



MAPPING HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES IN TRIVENETO

Policy Brief

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1. Introduction

Over the past decades, municipalities and local authorities have taken on an increasingly active and direct role in the multilevel governance of human rights (Durmuş 2020).

Traditionally, normative and policy agendas on human rights at the supranational level are negotiated and adopted within regional and international organisations. National interests and priorities shape these agendas, and States are responsible for implementing the adopted standards through national laws and policies. Within this framework, municipalities play a significant role not only in guaranteeing human rights, for instance through the tripartite obligation to respect, protect and fulfil them, but also in relation to the definition of the standards themselves. Politically, this has at times translated into programmatic declarations of intent, such as the self-designation of some municipalities around the world as “human rights cities” (for example York, Graz, Barcelona, Lund, Jakarta, Rosario, and others). International organisations, including UNESCO (UNESCO Graz Centre 2024) and the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2023), have supported this trend by providing networks for cooperation, as well as support and visibility for cities committed to the promotion of human rights.

Despite their declared commitments, local governments (and broader subnational entities such as regions, länder, provinces, counties or municipalities) represent, from a subsidiarity perspective, the level of governance closest to human rights holders. Through the management and delivery of basic services, they address and resolve on a daily basis practical conflicts and complexities related to the realisation of human rights, in line with the specific social, economic and cultural needs of the local population. The contribution of these actors can therefore be analysed empirically both as an increasingly relevant administrative node in the multilevel effort to implement human rights (the city as a provider of human rights) and as a site for the creation and experimentation of initiatives, norms and strategies aimed at guaranteeing the human dignity of all, often in collaboration with other stakeholders (the city as a human rights laboratory). Generally, both forms of local engagement with human rights can contribute to greater acceptance and more effective implementation of commitments at higher levels of governance, particularly in the current regressive phase that human rights and related values are undergoing amid today's polycrisis and widespread conflict.

This project is therefore conceived as the starting point of a broader investigation into local engagement with human rights, which is expected to further expand the scope of analysis and to lay the foundations for exchange among local public officials working on these issues in Italy and abroad.

2. Research objective

Building on the growing interest in analysing local administrative dimensions in the promotion and protection of human rights, this project aims to investigate how social policies, with particular attention to human rights and some of their specific articulations, are developed and implemented within the normative frameworks adopted at municipal level by local administrations. The area selected for this preliminary study is the Triveneto region, comprising Veneto, Friuli Venezia Giulia and Trentino-Alto Adige. The diverse political and administrative structures across the three regions, their proximity to different border areas, and the presence of distinct socio-industrial contexts make this study particularly valuable for understanding the various political-administrative mechanisms that, within the same national context, generate different needs to identifying and addressing the challenges posed by certain dynamics affecting contemporary societies.

The project team is composed of a group of researchers focusing on different disciplinary areas, including human rights, political science and law. The project is funded by the Department of Political Science, Law and International Studies of the University of Padua, but it also involves researchers and academics from other international universities. Specifically, the members of the Research Programme are Pietro De Perini (University of Padua, project coordinator), Piergiuseppe Parisi (University of York),

and Angelica Vascotto (University of Padua). The research group also includes Marco Mascia (University of Padua), Paolo De Stefani (University of Padua), Paola Degani (University of Padua), Klaus Starl (University of Graz), Elisa Gamba (University of Padua), Claudia Pividori (Centro Veneto Progetti Donna), Francesca Benciolini (Municipality of Padua), and Luigi Zanin (Veneto Region).

3. Applied methodology

For the purposes of this research, four thematic areas within the sphere of human rights have been selected:

- Citizenship and human rights education
- Housing policies and the housing emergency
- Equal opportunities and the prevention of gender-based violence
- Inclusion and social cohesion

The area under investigation comprises 3 regions, 13 provincial capitals and 1,057 municipalities. The aim is to analyse local policies, with a particular focus on municipalities with more than 5,000 inhabitants. The reference sample includes approximately 15% of these municipalities (100 in total: 42 in Veneto, 22 in Friuli Venezia Giulia and 36 in Trentino-Alto Adige). The selection of municipalities is based on the results of the first national survey (Mazzuchelli 2011). The project seeks to explore local policies in detail, including those related to the specific thematic areas, and to initiate a comparative analysis between regional and provincial administrative centres.

Regarding the data collection phase, the research was conducted through desk-based research, the administration of a questionnaire, and the carrying out of semi-structured interviews.

4. Numerical data

Below are the specific contact details of the respective municipal administrations.

