Political sciences, international relations, human rights”, the Department of Political Science, Law and International Studies activated the first ever curricular course entirely promoted by an antiviolence centre. The course, named “Violence against women and human rights”, is unique in the Italian academic educational panorama, both from the formal and content point of view. Concerning the formal aspect, it is worth noting that the course, 6 CFU offered to 3rd year students, has been included in the Bachelor formal curriculum in a stable form. While being multi-disciplinary by vocation, the course is placed under the “political science” discipline.

On the content, the programme of the course is built by the team of experts of the Centro Veneto Progetti Donna, drawing from the 33-year long experience of preventing and

contrasting violence against women as well as supporting women survivors. The course, therefore, aims to provide students with theoretical and practical knowledge on the topic of violence against women according to the operational and political perspective of feminist antiviolence centres and within a human rights framework.

Lecturer in charge of the course is a member of the staff of the CVPD with an academic background. Experts' seminars are held by staff members of the CVPD as well.

Quantitative and qualitative outcomes of the course first edition concerning the level of students' interest, engagement and responsiveness to the issues tackled are promising and worth further analysis. Of particular interest are also a number of indirect results, such as referral of individual situation of violence, the activation by students of individual/collective forms of engagement as well as the realization of two extra-curricular laboratories by the CVPD on the prevention and communication of violence against women. This pilot experience, indeed, could be pivotal for developing and testing a new and upgraded form of "*university-antiviolence centre*" cooperation in the area of educational initiatives.

Useful Link

Course syllabus: <https://didattica.unipd.it/off/2021/LT/EP/SP1421/000ZZ/EPQ2099702/N0>

Claudia Pividori. Women's rights activist and expert on human rights and gender-based violence against women. Project manager and trainer at the Centro Veneto Progetti Donna (Padova - Italy) and part of the "International Group" of D.i.Re – Donne in rete contro le violenza.

Ph.D in International Law and Human Rights, University of Rome, La Sapienza; MA in Institutions and Policies of Human Rights and Peace, University of Padua.

Contracted Professor at the Department of Political Science, Law and International Studies, University of Padua for the course "Violence against women and human rights".

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Bettina Pfleiderer, Madeleine Stöhr, Paulina Juszczak (University of Münster), Emilia Solinas (University Hospital AOU, Parma), Lorella Franzoni (University of Parma, Training and research Center on organization, quality, and sustainability of health systems, Parma), Antonella Vezzani (Medical Women Italian Association), *Introducing the EU project VIPROM: Improving health sector professionals' knowledge on domestic violence through tailored stakeholder specific trainings*

The Istanbul Convention underlines in Article 15 the need for comprehensive mandatory training for professionals who support victims or perpetrators of domestic violence (DV). These trainings should address how to recognize and prevent DV, how to promote gender equality, and how to meet the needs of victims.

The Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO), an autonomous body, monitors compliance with the Istanbul Convention's mandates. In its recent German report (GREVIO 2022: <https://rm.coe.int/report-on-germany-for-publication/1680a86937>), GREVIO highlighted that a systematic training that provides a deep understanding of the different manifestations and dynamics of DV, including practices like Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and stalking, is lacking. In particular, health practitioners, who are first line responders, need tailored stakeholder specific training to enhance their competency in supporting victims with special needs, for example those with disabilities, with addiction, being elderly or having a migrant background (GREVIO 2022). Professionals of the medical sector are often the only ones seeing DV victims and therefore they need to be aware of the various victim groups and their different vulnerabilities. Without awareness about and knowledge of DV, prevention measures can neither be introduced nor implemented.

Across Europe, DV is not compulsory in the curricula of various medical professionals such as physicians, nurses, midwives, dentists, and medical and dental students. The EU-funded project VIPROM: *Victim Protection in Medicine: exploiting practical knowledge of medical staff to enhance the multi-professional contact with victims of domestic violence* (project number 101095828, February 2023 to February 2026), with partners from five European member states, Austria, Germany, Greece, Italy and Sweden, is addressing this gap. VIPROM aims at developing tailored curricula for different medical sector DV frontline responders. A thorough needs assessment, based on more than 120 interviews conducted by VIPROM researchers, confirms the widespread demand for tailored training programmes within the health system. The project will also conduct train-the-trainer programs and implement and evaluate the developed curricula by pilot training sessions across stakeholder groups, thereby ensuring high quality.

Our planned presentation will introduce VIPROM (<http://www.viprom-cerv.eu/>) and our training platform (www.training.viprom-cerv.eu), as well as our ongoing work and upcoming plans, including the organisation of a European webinar series focused on DV, scheduled for 2024.

Prof. Dr. Bettina Pfleiderer PhD MD works as associate professor and head of the research group Cognition & Gender at the Clinic of Radiology of the medical faculty of the University Muenster in Germany. She is the coordinator of the EU project VIPROM and a known expert in the field of domestic violence and medical education since many years and is lecturing on domestic violence globally. She and her research team developed the EUROPEAN training platform on DV for the healthcare sector, police, and social sector.

Laila Micci (SVSeD), Giusy Barbara (SVSeD, University of Milan), Cinzia Meraviglia (GENDERS Research Center University of Milan) , Gaia Spinelli (SVSeD), Giulia Abbate (University of Milan) , Yulia Dormidontova (Formerly GENDERS Research Center, University of Milan), Elena Pezzotti (SVSeD), *Does economic violence play a*

role in the decision to break a violent relationship? Preliminary results of an Italian academic study

Economic violence, defined as any act or behaviour which causes economic harm, is usually associated with other forms of IPV, such as psychological maltreatment, physical violence, sexual abuse. Common strategies to perpetrate economic violence are interference with the woman's work (even precluding her work for pay), limiting her education, controlling access to money or financial information, stealing her money, tracking her use of money. Limiting women's access to financial resources may generate a vicious circle in which their ability to break the abusive relationship is severely compromised. Our research question therefore addresses the role played by economic factors in an abusive relationship as for the woman's decision to break it.

The data basis of this study comes from a mixed mode survey (self-completion questionnaire), fielded between September 2019 and September 2020. The total valid sample counts 320 women, of which 63 (20%) experienced a violent relationship, either separated (N=32) or in relationship at time of interview (N=31).

The level of economic violence was assessed using the Scale of Economic Abuse (SEA) (Adams, Sullivan, Bybee, & Greeson 2008), being applied for the first time on Italian data, with higher scores indicating higher levels of economic violence. We performed a multinomial logistic regression with a four-fold typology as the dependent variable (in current violent relationship / separated, formerly in violent relationship / in non-violent current relationship / separated, formerly in non-violent relationship). The estimated model included several control variables (age, education, number of (minor) children in the household, monthly personal income, working for pay or not). The SEA score was our key explanatory variable, whose effect on the woman's probability to be found in either of the four groups was estimated. Since economic violence often couples with other forms of IPV, we estimated the effect of the SEA score net of the overall level of violence in the relationship, measured by the Index of Spouse Abuse (Hudson & Rau McIntosh 1981). Our results show that the SEA effect remains significant even net of the ISA score, pointing at the distinctiveness of the economic dimension in an abusive relationship. More specifically, higher levels of economic violence were found to be predictive of still being in a violent relationship, instead of having already broken it, the difference between these two outcomes being widely significant. Overall, 10 additional points on the SEA increase the estimated probability of still being in an abusive relationship, instead of having broken it, by 80%.

