



COUNTRY FOCUS

ITALY

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COUNTRY CONTEXT

/ FACTS AND FIGURES

The number of regular migrants in Italy totalled 5 million or 8.2% of the population in 2015 (ISTAT), with the majority from Albania, China, Morocco and Romania (ISTAT, 2014).

An estimated 57,000 FGM-affected girls and women (aged 15-49) lived in Italy in 2010, of which some 20,000 (35.5%) were Nigerian, 18,600 Egyptian (32.5%) and almost 15% from the Horn of Africa, notably Ethiopia (3,200 or 5.5%), Eritrea (2,800 or 4.9%) and Somalia (2,300 or 4%) (Farina, Ortensi & Menonna, 2016). More up-to-date figures are expected shortly, pending publication of research led by the Università Milano Bicocca, funded by the Daphne programme.

However, in the absence of an official system of data collection on FGM in Italy there is a lack of publicly available countrywide data, although some departments/services do collect information.

/ MAIN COMMUNITIES POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

The number of women from FGM-practising countries resident in Italy is 161,457 or 6.1% of the total number of foreign women in the country (ISTAT, 2015). (This figure does not include Italian citizens from FGM-practising countries of origin.) Notable other groups are irregular migrants and asylum-seekers, whose number and demographic profile are difficult to estimate. According to the UNHCR, however, the majority are from Eritrea and Somalia, as well as other countries where FGM is widespread (Gambia, Guinea, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal and Sudan) (UNHCR, 2016).

The main FGM-affected communities resident in Italy are from Egypt, Ghana, Nigeria and Senegal. Other countries of origin include Benin, Burkina Faso, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea, Indonesia, Iraq, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Liberia, Mali, Somalia, Sudan and Togo.

01
Country Context

LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

/ INTERNATIONAL AND EUROPEAN CONVENTIONS

02

Legislative Framework

Italy was one of the countries to support Resolution 67/146 of the General Assembly of the United Nations calling for a worldwide ban on FGM, adopted in 2012 (UNGA, 2013). In addition, Italy has ratified various international conventions against FGM, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR) and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (2010/C 83/02) (EIGE – European Institute for Gender Equality, 2013). Furthermore, in keeping with Articles 2 and 3 of the Italian Constitution, the practice of FGM may be considered persecution for reasons of membership of a particular social group.

In 2013 Italy ratified the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (also known as the Istanbul Convention), the first regional treaty to recognise the existence of FGM in Europe and the need to tackle the problem in a systematic manner.

Article 38 of the Convention specifies that:

Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that the following intentional conducts are criminalised:

- a) excising, infibulating or performing any other mutilation to the whole or any part of a woman's labia majora, labia minora or clitoris;
- b) coercing or procuring a woman to undergo any of the acts listed in point a;
- c) inciting, coercing or procuring a girl to undergo any of the acts listed in point a.

The Convention requires member states to increase and implement preventive measures, addressing affected communities, citizens as a whole and those who work in the sectors concerned. It also specifies the obligation to protect and support women and girls, ensuring that their needs and their safety are regarded as priority. In addition, legal measures specified are to form part of transnational policy, in cooperation with NGOs and support associations.

Law N. 119, 2013 (Urgent measures on safety and to reduce gender violence) permits the issuing of a residence permit to foreign women suffering violence, injury, beatings and/or abuse in the domestic environment (including FGM), similar to provisions for the victims of trafficking. The perpetrators of violence may be deported (even where the conviction is not definitive). The law also grants the victim legal aid in derogation of income limits. In addition, the law provides for a national action plan against sexual and gender violence, as adopted in 2015 in line with the Istanbul Convention.

/ CRIMINAL LAW

A specific criminal law concerning FGM has been in force in Italy since 2006 (Law 7/2006). Articles 583bis and 583ter of the Penal Code prohibit all forms of FGM, including clitoridectomy, excision, infibulation and any other practice causing effects of the same kind, or causing mental or physical illness (EIGE - European Institute for Gender Equality, 2013). The principle of extraterritoriality is applicable, making it illegal for FGM to be carried out by an Italian citizen or a foreigner residing in Italy or on an Italian citizen or person residing in Italy, even if the crime is perpetrated outside Italy.