From the original sample of 100 case studies, participation proved to be very limited. This made it necessary to expand the number of cases under analysis by involving additional municipalities with more than 5,000 inhabitants, in order to increase the final number of participants and reach the expected targets. To date, participation data can be summarised as follows:

- In Veneto, 59 municipalities were contacted, compared to the 42 initially planned
- In Trentino-Alto Adige, 58 municipalities were contacted, compared to the 36 initially planned
- In Friuli Venezia Giulia, 52 municipalities were contacted, compared to the 22 originally planned

Out of 169 municipalities contacted, the questionnaire was successfully administered in 64 cases, resulting in an overall response rate of 37.86%. Of the questionnaire respondents, 63.3% (N = 41) expressed their availability for a follow-up meeting through an in-depth interview, and 20 participants completed the interview within the set timeframe, namely by the end of April 2025. With regard to regional participation, 40.6% of responses were provided by Veneto, 31.3% by Trentino-Alto Adige, and 28.1% by Friuli Venezia Giulia.

Based on the number of municipalities contacted, some data on municipal response rates at the provincial level are presented below.

VENETO						
Venice	Verona	Treviso	Vicenza	Rovigo	Padua	Belluno
12 out of 13	0 out of 10	4 out of 9	3 out of 5	1 out of 2	7 out of 10	0 out of 2

TRENTINO–SOUTH TYROL	
Autonomous Province of Trento	Autonomous Province of Bolzano
11 out of 20	7 out of 20

FRIULI–VENEZIA GIULIA			
Trieste	Udine	Pordenone	Gorizia
1 out of 4	11 out of 16	5 out of 16	3 out of 7

With reference to the data presented above, the figures below indicate the level of participation in the questionnaire by the respective provincial capitals:

- 2 out of 5 in Veneto
- 0 out of 2 in Trentino–Alto Adige
- 1 out of 4 in Friuli Venezia Giulia

5. FIRST TOPIC: Citizenship and Human Rights Education

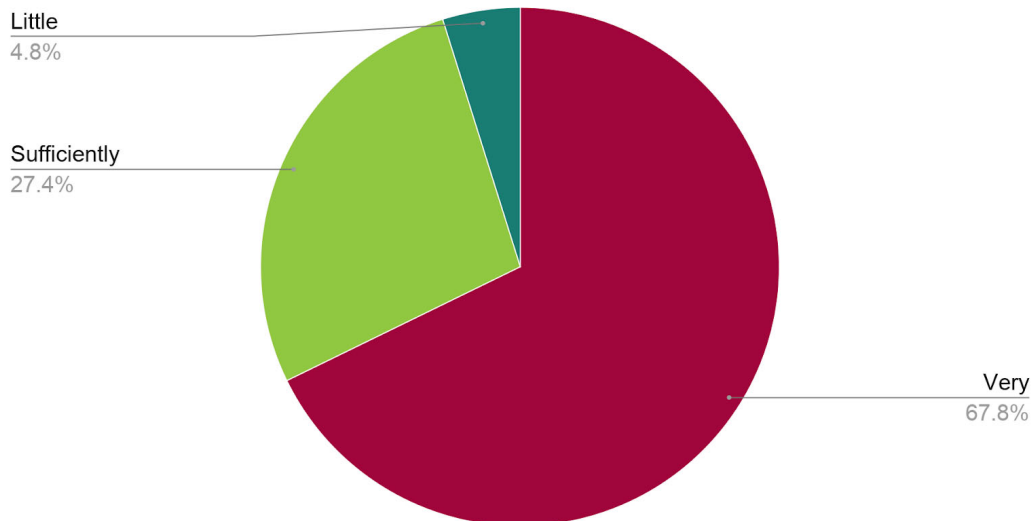
• Introductory information

Citizenship and Human Rights Education (CHRE) is understood as an educational process aimed at developing citizens' (particularly young people's) awareness of their rights and duties, their understanding of democratic principles, and their respect for human dignity, cultural diversity and social justice. Its main objective is to promote active, responsible and inclusive citizenship through knowledge of fundamental human rights and international law, the promotion of democratic principles and the rule of law, and the development of critical thinking, civic participation and tolerance (see the European Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education, Council of Europe, 2010, Section I, paragraph 2). At international level, citizenship and human rights education is also supported by a range of instruments and initiatives, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training (2011), UNESCO's Recommendation on Education for Peace and Human Rights (2023), and the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. With regard to the Italian context, two main normative frameworks regulate and support this field: the Constitution of the Italian

Republic (1948), which constitutes the foundation of civic and human rights education, and Law No. 92/2019, which made the teaching of civic education compulsory in schools at all levels.

On the basis of this framework, the research focused on the importance attributed by municipalities to the theme under analysis. The first result is presented below:

How important are Citizenship and Human Rights Education in your municipality?