Laila Micci. Psychologist and psychotherapist, has been working at SVSeD (Service for Sexual and Domestic Violence, Milan) since 2007, coordinating the psychological support to victims of gender violence. She was also involved in planning professional training on the issues of gender violence for several different professional figures. Practitioner EMDR, her clinical practice is focused on trauma support.

Ladan Hashemi (University of London), Fatemeh Babakhani (Domestic Violence Services, Mehr Shams Afarid, Iran), Elizabeth Cook, Sally McManus (University of London), *Utilisation of social media for evidencing experiences of violence against women and girls (VAWG) : A case study from Iran*

Social media recruitment and online surveys have proven useful in social science research. However, the utility of these tools for recruiting circumscribed and hard-to-reach populations such as isolated victims of violence is understudied.

Objective: To explore the utility of social media for evidencing experiences of VAWG in Iran to give voice and visibility to potentially isolated victims and the nature of their experiences.

Participants: Data came from 453 Iranian women aged 14-59 (Mean=28.8, SD=8.04) recruited through an online researcher-made survey. A link to a web survey framed as “Violence against Women in Iran” was distributed via Instagram (the most used social media in Iran). Data was collected between February 2020 and January 2022. Of the sample, 40.6% were married, 47.0% single, and 12.4% divorced/divorcing. A majority (96.5%) were living in urban areas.

Findings: Experience of abuse was reported by an overwhelming majority of the sample (94.70%). The most reported location of abuse was the street (62%), followed by home (52.8%), social media (11.5%), and workplace (10.6%), while school/university (7.7%) was the least reported location of abuse. Over two-thirds of the sample reported experiences of verbal harassment/abuse (75.1%), inappropriate touching (70.6%), and catcalling (71.5%). Half reported experience of intimidation/threat (50.8%). Technology-facilitated abuse was reported by one-third, including texting (33.5%), unwanted phone calls (37.1%), and sexting (33.5%). Abuse by a known perpetrator was reported by 75.9% and 80.8% reported abuse by a stranger, 56.7% reported abuse by both a known person and a stranger.

Experience of domestic violence (DV) was reported by 72.6% of the sample. Psychological abuse in the form of humiliation (64%), verbal harassment/abuse (60.7%), and threat (47.9%) was the most reported form of DV followed by physical (53.4%) and sexual (17.2%) abuse. Fathers (37.7%) and husbands (31.6%) were the most reported perpetrators, followed by brothers (12.1%); 12.6% reported all three (father/husband/brother). Those who experienced DV had significantly higher levels of depression ($t=5.19$) and suicidal ideation ($t=4.93$) and lower levels of marital satisfaction ($t=6.68$) than those who did not report any DV ($p<0.0001$).

Conclusions: This study shows the feasibility of using social media to collect data on a hard-to-reach population where VAWG victims may be isolated. It has provided an opportunity to describe the nature, location and perpetrator characteristics. Specific obstacles to implementing the Istanbul Convention in the Iranian national context (applicable to neighbouring countries such as Turkey) and the need to extend the Convention to beyond Europe will be discussed.

Dr **Ladan Hashemi** is a Senior Research Fellow at the Violence and Society Centre, City University of London, UK. Her research focuses on the application of advanced quantitative methods in researching the intersection of gender, domestic violence (DV), and its harms to health and society. She has designed surveys and led on data analyses for large national and NGOs surveys (e.g., New Zealand Family Violence Surveys, DV support services in UK and Iran) to enable evidence-based practices for decision-making. She is currently co-ordinating two major threads within a UKPRP funded research consortium researching: trajectories and pathways linking violence and health inequalities in the UK and internationally.

Cristina Gamberi (University of Bologna), *One year of the Helpdesk against gender based violence and the raising awareness campaign: The case of the University of Bologna*

One year of the Helpdesk against gender based violence and the raising awareness campaign: The case of the University of Bologna

This presentation aims to highlight the crucial role played by higher education in the implementation of the Istanbul Convention by exploring and analysing the “Helpdesk against gender based violence of the University of Bologna” as the result and at the same time as a catalyst of the cultural change which is increasingly perceived as necessary within the Italian, international and global context.

Relevant European policies documents and the most recent scientific literature agree to disrupt the idea of the academic context as gender-neutral. Universities are in fact spaces affected by gender inequalities, where gender discriminations and multiple forms of sexual, symbolic, psychological and epistemic violence are reproduced.

Institutions are often hesitant not only to admit the existence of cases of GBV violence, but also to address them for fear of jeopardising their reputation and public image. This perceived negligence can be described as a strategic silencing, namely the systematic tendency to invalidate or deny the testimony of those who have suffered violence, or ignoring the incident even if the facts are known; or denying that what is reported can be classified as violence.

Drawing on these reflections, the presentation will move to focus on the University of Bologna helpdesk against gender based violence as part of a broader gender policies strategy to tackle GBV. Our aim is to retrace the genealogy of the creation of the helpdesk, which is partly to be attributed to the femicide of the student Emma Pezemo (1990-2021) and was made possible by enhancing an external network with some of the most relevant local stakeholders, such as the “Casa delle donne per non subire violenza di Bologna”, which has been entrusted to managing the service thanks to its feminist approach and their the thirty years' experience.

Beyond describing the specific features of the helpdesk, special attention will also be paid to the communication strategies adopted for promoting this space. The launch of the UNIBO Helpdesk GBV raising awareness campaign in October 2023 is first the result of the necessity of revisioning the way in which we talk about violence avoiding the risk of

reproducing an imagery steeped in stereotypes that make communication not only ineffective but sometimes even harmful and toxic. Secondly, this campaign is part of the considerable effort to enhance the institutional effort to support the cultural transformation that is still very needed.

Elisa Ercoli (Differenza Donna, Rome), *The feminist practice of Women's Shelters in Italy and their role in developing a feminist approach of prevention, protection, and legal response in the framework of the Istanbul Convention*

The Istanbul Convention provides a comprehensive framework for states to address violence against women, and women's shelters in Italy play a pivotal role in implementing its principles. By offering a holistic approach that combines prevention, protection, legal response, advocacy, empowerment, and community engagement, these shelters contribute to a feminist approach that aims to eradicate gender-based violence and promote gender equality.

This paper intends to explore the key components of the feminist practice within women's shelters in Italy. In particular:

Prevention: Women's shelters focus on preventing violence against women by raising awareness about gender-based violence, its causes, and its consequences. This includes educational programs, workshops, and campaigns aimed at challenging traditional gender roles, promoting healthy relationships, and highlighting the importance of consent.

Protection: Shelters provide a safe space and time for women who are victims of domestic violence, intimate partner violence, or other forms of gender-based violence. These shelters offer a secure environment where survivors can seek refuge from abusive situations, away from their perpetrators. This key component allows to develop a renewed framework of “safeness”, “security” and “protection”, outside an emergency, securitarian and paternalistic framework towards women.

