

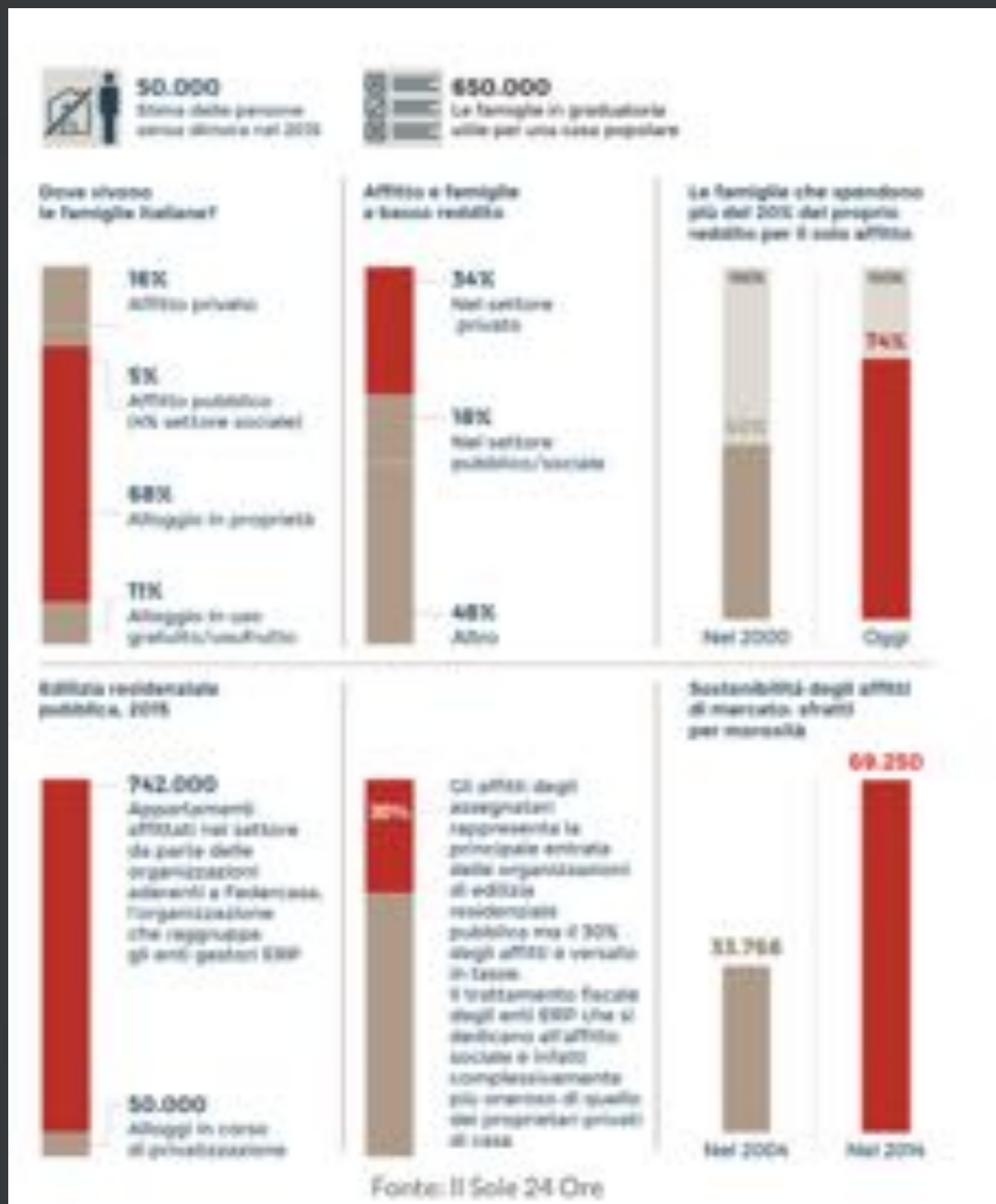
Homelessness, housing first and changes in Social work in Italy

Teresa Consoli

Dept. of Social and Political Sciences
University of Catania
consoli@unict.it

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... in the last years....



☐ homelessness

☐ housing first

☐ social work



Homelessness ... in Italy

Policy Agenda

Data / survey

Services



-
- ☐ **Regionalized welfare system - public / private**
 - ☐ **Homelessness has increased - new targets**
 - ☐ **Services organized by third sector and volunteers**

Housing first ... in Italy

2014/2016 FIOPSD

changes ...