FGM is punishable by a prison sentence of three to 12 years. According to the law, "Punishment is decreased to two-thirds if the lesion is minor. Punishment is increased by a third when the practices referred to in Articles one and two are committed to the detriment of a minor or if the fact is committed for the purpose of profit. The conviction of a healthcare professional for some of the crimes foreseen by article 583-bis includes the added punishment of disqualification from practising the profession from three to ten years." (Parlamento Italiano, 2006).

/ CHILD PROTECTION LAW


The general child protection law could be applied in cases of FGM. Article 330 of the Civil Code refers to the removal of the child from the family and the suspension of custody of a parent whose behaviour is threatening the child's wellbeing. Moreover, Article 333 of the Civil Code refers to preventive interventions in the case of prejudicial parental behaviour (EIGE - European Institute for Gender Equality, 2013).

In addition, Law N. 172/2012 (through which Italy ratified the Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of Children against Exploitation and Sexual Abuse, or Convention of Lanzarote) incorporated new offences into the Penal Code, as well as harsher punishments for existing offences. In relation to FGM, the Convention introduced the additional punishment of loss of parental authority and permanent prohibition from any role relating to the protection, legal guardianship and care of the child.

/ ASYLUM LAW

Asylum claims on the grounds of FGM could fall under D. L. 251/2007 regarding acts of persecution. Article 7, paragraph 2, letter A refers to "acts of physical or psychological violence including sexual violence", while Article 8, paragraph 1, letter D refers to "acts directed against a particular social group".

The law covers past and future persecution (Article 3, paragraph 4). On the basis of the combined provisions of these articles, FGM constitutes a form of gender-based moral and physical violence, on the grounds of which international protection in the form of refugee status is recognised.



Directive 2013/33/EC of the European Parliament and of the European Council of 26 June 2013, laying down standards for the reception of applicants for international protection (implemented as D. L. 142/2015), specifically mentions victims of FGM among vulnerable persons entitled to receive appropriate healthcare during their asylum application procedure (Article 17, paragraph 1).

Directive 2011/95/EC of the European Parliament and of the European Council of 13 December 2011 on standards for the qualification of third-country nationals or stateless persons as beneficiaries of international protection, for a uniform status for refugees or for persons eligible for subsidiary protection, and for the content of the protection granted also refers to FGM as grounds for the recognition of refugee status.

/ PROFESSIONAL CONFIDENTIALITY

General law with regard to professional secrecy and disclosure may be used to report cases of actual or planned FGM. According to Article 361 of the Italian Penal Code, all public officers have the duty to report a criminal offence of which they become aware in the course of performing their professional duties or as a result of their profession, otherwise they might be subjected to administrative sanctions. Article 362 of the Penal Code affirms the same duty to report of any person responsible for the delivery of a public service. Under Article 365 of the Penal Code, health professionals shall be prosecuted if they fail to report information about a crime obtained in the course of their professional duties, unless doing so would expose the patient/client to criminal prosecution (EIGE – European Institute for Gender Equality, 2013).

POLICY FRAMEWORK

/ NATIONAL ACTION PLANS/POLICY DOCUMENTS

Following implementation of the 2006 law against FGM, a commission for the prevention and combatting of FGM was established, chaired by the Minister for Equal Opportunities. The commission drew up the first national action plan (NAP) on FGM in 2007, with a public call for proposals for action/research projects, awareness-raising campaigns and training. Tenders were accepted from regions, local authorities, and the National Health Service's administrations, as well as NGOs focused on the protection of health or the human rights of migrants (EIGE – European Institute for Gender Equality, 2013).

A second NAP to prevent and combat FGM was approved by the commission in 2011, based on the implementation and agreement of the Conferenza Stato-Regioni of 6 December 2006. Funding was provided mainly for projects and research carried out by Regional authorities, local authorities, National Health Service administrations, and NGOs.

FGM is a policy priority in Italy, at the bilateral and multilateral level. Under Article 7 of Law 7/2006, Italian International Cooperation supports annual voluntary contributions to the activities of UNWOMEN and UNFPA, and remains a major donor to the UNFPA/UNICEF Joint Programme on FGM/C.

/ MULTIDISCIPLINARY GUIDELINES/PROTOCOLS

National level

Commissione nazionale contro le mutilazioni genitali femminili. Dipartimento per le Pari Opportunità (ed.) (2001). *Mutilazioni genitali femminili: cura e prevenzione. Linee guida per operatrici e operatori sanitari, sociali e educativi*. Roma: Dipartimento per le Pari Opportunità.