Legal Response: Women's shelters collaborate with legal authorities to ensure that survivors have access to legal remedies and protection orders. They often have legal experts who can provide information about women's rights, explain the legal processes, and assist survivors in navigating the complex legal system. This can include helping survivors file restraining orders, custody arrangements, and divorce proceedings, but also contribute to change attitudes and practices of institutions and public officers representatives.

Advocacy: Shelters engage in advocacy efforts to promote policy changes, legislative reforms, and better implementation of existing laws related to violence against women. They work to ensure that the legal framework is comprehensive, effectively enforced, and aligned with the principles of gender equality.

Empowerment: A feminist approach in women's shelters focuses on empowering survivors to regain control over their lives. This involves building survivors' self-esteem, providing skills training, facilitating economic independence, and helping them transition to a violence-free life.

Community Engagement: Shelters collaborate with local communities, educational institutions, healthcare providers, and law enforcement agencies to create a network of support for survivors. Community engagement helps to challenge societal norms that perpetuate violence and encourages collective responsibility in ending gender-based violence.

Intersectionality: Women's shelters recognize and address the intersectionality of gender-based violence with other forms of discrimination, such as racism, xenophobia, and ableism. This approach ensures that support is provided in a culturally sensitive and inclusive manner, acknowledging the unique challenges faced by marginalized women.

Elisa Ercoli: Activist since 1994 for Differenza Donna NGO, became the president in June 2014.

She has been Manager of the Antiviolence Shelter for women and children victims of violence of the municipality of Rome, and Manager of the anti-trafficking Shelter for women victims of trafficking.

She is also a project manager and a gender expert in several national and international projects against gender-based violence as in Russia, Kazakhstan, Morocco, Palestine, Nicaragua.

She graduated in Political Sciences with a focus on International context at the University "La Sapienza" in Rome and won a scholarship for a post-graduate Master's Degree in International cooperation at CIRPS - University "La Sapienza" in Rome. She is authors of many reports and heard as an expert by national and international institutions and organizations.

Maddalena Cannito (Scuola Normale Superiore Pisa), Paola Maria Torrioni (University of Turin), *The Anti-Violence Desks in Italy and at the University of Turin: academia as a place for countering violence and for cultural change*

The University has a crucial role in implementing many of the actions recommended by the Istanbul Convention such as data collection, implementing cultural actions to support both the countering and the prevention of male violence against women, awareness raising, education and training.

Based on these reflections, the paper aims to reflect upon the potentialities and challenges posed by the creation of Anti-violence Desks in Universities, starting from the experience of the University of Turin, which implemented this innovative gender policy in October 2019 as part of the Project "V.A.R.CO. – Violenza contro le donne: Azioni in Rete per prevenire e Contrastare" with the collaboration of the "EMMA" women's shelters of Turin. The project stems from the need for monitoring of the activities carried out by the actors involved in the contrast and prevention of violence against women, that pass also through the synergy that exists between different actors in a regional perspective.

The Desk is, first and foremost, as an informational space on what violence is and how to recognize it, pointing out that violence affects everyone and also crosses universities'

spaces and practices. It also acts as a place to counter violence by providing support to female students and workers who experience gender-based violence, so it is also a valuable observatory on violence against women. Finally, it promotes cultural change thanks to the synergy between the different skills of those who study the phenomenon, developing theoretical and interpretative perspectives, and those who address the problem with operational intervention on the ground.

While this initiative is unprecedented, it poses some challenges. The first has to do with the risk of pink washing that a feminist initiative may have within an environment such as academia that still perpetuates often sexist and discriminatory dynamics against women and other non-dominant subjectivities, including those related to the precarization of university work. Secondly, it raises the issue of the risk of rendering invisible violence experience by other subjectivities than cis-gender heterosexual women. Thirdly, the Desk poses the problem of coordinating the work of different institutional subjects, such as the Joint Committee for Equal Opportunity and the Confidential Counsellor, and of integrating the already numerous initiatives put in place by universities, such as the Psychological Desks, in the direction of a concrete commitment to equal opportunity and overcoming all discriminations and forms of violence.

Paola Maria Torrioni is Associate professor of Sociology of Cultural and Communicative Processes in the Department of Cultures, Politics and Society. Her research topics include family socialization processes, gender dynamics in care towards children and the elderly, and male violence against women. She is principal investigator of the project V.A.R.CO. – *Violenza contro le donne: Azioni in Rete per prevenire e Contrastare* and coordinates the Observatory MU.S.I.C - Social Change and Cultural Innovation. She recently published, with Loredana Sciolla, the fourth edition of the “Manuale di Sociologia dei Processi Culturali. Cultura, Individui e società” (Il Mulino, 2020).

Maddalena Cannito holds a Ph.D. in Social and Political Change and is Postdoc researcher at the Scuola Normale Superiore (Pisa, Italy). Her research interests are in the field of masculinities studies, gender studies and sociology of the family, and deals with fatherhood, gender-based violence, work-life balance policies, gendered workplaces. She is coordinator of the project V.A.R.CO. – *Violenza contro le donne: Azioni in Rete per prevenire e Contrastare* and author of a recent book on fatherhood in Italy “Fare spazio alla paternità. Essere padri in Italia tra trasformazioni del welfare, ambienti di lavoro e modelli di maschilità” (Il Mulino, 2022).

Christine Barter (University of Central Lancashire), *Reflections on acting as a specialist advisor to the UKs government’s Women and Equalities Committee*

The presentation will focus on learning from acting as an academic specialist advisory to the UK government’s Women and Equalities Committee, established in 2015. This committee has been concerned with the prevalence of sexual harassment and sexual violence in educational settings across the life course (from primary schools to university settings). The presentation will focus on three inquiries: Sexual Harassment and Sexual

Violence in Schools Inquiry (2016-2017), the Attitudes towards Women and Girls in Educational Settings Inquiry (2022-2023) and the current Violence against Women and Girls Inquiry (2022-2024). The findings and recommendations from these related Inquiries are central components to the implementation of the Istanbul Convention in UK educational contexts. Together they consider how effective schools, colleges and universities are at keeping girls and women safe and addressing attitudes underpinning violence against women and girls, including female staff. Many of the observations and recommendations made cross these inquiries are relevant to tackling all forms of GBV and upholding the UK's international obligations as signatories to the Istanbul Convention. These include:

- The need to develop specific strategy for engaging with boys and young men in primary and secondary schools on GBV including;
 - design and deliver a relationship and sex education (RSE) curriculum that places a greater focus on, and engagement activities for, boys and young men
 - development and access of evidence-based learning materials covering gender norms and gender equality.
- Provide educational resources to address online forms of GBV including: boys cyberflashing hardcore pornographic images at girls; the Airdropping of nude images; and other forms of online sexual harassment and improve monitoring of its impact in educational settings and the effectiveness of school leaders in tackling this corrosive problem.
- Provide support for students who experience all types of harmful sexual behaviour to come forward without fear of invalidation; and a safe, non-judgmental space for students who are responsible for 'low level' behaviours to reflect on and talk about their behaviour;
- Widen the provision of compulsory RSE to include young people aged 16 to 18 as this current gap leaves young people under-supported and less equipped to navigate potentially harmful and dangerous situations.
- Commitment to a prevalence survey of sexual harassment and sexual abuse in the university sector.
- A new condition of registration for universities which places a mandatory obligation on universities to tackle GBV, including the requirement for compulsory evidence-based bystander intervention programmes for all first-year students
- Make non-disclosure agreements in England which silence victims of sexual harassment and violence illegal.