HF and FioPSD



- ☐ a bottom-up policy
- ☐ from local to national
- ☐ an extraordinary experience



186 APARTMENTS

27 CITIES



Apartments for families



Co-housing



Single apartments

70%

Private housing market

31%

15%

Public property

15%

Religious property

Agrigento
Palermo
Caltanissetta
Torino
Noto
Milano
Trieste
Genova
Bergamo
Modena
Catania
Bologna
Pisa
Cosenza
Rimini
Valle Savio -
Cesena
Pordenone
Siracusa
Ravenna
Acireale
Chioggia
Trento
Padova
Udine
Piana degli
Albanesi
Verona
Ragusa

... working experience?

**The implementation of
Housing First Programmes
requires a change in the way we approach
housing and social work – a “mindshift”**

.... changes in Social Work





questions

Which is the **role** that operators/social workers are playing **in implementing the Housing First Model in Italy**? And which **competences** have been acquired in implementing HF?

Which is the **role** that operators/social workers are playing **in supporting the recovery issue, the empowerment and autonomy of users**?

Who are the **operators** we are talking about?

Housing first and social operators / workers

Explorative qualitative analysis

Semi-structured face to face interviews with 10 social operators/
workers involved in delivering HF projects

10 interviewed operators

- 5 social operators (professional qualification)

- 2 social workers

- 1 social scientist

- 1 operator

- 1 with no specific qualification

(4 with **NO** experience - 6 with a relative long experience in homeless)

Competences acquired in delivering HF projects

To respect and manage the **time needed** by the homeless to carry out activities and pursue a personal change

To be **less impositive** and more on a pair relations with the homeless

To evaluate the assistance project for the homeless from a **overall global perspective** considering every aspect globally and not singularly

To **reduce the risk** of turning homeless into a chronic condition rather than to eliminate it completely

How social workers **apply** the HF principle of consumer's choice and self-determination

For some operators it is very difficult to apply for others it is a normal practice

Social operators/workers are required:

To **manage the uncertainty and risk** related to the choice and self-determination of the homeless

To **respect the timing** of the homeless and wait for their reaction, change and development without judgement

It is fundamental to **work in couple/team** (multidisciplinary team?) in order to balance the assistance intervention and to work in a team for sharing, confronting and super visioning

To **reflect constantly** on their activities

How social operators practice the HF principle of recovery?

By **preparing** the homeless to an autonomous choice and self determination

Both the social operators/worker and the user may have developed inner expectations of impositive or reward/punishment behaviors
sometimes the recovery is pursued indirectly by showing the homeless the negative impact of alcol/drug/game abuse on their job/house maintenance

By **managing** the anxiety
of seeing the homeless damaging themselves and having to wait without intervening, until their behaviors leads them to a mortal risk

Changes in social operators' practice

Focus on the practice and the **relationship** with the homeless.

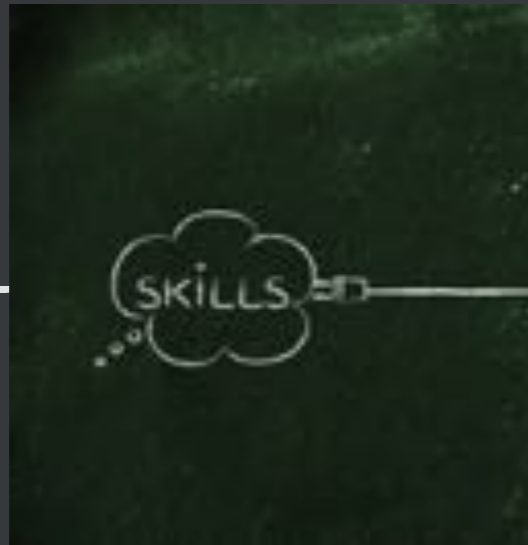
The absence of the traditional “**contract**” for negotiating interventions of assistance with the homeless

Different idea and process of “**take in charge**” from the operator/ social worker and the homeless.



Relevance of Community (social) work

«Social work has a clear-cut community dimension ... the community is the space where people can really exercise their rights, hence the need for professionals to redefine social policies by empowering people in community dynamics. We need to incorporate this focus into our professional work, which still leans too heavily on managing state benefits and mitigating the undesirable effects of a society that engenders poverty and inequality» (Bezunartea Barrio, 2014)



New **relations** with users

«...it is the very relationship between social workers and the people who use our services that needs a rethink and reform. [...] the most fundamental changes we can make are **to share more power with our service users, to transform our role from fixer to facilitator ...**» (Brünjes, 2014)



Relevance of supervision (reflective practice, work group, équipe)

*«... reflective practice is a **key part of effective** interventions in the homeless sector (Marguire, 2014)*

Alter-vision (L. Gui)

Concluding remarks

- ☐ form volunteer work to practice / knowledge /skills
- ☐ specific focus on “homelessness”
- ☐ new qualifications for (social) workers?
- ☐ new research ... new teams
- ☐ thanks consoli@unict.it

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