Regional level

Abruzzo

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- Di Marcantonio, G. (a cura di) (2009). *La prevenzione ed il contrasto delle mutilazioni genitali femminili nella scuola*. Book produced in the framework of the project DADA-FORM - Diritti e Autonomia per le Donne Africane.

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Policy Framework

Abruzzo and Sicily

Le Onde Onlus (2010). *Progetto IRIS - Interventi contro la violenza di genere verso le donne. Ricerca e sperimentazione di sportelli specializzati: Linee guida e raccomandazioni*. Palermo: Arti Grafiche Palermitane.

Emilia - Romagna

Regione Emilia - Romagna (2001). *Progetto n. 9. Le mutilazioni genitali femminili nella popolazione immigrata (dicembre 2000 – febbraio 2001). Raccomandazioni per i professionisti*. Gianfranco Gori, coordinator of the Commission that implemented the research and adapted the Guide Lines.

Lombardy

Re, A. (ed.) (2011), *Le Mutilazioni Genitali Femminili: Vademecum per operatori sanitari, socio-sanitari e scolastici*.

Tuscany

Laurenzi, E. (ed.) (2006). *Profilo informativo del fenomeno delle mutilazioni genitali femminili. Conoscerle per prevenirle*. Produced by the interdisciplinary Work Group on FGM created by Region Tuscany in 2003.

/ INSTITUTIONS

The Commission for the prevention and combatting of FGM referred to above has been disbanded and no specific FGM-related NAP is now in operation or planned. However, regional roundtables are held at irregular intervals, such as the multidisciplinary Tavolo Tecnico Regionale Regione Toscana.

MILESTONES / PROMISING PRACTICES

The 2007 public call for tenders for initiatives to tackle FGM was especially effective at the local level of project implementation. Research findings (including interviews, focus groups, meetings and questionnaires) resulted in a widely disseminated series of publications and reports, as well as informing policy choices. Moreover, many projects combined research, training and awareness - raising components, significantly increasing the scale of circulation.

The experience of Lazio's Dipartimento salute donna e bambino dell'Ospedale San Camillo - Forlanini di Roma is of particular interest, offering practical insights into the care of women suffering complications related to reproductive health, obstetric problems during pregnancy and childbirth, and/or sexual/relationship problems as a consequence of FGM. The department, which has been appointed Regional Reference Centre for the treatment of medical and surgical complications resulting from FGM, offers deinfibulation procedures at patients' request, as well as training for health care professionals and social workers.

Rome's Istituto Nazionale per la promozione della salute delle popolazioni Migranti e per il contrasto delle malattie della Povertà (INMP) is also of interest, offering health care for women with FGM, as well as carrying out research and training.

In Tuscany, the Azienda Ospedaliero Universitaria Careggi di Firenze together with the Centro di Riferimento Regionale per la Prevenzione e la Cura delle Complicanze delle MGF (CRR-FGM) offers healthcare to women who have undergone FGM. Services include deinfibulation surgery, which is performed using a holistic approach that takes account of legal and cultural aspects, including in-depth work with the patient to increase their knowledge, information, health education and parenthood education (i.e. prevention of FGM in daughters), in addition to aesthetic/psychological/sexological/urological results, in accordance with Law 7/2006.


The deinfibulation procedure is conducted according to protocol and in line with a specific regional code, requiring that the procedure is fully understood by the patient and that informed consent is given. The Hospital's FGM Centre's staff can also draw on a multidisciplinary network of volunteers (including social workers, psychologists, sexologists and obstetricians, as well as students of medicine, obstetrics, nursing, sociology, anthropology, etc.). The Centre also collaborates with a network of clinics, paediatricians and family physicians, in addition to cultural associations (NOSOTRAS) and religious associations and various migrant communities.

In addition, the Centre conducts training and research at the national, regional and international level.

In Lombardy, the Cooperativa Crinali Sociale Onlus has been working since 2000 to establish a multidisciplinary regional reference centre for the prevention and

Milestones /
promising practices

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treatment of FGM at two hospitals in Milan (San Paolo and San Carlo Borromeo). The project has resulted in a network of local services (sexual and reproductive health centres), other hospitals in Milan, as well as child neuropsychiatry services, services for adolescents and schools, local psychiatric centres, NGOs and voluntary work. The Cooperative is part of the GrIS (Gruppi Immigrazione Salute), the regional focal point of the SIMM (Società Italiana di Medicina delle Migrazioni) network.

The region of Piedmont has implemented a training project for preventing and tackling FGM for social and health professionals and NGO staff, with 400 participants in 2010 and 300 in 2015.