Christine Barter is Professor of Interpersonal Violence Prevention and Co-Director of the Connect Centre for International Research on Interpersonal Violence and Harm, University of Central Lancashire. She is an expert in the prevention of gender-based violence (GBV), with a particular interest in young people's intimate relationships. Her work has focused on preventing and understanding various intersecting forms of GBV including sexual violence and exploitation, domestic abuse and online forms of harm. She sat as a Specialist Advisor

on the UK Governments' Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence in Schools Inquiry (2016-2017), Attitudes towards Women and Girls in Educational Settings Inquiry (2022-2023) and currently sits as a specialist advisory on the UK Government's VWAG Inquiry 2022-2024.

Letizia Lambertini (ASC InSieme, Bologna), *The Responsibility of Violence: A Model of Socio-Educational Intervention in Countering Violence Against Women*

ASC InSieme (www.ascinsieme.it) is a public organization that provides Social Services to a population of approximately 113.000 residents in the metropolitan area of Bologna, serving different Areas: Minor and Families, Adults, the Elderly, and Persons with Disabilities. Within ASC InSieme, the specialized Domestic Violence Group has been active since 2014. This interdisciplinary team comprises social workers, educators, linguistic and cultural mediators, experts in home care for non-self-sufficient individuals, facilitators of mutual support groups, and equal opportunity professionals from all operational areas within the organization (Minor and Families, Adults, the Elderly, Disabilities).

In a publication by Il Mulino in 2019 (Letizia Lambertini (ed.), *La responsabilità della violenza. Un modello di intervento socio educativo nel contrasto alla violenza contro le donne* - *The Responsibility of Violence: A Model of Socio-Educational Intervention in Countering Violence Against Women*), the Domestic Violence Group discusses its educational and self-educational journey. It presents an approach to countering violence from the perspective of a Social Service that has firmly positioned itself against the re-victimization of women. It begins with a focus on the responsibility and accountability of men who perpetrate violence. This approach was developed in close collaboration with a Women's Anti-Violence Center (*Casa delle donne per non subire violenza*) and a Center for Men Who Perpetrate Violence (*Senza Violenza*). This professional empowerment journey emphasizes specialization and the enhancement of skills, recognizing that supporting victims of violence and addressing perpetrators requires professionalism, authority, and credibility.

In 2021, with the support of the Emilia-Romagna Region, the Domestic Violence Group produced four micro-videos for counteracting violence (<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLeJD4ITMYfkWfGcrg7uuzhPf1VvKilq0g>). These videos aim to give voice to women who come to the Social Service (often because they have no other choice, and the Judiciary decides for them). These videos share stories of discrimination and devastation but also of empowerment and redemption. They also aim to present the Social Service as a reliable, capable, and trustworthy place.

Since 2021, the Domestic Violence Group has engaged in intensive training activities within Social Sciences degree programs, Educational Sciences programs, and as part of a doctoral curriculum in Gender and Women's Studies in various departments at the Universities of Bologna, Parma, Verona, Palermo, Venice, and Naples. The goal is to present the model developed through their experience and engage with the next generation of professionals in the field. This commitment not only aligns with national and

regional guidelines on training for those entering professions related to countering violence against women, starting with the Istanbul Convention, but also reflects the importance of building and supporting bridges of experience between academia and the professional world, as well as facilitating dialogue on methodologies and practices.

I am a freelancer with most of my career experience within the public administration. I have a background in history and a specialization in gender studies. Since 1993, I have worked for equal opportunity organizations, focusing on research, social and migration program planning, and education for intergender and intercultural dialogue. In the field of educational action research, my interests have centered on love relationships, the prevention of domestic violence against women, and female empowerment in migrant contexts. Over the past decade, I have worked within the Social Service, where I contributed to the development of a specialized group to combat domestic violence and violence against women.

5. ANALYZING CASE-STUDIES: COMPARISONS AND DIFFERENCES

Chair: Fehmiye Ceren Akcabay (Istanbul Okan Üniversitesi, Turkey)

Joana Torres (University of Porto/ University of Maia), *Political and Institutional Analysis of the Istanbul Convention in Portugal: Gender Violence in Intimacy in Focus*

The Istanbul Convention is an important and pioneering instrument for combating gender-based violence and violence against women in the European context, conceiving of it as a human rights issue. It establishes a set of international obligations and standards, which must be transposed into the national public policies of the ratifying countries, including Portugal. This qualitative study aims to analyze and understand how responses and services regarding intimate gender violence (IGV) are being made available in the Portuguese context. To this end, it focuses on the experiences of institutional responses to IGV in their context of emergence, analyzing them in depth in their different expressions (e.g. legal, social, political), while seeking to carry out a systematic evaluation of these responses, based on the GREVIO report (2019) and to catapult, from this evaluation, deeper knowledge and more robust interventions in the field of IGV. A total of 75 interviews were carried out (54 with professionals from the different institutional responses, 12 with experts from different fields, and 9 with women victims).

The results show that the different professional groups working in the various institutional responses to IGV have different levels of understanding, mastery of the dynamics of the phenomenon and perception of their responsibility for responding to it; the training of professionals is still insufficient to guarantee an adequate response; the cross-referencing of different responses required in these cases intensifies the possibility that, at some point in the process, the victim will encounter episodes of secondary victimization; networking needs to mature and develop an identity that allows for an articulated and effective response. Although the formal transposition of the Istanbul Convention into national public policies and legislation has been progressively achieved, the appropriation of its

assumptions still falls short of what would be desirable, with the main obstacle being the patriarchal roots that still exist in society and are reflected in political and institutional structures. The research carried out intends to contribute to the necessary evaluation of the implementation of support responses for victims of IGV and, consequently, to improve them and prevent the support system itself from proving to be a promoter of violence.

PhD in Criminology (2023) from the Faculty of Law of the University of Porto. She has a degree in Criminology (2012), a master's degree in psychology of justice (2014) and a degree in Psychology (2016) from the University Institute of Maia. She has a postgraduate degree in Human Rights from the University of Coimbra. She teaches on the Criminology degree programme at the University of Maia. In recent years, her work and academic output has focused on the areas of gender-based violence, youth, human rights, intersectional approaches, and the study of public policies applied to these themes. Since 2019, she has been carrying out humanitarian work in Guinea-Bissau in the areas of gender-based violence and sexual and reproductive health.

Rosa Sorrentino (University of Naples Federico II), *Countering violence against women in Italy. The burden of local institutions and territorial third sector in the Region of Campania*

Keywords: VAW, Istanbul Convention, institutions, third sector, anti-violence centres, policy, Region of Campania

Chapter II of the Istanbul Convention recognizes the need to activate integrated, comprehensive and coordinated policies in order to “protect women against all forms of violence, and prevent, prosecute and eliminate violence against women and domestic violence [promoting] substantive equality between women and men” (Art. 1). In particular, Articles 7 and 9 recommends the involvement of all potentially relevant subjects, useful for the activation of the measures necessary for these purposes, including regional and local authorities, NGOs and civil society organizations.

The Italian legal system ratified the Istanbul Convention with Law 77/2013, taking up this dispositions and recognizing an administrative role for local authorities, which – according to Law 328/2000, Law 119/2013 and the Agreements between State and Regions 2014 and 2022 – plan and manage resources and interventions in the regional territory to prevent and fight all forms of discrimination and violence against women. On the other hand, third sector's organizations (TSO) have an operational role, being able to set up – if properly recognized – anti-violence centres and shelters, subjects that work in synergy with the institutional actors, the police, the educational system, the judicial authority and all those stable institutions and realities that can be a reference point for fighting and preventing VAW. Both local authorities and TSO contribute to the structuring of a territorial network of actors that are recognized and regulated at a national level and administered and managed at a regional and local level.

The Campania Region, with more than sixty active anti-violence centres in the five provinces (2022), has shown in recent years great attention and responsiveness to the

issue, manifesting a growing commitment to legally and financially support women victims of violence, their children and orphans of feminicide, also through the operational arm constituted by specialized third sector organizations. Through the case study of the Italian Region of Campania, the proposal intends to show how the (inter)national directives – and, with them, the guidelines of the Istanbul Convention – can be incorporated and made operative at regional and local level.

The following will be provided here:

- a general framework useful for understanding the history and functioning of Italian multi-level and multi-actor antiviolence system;

- a reconstruction and analysis of the main regulations and initiatives promoted in Campania Region in recent years.

This will make it possible to prepare reflections regarding, on the one hand, the capacity for innovation and resilience, and on the other hand, the complexities and criticalities that characterize the functioning of the Italian anti-violence system.

Rosa Sorrentino is Ph.D student in Social Sciences and Statistics at University of Naples "Federico II" with a research thesis on the anti-violence system in the Region of Campania. She cooperates with the Regional Pol.i.s Foundation (Integrated Security Policies for Innocent Victims of Crime and Confiscated Property) on the topic of violence against women, the protection and support of women victims of violence, their minor children and orphans of feminicide. She is a member of the research team of the Norisc-19 University Project on the impacts of Pandemic and third sector Reform in Italy and Campania Region. Her research interests include: social research methodology; gender, media and communication; women's and gender studies; structural violence against women; social policies and welfare regimes; the role and socioeconomic effects on the third sector.

Jasna Podreka, Rok Smrdelj, Milica Antić Gaber (University of Ljubljana), *Between Continuity and Changes: Analysing Systemic Regulation on Sexual Harassment and Violence in Slovenian Academic Field*

The academic field is characterised by the emergence and reproduction of social norms that reflect and reinforce the existing gender regime and power relations. Despite the gendered social power structure in academic field, the issues of sexual harassment and violence in academia in Slovenia is under-researched and inadequately regulated by national legislation and institutional regulations and norms. To fill this gap, as part of the targeted research programme funded by the Slovenian Research Agency and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports, we analyse the existing institutional policies and internal legal acts (regulations, protocols, guidelines, etc.) that address and regulate this area in public and private universities, in public and private post-secondary education institutions, as well as in public research institutes. Apart from our assumption that the issue of sexual harassment and violence in the academic field in Slovenia is under-addressed and under-regulated we found that internal regulations are generally lacking. As a result, we pay

close attention to the overall systemic regulation of this area in Slovenia, how institutions address it, its significant shortcomings, and the best practises that should serve as a model for future regulation. We found good practices especially in public universities, while this area is less regulated at public and private post-secondary education institutions and public research institutes. We draw special attention to important systemic shifts that have occurred at the University of Ljubljana and its Faculty of Arts. We also highlight the recommendations we have made to encourage policymakers and authorities in the academic field to more consistently and systematically regulate and address the issue of sexual harassment and violence in academic field in Slovenia.

Milica Antić Gaber, is Senior Researcher and Full Professor at the Department of Sociology at Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana, where she teaches Sociology of Gender at graduate and post-graduate level and coordinates Doctoral program on Gender Studies. She was a visiting scholar and lecturer at *Central European University* in Budapest, *Centre for Women's Studies* in Belgrade, *Inter-University Centre* in Dubrovnik, *Birkbeck College* in London, *Centre for Women's Studies* in Novi Sad and *University of Pompeu Fabra* in Barcelona. She participated in or coordinated national and international projects on gender equality on violence against women, *balancing private and professional life of women in politics*, *gender quotas in GEP implementation in the academic field*, and on sexual harassment in academia. She was a member of the Expert Forum of European Institute for Gender Equality. She was collaborating in several ways in evaluation of Slovene and EU gender equality policies. She was two terms a member of Executive Board of European Sociological Association.

Silvia Mazzaglia (University of Milano-Bicocca), Eleonora Calamandrei (La MALAconsilia, Bologna), *Break the silence. The experience of the feminist student counselling 'MALAconsilia' and the mobilisation against sexual harassment at the University of Bologna*

The aim of this contribution is to provide an overview on the phenomenon of sexual harassment and the many forms in which gender violence takes place within the university institutions, making a specific focus on the experience of Bologna mobilisation around the campaign *#metoounibo* promoted by the feminist and transfeminist association *La MALA educación* and the student community of the University of Bologna between 2019 and 2022. In particular, the work will be divided into three short sections: the first will present an overall theoretical framework with the goal of summarising how previous literature have investigated the phenomenon of sexual harassment and gender-based violence in the universities.

Starting from the definition of *sexual harassment* as «unwanted, non-reciprocal and imposed acts that can have serious consequences for people affected», both recurring elements of these acts and possible forms of interventions will then be presented. Focusing on the Italian case, particular attention will be addressed on the establishment and role of the *confidential counselor*, the institutional figure who is responsible for

protecting the academic community from violence and discriminatory attitudes and offering active assistance and support since 1994.

In the second section will be presented the experience of *MALAAconsilia*, a bottom-up and feminist student counseling, directly self-managed by both students and activists at the University of Bologna from 2017 in order to combat gender-based violence by sharing knowledge and educational spaces.

Finally, in the third paragraph, the present contribution will focus on the participatory and process that was carried out to edit the University's Code of Conduct for the prevention and contrast of moral and sexual harassment and discrimination through the #metoounibo campaign will be recounted.

Keywords: gender-based violence, feminist student counseling, university, code against sexual harassment, trusted counselor

Silvia Mazzaglia is 27 years old. She has been a student at the University of Bologna, first obtaining a bachelor's degree in philosophy and then a master's degree in sociology and social research. She has been an activist of the student collective and association *La MALA educación* during the period from 2017 to 2022. Nowadays. She is currently attending the PhD programme within the Sociology Department at the University of Milano-Bicocca.