A 2011-13 study on migrant women and social and health professionals in Umbria resulted in a two-year (2014-15) training programme for social, health and teaching professionals involving some 200 professionals in 100 hours of training. In addition, awareness-raising activities were carried out with key stakeholders, including teachers, students, health and social professionals, families, administrators and policymakers. In 2014 the Centro Umbro di Riferimento per lo Studio e la Prevenzione delle MGF was established at the headquarters of the Fondazione Angelo Celli, offering support to professionals as well as guidance to services and counselling to women and families. The centre is managed by a team of anthropologists and leads a reference network for FGM, comprised of health professionals, experts and institutions providing an integrated response to complex cases.

In Emilia Romagna, numerous activities have been carried out, such as research projects, training courses at health and social care facilities and schools, awareness-raising activities across the region, including theatrical and art performances, debates, book presentations, conferences and seminars for the public and/or specialist groups. (For an overview of FGM-related activities carried out in Emilia Romagna and Italy as a whole, see the website dedicated to FGM of Rete dei Consultori della Regione Emilia Romagna).

Activities financed under the second NAP by the Equal Opportunities Department/ Conferenza Stato-Regioni are still being carried out in various regions.

ADVICE AND SUPPORT

(Services active in Italy in May 2016. This list is regularly updated)

Some hospitals and health care facilities provide specialist medical and psychological support, while a number of associations provide social support, linguistic/cultural mediation, awareness-raising activities, information and referrals to specialist health facilities and legal services.



Abruzzo

Associazione Focolare Maria Regina onlus, Piazza Don Silvio De Annuntiis, Scerne di Pineto (TE), tel. 085 9461127, focolare@ibambini.it, www.mgfabruzzo.it



Basilicata

Associazione tolba medici volontari per lavoratori stranieri, Via D'Addozio 7, Matera, tel. 083 5333522, Office hours: 8.30/13 ; 15/17



Emilia Romagna

Azienda USL di Bologna, UO Ostetricia e Ginecologia dell'Ospedale Maggiore – Counseling service for deinfibulation

Contact: Morena Fogli (obstetrician), tel. 051 3172465, morena.fogli@ausl.bo.it; Giorgio Scagliarini (director), giorgio.scagliarini@ausl.bo.it

Azienda USL Bologna Centro per la salute delle donne immigrate e loro bambini, Via Antonio Zanolini 2, Bologna. Contact: Grazia Lesi (gynecologist), grazia.lesi@ausl.bologna

Azienda USL di Modena has trained health professionals on reception, support and prevention of FGM in the following services: Consultorio familiare e spazio donne immigrate, via Don G. Minzoni 121, Modena. Contact details: Daniela Spettoli (gynecologist), d.spettoli@ausl.mo.it; Consultorio familiare e Spazio Giovani, Viale Molza 3, Modena. Contact details: Roberta Piccinini (obstetrician) r.piccinini@ausl.mo.it



Friuli Venezia Giulia

IRCCS Materno Infantile Burlo Garofolo di Trieste
via dell'Istria 65, tel. 040 378 5111

Psychological and medical care is provided to women with FGM, including deinfibulation and restorative and reconstructive surgery.



Lazio

Dipartimento salute donna e bambino dell'Ospedale San Camillo - Forlanini Circonvallazione Gianicolense 87, Roma
tel. 06 58704617/4641/3677, gscassellati@scamilloforlanini.rm.it

Advice and Support

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Inmp - Istituto Nazionale salute, Migrazioni e Povertà
Via di S. Gallicano 25, Roma, tel. 06 5855 8505



Lombardy

Health and counselling centres for migrant women and their children at the Ospedale San Paolo and Ospedale San Carlo Borromeo in Milan, in collaboration with the Cooperativa Crinali (offering medical, psychological and sexual treatment, including deinfibulation, supported by linguistic/cultural mediation, as well as awareness-raising activities and training).