Eleonora Calamandrei is 29 years old. Born in Florence, she had been a student at the University of Bologna, where she obtained a bachelor's degree in Literature and a master's degree in Classic Literature and Philology. While attending university she had been an activist for the student collective *La MALA educación* and then for the feminist counseling *La MALAAconsilia*. She is currently working as a teacher for secondary school in Bologna.

Nicolò Ingarra, Rachele Marconi (University of Macerata), *Enforcing the Istanbul Convention at regional level: The case of the Marche Region*

The contribution aims at analysing the role of institutional agreements between Regions and Universities in the enforcement of the Istanbul Convention. Using the example of the Marche Region annual report on gender-based violence, the contribution examines how academic research and scientific methodology can be used to report and monitor on gender-based violence in regional contexts and to better define strategic objectives and actions. In fact, in the Marche Region, a Convention between the regional institution and the Universities of Macerata and Urbino has been in place since 2022 in the field of data collection and the political-normative analysis on violence against women. This has provided a more complete picture of the effects caused by these post-pandemic years on the phenomenon of gender-based violence, which continues to represent a serious violation of human rights despite the efforts implemented at international, national and regional level. As suggested by GREVIO - with a view to 'broadening the ongoing efforts to conduct independent comparative analyses of existing regional legislation and policies on

violence against women, with a focus on identifying promising practices that can be recommended throughout Italy, and to promote such efforts at both national and regional levels' - the Marche experience has taken the opportunity to refer to the most significant projects, experiences, procedures or actions supported by the Region in different capacities that can serve as models for future perspectives on interventions. In this context, it would therefore seem useful to disseminate the methodological model followed as well as the expected and hoped-for results with a view to creating a genuine system of synergy between institutions so that the principles enshrined in the Istanbul Convention can find concrete life at local level.

Nicolò Ingarra Nicolò Maria Ingarra is a PhD candidate in Global Studies. Justice, Rights, Politics at the University of Macerata and subject expert in Political Philosophy, Philosophy of Human Rights and Political Language and Communication. He holds a master's degree in law and his actual research focuses on the management of organizational well-being and health through the perspective of the ethics of care and with an interdisciplinary approach. Given that his research mostly focuses on the welfare policies linked to the Diversity management and the gender equality, he is collaborating with the National Conference of Equality Bodies of Italian Universities. Furthermore, he attended the Training Course in Gender, Politics and Institutions at the University of Macerata and the Advanced Course in History of Gender, Globalization and Democracy of Care at University of Urbino "Carlo Bo".

Rachele Marconi is a postdoctoral research fellow in International Law at the Department of Political Science, Communication and International Relations at the University of Macerata and an adjunct professor at the Department of Humanities at the same university.

She obtained her PhD in International Law from the University of Macerata, course in Global Studies. Justice, Rights, Politics, discussing a thesis entitled 'Violence against women in armed conflict. Interpreting IHL norms from a gender perspective'.

In 2016, she graduated in Law from the University of Macerata and graduated with honours from the Scuola di Studi Superiori Giacomo Leopardi of the same University.

She gave two seminars within the Training Course in Gender, Politics and Institutions at the University of Macerata.

Funda Kaya (University of Palermo), *Evaluating the Turkey's Withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention from a Socio-Legal Perspective*

Turkey's withdrawal from the "Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (known as the Istanbul Convention)" was announced by presidential decree on March 20, 2021. In Turkey, the anti-gender argument against the Convention has been ongoing since 2019, but it has no societal support outside of extremist Islamic groups. Furthermore, it was unlawful to withdraw from the Convention by presidential decision without a debate in parliament. Therefore, women's organizations, activists, opposition parties, bar associations, and NGOs began a vigorous

response to the president's decision. Also, activists, bar associations, and opposition parties used strategic litigation, and the presidential decree was challenged before Turkey's Supreme Administrative Court. The Court did not annul the decree, but the litigation process is still pending. After domestic remedies are exhausted, it is planned to apply to the European Court of Human Rights. Besides the legal struggle, feminist protests continue to fight back against the withdrawal from the Convention.

I will evaluate the social, political and legal developments after Turkey's withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention from a socio-legal perspective. The socio-legal study is an empirical method that aims for theoretical and empirical analysis of law as a social phenomenon by using an interdisciplinary approach. Thus, instead of evaluating legal institutions or legal norms, it aims to examine the law in a social context. In this respect, I will analyze the feminist resistance in Turkey against the withdrawal from the Convention by referring to Nancy Fraser's public sphere theory.

Fraser states that there are many public spheres rather than just one in society, and "subaltern counterpublics" are alternative publics to hegemonic ones. They are formed by oppressed social groups such as women, ethnic minorities, and sexual and gender minorities. And counterpublics help to balance the unequal conditions of democratic participation in the mainstream hegemonic public sphere. In addition, she focuses on the "transnational public spheres" created by globalization.

I argue that the Women's Movement in Turkey, through its litigation campaign and feminist activist actions after the withdrawal from the Convention, has created a subaltern counterpublic. Thanks to the feminist resistance against the presidential decree, an alternative discourse has emerged near the hegemonic one.

Funda Kaya is a Ph.D. student in Human Rights: Evolution, Protection, and Limits at Palermo University. She graduated from Ankara University with an LLB and an LLM in Public Law. She taught legal clinics while working as a research assistant in the Philosophy and Sociology of Law department at Ankara University from 2012 to 2020. Before her academic research, she worked as a public attorney for eight years in Turkey. Her research interests focus on feminist legal theory, human rights, and legal ethics.

Klaudia Kaptur (University of Wrocław), *The concept of the 'brave victim' and the areas of cultural and legal institutional discrimination against women in Poland*

The abstract is based on an article „The concept of the 'brave victim' and the areas of cultural and legal institutional discrimination against women in Poland” which was created during research in the project „Women as subjects of constitutional rights in CEE”.

Institutional discrimination against women in Poland is a social problem that persists despite constitutional guarantees of gender equality and legislation providing for compensatory measures. The socio-cultural change is visible, but the patriarchal model of the family characteristic for Central and Eastern Europe, persists despite legal guarantees. The abstract analyzes the possibility of using M. Marody's concept of the “brave victim” as a means of designing compensatory actions in legislation and enforcement that will help

eliminate institutional discrimination. Institutional discrimination is defined in legal doctrine as discrimination that occurs at the level of a given institution, organization, or even society as a whole. The concept of the “brave victim” is a social fact that the legislator should take into account when designing policy law to avoid social tensions and develop effective legal solutions to counter discrimination. Therefore to, avoid further social crises such as Black Protests in 2016 or Women's Strikes throughout 2020-2021, the social analysis based on the „brave victim” concept before creating legal opportunities is fundamental.

The abstract also analyzes cultural and social factors that condition or contribute to the deepening of legal and social inequality for women. Also identifying areas of institutional discrimination in Poland, including: the labor market, parental rights, social rights, access to political functions, and increasing women's participation in public life.

The analysis of national legal regulations and regulations implemented from EU law indicates the heterogeneity of protection against discrimination. In the end I would like to show some proposes conditions and principles for the application of special legal solutions that establish anti-discrimination standards applicable in the current social conditions in Poland. Undoubtedly, the most important changes in the field of combating discrimination against women in Poland are the result of EU regulations and guidelines in this area, in particular through the requirement to apply equality mainstreaming.

An important result of the research presented above is the determination that a noticeable trend among contemporary women, when it comes to their attitude, is their readiness to participate in social life under conditions of widely recognized gender nondiscrimination. This trend is visible despite the distinct climate of discrimination manifested in social criticism and the pressure related to representing certain progressive women's attitudes.

Klaudia Kaptur – student of Law and Administration at the Faculty of Law, Administration, and Economics at the University of Wrocław. Chairwoman of the ISKRA Scientific Circle (Interdisciplinary Student Circle of Administration). Currently involved in the project "Women as Subjects of Constitutional Rights in Central and Eastern Europe" under the leadership of Professor Anna Śledzińska-Simon. In my work I focus on: sociology of law, womens rights, cultural causes of discrimination, EU and national anti-discrimination regulation.

López Belloso, M., Izaguirre Choperena, A., Silvestre Cabrera, M. (University of Deusto), *Surviving domestic violence during the pandemic. Evidence from RESISTIRE project*

Emerging global and national data show increases in gender-based violence (GBV) and in the reported number of cases of GBV against women and LGBTQI persons during the COVID-19 pandemic. Emerging global and national data show increases in gender-based violence (GBV) and in the reported number of cases of GBV against women and LGBTQI persons during the COVID-19 pandemic. Since the onset of the pandemic, 45% of women have been exposed directly or indirectly to at least one form of VAW (i.e., either they or

other women they know have experienced one or more forms of violence), being verbal abuse and denial of basic resources the most common forms of VAW reported (23%).

In fact, the lockdown and the confinement measures escalated the inequalities regarding GBV making it more difficult for the women living with their perpetrators to access the existing Services thus, making them one of the most disproportionately affected group in the context of GBV.

Data obtained in the EU funded Resistiré project, that analyzed policy responses on behavioural, social, and economic inequalities in 31 countries (EU 27 plus Iceland, Serbia, Turkey and the UK) with gender+ approach, will inform this communication. The project combined the mapping and analysis of public policies and civil society initiatives to address the crisis, and subsequently the National Recovery Plans; the analysis and comparison of different quantitative analyses; and the collection of individual stories behind the crisis.

This paper aims to highlight and analyse the personal stories that illustrate and epitomize the above-mentioned issues. Therefore, we use a qualitative methodology: the narrative enquiry (Lyons, 2007; Kim, 2016). as a tool to provide the space for re-thinking; alternative interpretations; reflections on implicit and taken-for-granted norms and provide insights into the life and thoughts of vulnerable groups (Lara, 1999).

Resistire findings show how the isolation and restrictive measures adopted to contain the spread of the virus made it even more difficult to report violence to the police and reach out to specialized services. Increased bureaucracy, a lack of information on the channels for reporting, and the lack of safe ways to report also contributed to the difficulties in reporting. Moreover, limited access to hospitals and healthcare centres prevented the early detection of GBV and immediate response.

Keywords: Gender Based Violence, policy responses, intersectionality, COVID-19 pandemic, Resistiré project

María López (Phd) is a lecturer and researcher at the Social and Human Sciences Faculty at the University of Deusto. She holds a degree in Law from the University of Deusto, MA in Humanitarian Action (NOHA) and a PhD in Human Rights earned at the same University. Her thesis on Truth, justice and reparation processes for victims of forced disappearance in Western Sahara received the Brunet Award in 2017. Her research is especially focused on the interdisciplinary and intersectional approach to human rights violations and gender equality. She has participated in several international research projects such as H2020 Gearing Roles, RESISTIRE or Socio Bee.

María Silvestre holds a PhD in Political Science and Sociology. Professor of Sociology at the University of Deusto. Main Researcher of the "Deusto Social Values Team" recognized as a team of excellence by the Basque Government and which represents Spain in the European Values Survey. She has been Dean of the Faculty of CCPP and Sociology of the University of Deusto (2004-2009) and Founder and Director of the Master in Intervention in Violence against Women (2003-2009). She has been the Director of Emakunde - Basque Institute for Women of the Basque Government (2009-2012). She has led several

international and national research projects in competitive and concerted calls such as GEARING-Roles and has assumed different management positions such as the Presidency of the Basque Association of Sociology and a Vice-Presidency of the Spanish Federation of Sociology. She is currently the Director of Equality at the University of Deusto.

Ainhoa Izaguirre (PhD) is a lecturer and researcher at the Social and Human Sciences Faculty at the University of Deusto. She holds a degree in Social Work from the University of Deusto, MA in Intervention in Violence Against Women and a PhD in the same topic. Her research career is especially focused on gender equality, gender-based violence and its impact on children. She has participated in several national and international research projects such as H2020 YouCount, RESISTIRÉ, UNTWIST or IMPROVE. She collaborates with specialized journals as a reviewer and evaluator.

Lisa Grans, Maija Mustaniemi-Laakso (Åbo Akademi University, Turku, Finland),
Criminalising forced marriage: Scope, consequences and the role of academia

This presentation discusses the ongoing process towards explicit criminalisation of forced marriage in the Finnish Criminal Code. To date, it has been held that the different acts that forced marriage consists of fall within the existing provisions in the Finnish Criminal Code relating to trafficking in human beings, to aggravated trafficking in human beings and to coercion, and that explicit criminalisation is therefore not needed. While adhering to this view, a recent Ministry of Justice memorandum leaves open the possibility of specifying the Criminal Code's provision on trafficking in human beings by adding a mention of forced marriage among the purposes of human trafficking. Explicit criminalisation finds wide support within the civil society, but its scope and consequences remain yet to be clarified in depth.

In our presentation, we bring up some central aspects in the different criminalisation alternatives and discuss them in relation to the requirements of the Istanbul Convention. Question marks exist, for example, in relation to whether the criminalisation obligation in the Convention extends to informal marriages and to forcing a person to remain in a marriage. We analyse the current conceptualisation of forced marriage in the Finnish context and argue that the interplay between the human rights obligations originating from the Istanbul Convention and the ECHR may lead to a need for a wider understanding of forced marriage that extends beyond formal marriages and includes acts that coerce a person to remain in a marriage. We also submit that to be effective and equal, any legislative changes on forced marriage should take account of research on the different vulnerabilities arising from such marriages, as these have an impact on state obligations, and be based on an analysis of the consequences that the different legislative options have on the target groups.

Lisa Grans (PhD in public international law, LLM international human rights law) works as researcher at the Institute for Human Rights and School of Law at Åbo Akademi University, Turku, Finland.

Maija Mustaniemi-Laakso (PhD Candidate in public international law, M.Pol.Sc., MA) works at the Faculty of Social Sciences, Business and Economics, and Law/Institute for Human Rights/School of Law, Åbo Akademi University.