Ospedale San Paolo, via di Rudinì 8, Milano - Blocco D, Piano 2, Stanza 15 bis

Office hours: Tuesdays 9/12.30, Thursdays 13.30/17, Fridays 9/12.30

Contact: Barbara Grijuela, barbara.grijuela@asst-santipaolocarlo.it,
tel. 02 89181040

Ospedale San Carlo Borromeo, via Pio II 3, Milano – Piano 3, Settore B

Office hours: Mondays 9/12.30, Tuesdays 13.30/17, Thursdays 9/12.30

Contact: Hassibi Parvaneh, hassibi.parvaneh@asst-santipaolocarlo.it,
tel. 02 40222486

Cooperativa Crinali Sociale Onlus, Corso di Porta Nuova 32 – 20121 Milano,
tel. 02 62690932

Cooperativa Sociale KANTARA, Via Angera 3, Milano, tel. 02 67075398

kantara@tiscalinet.it, Office hours: Mondays to Fridays 9/14,

Contact: Maria Castiglioni



Piedmont

Ospedale Sant'Anna di Torino

Corso Spezia 60, Torino

Direct access to the Centro SVS (sexual violence rescue center) or by booking,
tel. 011 3131869

Contact: Gynecologist Dr. Clara Monzeglio, tel. 011 3131732; SVS Center
Obstetrician Antonella Canavese, tel. 011 3131869

Offers medical treatment and deinfibulation for women with FGM.

Two sexual and reproductive health centres dedicated to FGM: Lungo Dora
Savona 24, Torino, Contact: Dr. Mira D'Ercole, tel. 011 2403681; via Maddalene
35A, Torino; Dr. Mortara, tel. 011 284738



Sicily

Ospedale Civico-Benfratelli. UOC Malattie Infettive, reparto medicina delle migrazioni, referral to specialist gynaecologist and the association

ANLAIDS Sicilia, Felicia Impastato, piazza Nicolò 2, Palermo, tel. 091 6664715

ANLAIDS, Largo Giuliana 2, Palermo, tel. 333 3207437, tullioprestileo@virgilio.it, anlaid.sicilia@alice.it

CEFPAS, Centro Regionale per la formazione e l'aggiornamento del Personale del Servizio sanitario, Via G. Mulè 1, Caltanissetta, www.cefpas.it

Contact: Dr. Piersergio Caltabiano (training manager), tel. 093 4505870, caltabiano@cefpas.it



Tuscany

Centro di Riferimento Regionale per la prevenzione e cura delle complicanze legate alle MGF - Prevention, training, awareness-raising activities, cultural mediation, psychological and medical treatment, including deinfibulation and restorative and reconstructive surgery. At Dipartimento materno-infantile (DAIMI), Careggi, Largo Brambilla 3, Firenze

Contact: Dr. Abdulcadir Omar Hussen, tel. 055 7947601, abdulcadir@aou-careggi-toscana.it, mgf.firenze@gmail.com

For emergencies: 340 4675562, oabdulcadir@gmail.com

Office hours: Mondays to Fridays 9/13

NOSOTRAS Onlus, via Faenza 103, Firenze, mgf@nosotras.it



Umbria

Centro umbro di riferimento per lo studio e la prevenzione delle MGF
The center's counselors are available by appointment for talks, guidance, training activities, mediation. Contact: Dr. Sabrina Flamini, Dr. Maya Pellicciari, tel. 075 41508 (Mondays to Fridays, 10-13), mgf@antropologiamedica.it



For legal assistance

Contact ASGI - Associazione per gli Studi Giuridici sull'immigrazione



For emergencies

Contact the local police station's or police headquarters' Ufficio dei minori.



For further information and/or to report any errors or changes in the information on this website, please contact: AIDOS - Associazione Italiana Donne per lo Sviluppo, tel. 06 6873214, segreteria@aidos.it

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/ OTHER PUBLICATIONS AND AUDIO-VIDEO MATERIALS PRODUCED IN ITALY

For an overview of studies, research, documentation and reports on projects regarding FGM carried out in Italy, please see the website dedicated to FGM of Rete dei Consulitori della Regione Emilia Romagna. AIDOS has also produced various manuals and training guides, mainly in the context of development cooperation.

For an anthropological perspective on the implementation of the Italian law on FGM, please see Fusaschi, M. (2015). Humanitarian Bodies. Gender, Moral Economy and Genital Modifications in Italian Immigration Policy. *Cahiers d'études africaines, LV (1), 2017, 11-28*.

The Multisectoral Academic Training Guide on FGM/C is a teaching manual aimed at promoting and facilitating the incorporation of academic content about FGM in University degrees of Medicine, Nursing, Education, Psychology, Social Work, Law and Criminology, Anthropology, International Cooperation, Gender and Feminist Studies and Sciences of Communication and Journalism. The guide is released in 6 languages and it is the main training output of the MAP-FGM project.

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