Both presenters work in the project 'The many faces of special protection: Unpacking the roles of vulnerability in human rights and criminal law (ROVU)' project (Academy of Finland 2021-25), Institute for Human Rights, Åbo Akademi University, Finland (<https://abo.fi/vulnerability/>)

Chiara Gius (University of Bologna), *Online Violence Against Women and Girls in Italy, insights from Italian Awareness-raising Campaigns and future research paths*

Online violence against women and girls (Cyber-VAWG) remains an under-conceptualized topic, despite the significant role played by gender in cyber-violence (EIGE 2017; EU Parliament 2021). In 2016, the tragic suicide of a young woman victim of cyber-VAWG prompted the beginning of a public discussion about digital violence and its implications for women. In response to the case's profound impact on Italian public opinion, a specific offense addressing the unauthorized and non-consensual distribution of sexually explicit images was introduced in the "Red Code" (Law 69/2019), a law grounded in the commitment the Italian government made by ratifying the Istanbul Convention. However, a closer look at the Italian public discourse on cyber-VAWG reveals an unresolved tension that has yet to be fully addressed at social and policy level: while cyberspace is often depicted as a site of anticipated gender equality (Capecchi, 2021), online interactions often reflect a persistent gendered double standard that upholds male dominance (Bourdieu, 2001).

Building on these considerations, the following contribution examines how awareness-raising campaigns in Italy, primarily directed at young women and girls, address Cyber-VAWG to foster safer online environments. Using a qualitative approach that combines existing literature and data collected as part of an ongoing research project, the analysis detected the presence of three concurring approaches to the problem ("media-oriented", "educational," and grounded in "media activism"), each of which connects to different positions that link together gender, violence, inequality, and digital media. These strategies reflect the varied positions in Italy's public discourse on violence against women, in general, and cyber-WAVG in particular, highlighting differing understandings about the role of digital media in society. Specifically, some campaigns imply that online gender violence can be reduced through personal responsibility, while others view it as a sociocultural challenge rooted in longstanding societal inequalities.

While conclusions are necessarily preliminary, the analysis serves as a foundation for deepening our understanding of the sociocultural construction of Cyber-VAWG as a societal concern. This understanding underscores the importance of comprehensive research and effective policy directions that address digital gender-violence in the context of broader societal changes. To support this aim, the presentation will introduce the framework for a forthcoming project on the social representations of Cyber-VAWG funded by the Italian government under the PRIN (Research Projects of Relevant National Interest) program, set to commence in October 2023.

Chiara Gius holds a doctorate in sociology of culture and communication from the University of Padova. She is currently an Assistant Professor at the Department of Political and Social Science of the University of Bologna where she teaches Humanitarian and Social communication. Her research interests are in the areas of social representation of gender, gender based violence, humanitarian and social communication, as well as migration. She has been a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Bologna, and a visiting fellow at the Center for Refugee Studies at York University (CA) and at the Department of Italian Studies at the University of Toronto.

Alice Farneti (University of Bielefeld), *Sexual Harassment in University. Critical Perspectives on the System of Complaints*

In 2014, an anonymous group covered with stickers the office doors of six professors at the Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM). On the pictures that circulated on social media, we can read on the stickers: *Harcèlement, attouchements, voyeurisme, agressions... Tolérance zéro! Politique 16. Non à la culture du viol. Brisons le silence. L'UQAM doit agir.* [Harassment, sexual touching, exhibitionism, assaults: Zero tolerance! Policy 16. No to rape culture. Let's break the silence. UQAM must act.]. The event, which took the name of “stickergate”, generated a small media scandal and sparked a debate within the UQAM university community on the legitimacy of direct action. For someone who is not familiar with the Quebec feminist mobilizations against sexual harassment and violence, this episode may raise some questions. Why did the group choose to use stickers, rather than reporting the professors through the university system of complaints? And if they did file a complaint, what might have gone wrong?

Since the Seventies, feminist groups in different parts of the globe have mobilized against sexual harassment in the workplace and the educational context. This led to the integration of the concept of sexual harassment in national and international legislative frameworks – including the Istanbul Convention. As a result, organizations have adopted policies against sexual harassment, which in most cases involve internal systems of complaints (Bacchi 1998). This presentation offers an overview of the feminist debate on the university systems of complaints. Broadly speaking, this debate divides those who accuse universities of promoting a paternalistic attitude toward female students (e.g. Patai 1998) and those who claim that the system of complaints may contribute to reproducing sexual harassment (e.g. Ahmed 2021). I argue that this difference in perspectives depends on whether the author considers sexual harassment as part of the larger issue of gender inequalities in university. Gender-neutral definitions of sexual harassment in internal policies allow universities to attribute to victims the responsibility of reporting their aggressors, ignoring the structural dimension of the problem. Furthermore, universities can instrumentalize systems of complaints to delegitimize student activists who openly denounce cases of sexual harassment. Currently, institutional approaches against sexual harassment are still a space of conflict for feminist mobilizations in academia.

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Barbara Biglia, Sara Cagliero (University Rovira and Virgili, Spain), *Would be universities able to become key actors in tackling Gender-Related Violence?*

Gender-related violence (GRV) has gladly been recognised as an important and widely spread problem that crosses frontiers, cultures, classes, and ages. That brought to the definition of international and, somewhat consequently, national norms that aim to find a solution. However, a mere normative response cannot eradicate the (un)culture in which is rooted. To achieve a more equitable society a cultural transformation is needed, and higher education institutions should contribute to it. Unfortunately, though, universities are spaces that are still struggling to tackle GRV in their heart. In this conference starting from the learning developed in a European (USVReact), a national (SeGReVUni) and a transnational (SeGReVUni_Cat_Mex) projects, we will present some of the limitations, pitfalls and challenges that Catalan HEI is facing in the fight against GRV. Between them: Firstly, the criminalistics approach to the problem tends to one hand to obfuscate the need of the person who has been suffering the violence and, on the other hand, to reduce it to an intersubjective dynamic. This will not lead universities to acknowledge their institutional and educational responsibility. Secondly, the trend towards neoliberalism in higher education has resulted in a general approach to Sexual and gender-related violence focusing more on protecting institutions from possible legal challenges than on clearly committing to the creation of a climate of respect and mutual support within and outside of these institutions. Thirdly, the standardization of the response to GRV, thought protocols and other legal paths, tend to obscure the importance of power relations and positionalities in the experience of violence. This means an incorrect, when not directly harmful, response to the violence suffered by subjects situated in unequal social positions. Nonetheless, a higher number of professionals who work in HIE are becoming more conscious of the problem and committed to its eradication. At the same time, many female students are speaking out and creating self-defence support groups that are becoming political agents for the needed transformation.

We will suggest that in order to become key actors in tackling Gender-Related Violence, Universities first need to question their own power structures and heteropatriarchal practice. We will also explore the expectations opened by the framework protocol created by the feminist department of the Catalan government, which exhorts institutions to assume due diligence in the case of GRV and is based on a less criminalistic and more caring approach putting restauration as a key measure.

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