• Types of projects/activities implemented

The municipalities that took part in the questionnaire reported a wide range of activities and projects carried out either directly or indirectly by the municipality (in the form of funding or endorsement of third parties, often cooperatives and organisations from the third sector).

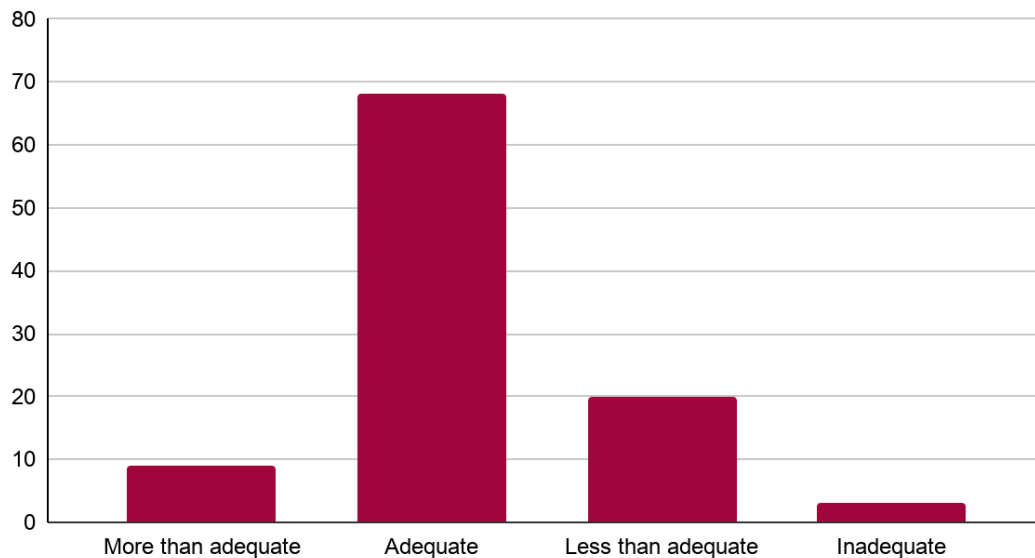
In most cases, these projects aim to engage younger people in understanding civic space, alongside a broader strategy of awareness-raising targeting the wider population.

Some examples of activities include:

- Youth Municipal Council
- Promotion of performances and cultural events addressing human rights, citizenship, reception and inclusion, gender equality, and LGBTQIA+ rights
- Civic Calendar initiatives
- Membership in national networks such as “Cities of Refuge for Human Rights Defenders” and “EloGE”, as well as the adoption of Guidelines for the Promotion of Citizenship Education
- Activities and seminars with schools to foster familiarity with and understanding of public institutions
- Meetings with newly turned 18-year-olds to promote themes of active citizenship
- Guided visits to the Town Hall
- The presence of an Ombudsperson for the Rights of Persons Deprived of Personal Liberty

In response to the question, “To what extent do you consider the resources allocated by the municipality to be adequate for this thematic area?”, the answers yielded the following percentages:

How adequate are the existing resources?



Respondents who answered the previous question with “rather inadequate” or “inadequate” were invited to provide brief explanations of the reasons for this shortfall. Among the main factors identified, the following emerged:

- 43.8% consider the inadequacy of the resources allocated to this thematic area to be due to a lack of human resources
- 43.8% believe that the main responsibility lies with insufficient financial resources allocated to municipalities
- 6.3% stated that the inadequacy of resources is due to a general lack of interest in the topic
- 6.3% specified that inadequate resources reflect weak engagement or limited feedback from the local population

• Key points emerging from the interview phase

Among the main issues that emerged during the interview phase, there was a strong interest in topics related to human rights and citizenship. In a highly cross-cutting manner, both territorially and across party lines, there was widespread recognition of the pressing need to address these issues. Local administrations expressed a clear willingness to involve all segments of society, from younger generations to older people. Some areas appear to focus more strongly on issues related to national political citizenship (knowledge of institutions, electoral processes, active citizenship and participation). Other contexts, by contrast, direct their efforts more towards themes linked to so-called “international” dimensions, such as peace, integration and the promotion of human rights.

• General observations

Among the key points emerging from the study, the following should be highlighted:

- A strong effort to engage young people, who are seen as the most important actors in improving conditions for society as a whole, for the following reasons:
 1. Greater opportunities for educational engagement through collaboration with schools;
 2. The transmission of information, values and awareness to their respective family units, thereby enabling forms of indirect engagement with those segments of society that are more difficult to reach due to work-related constraints and/or family structures.

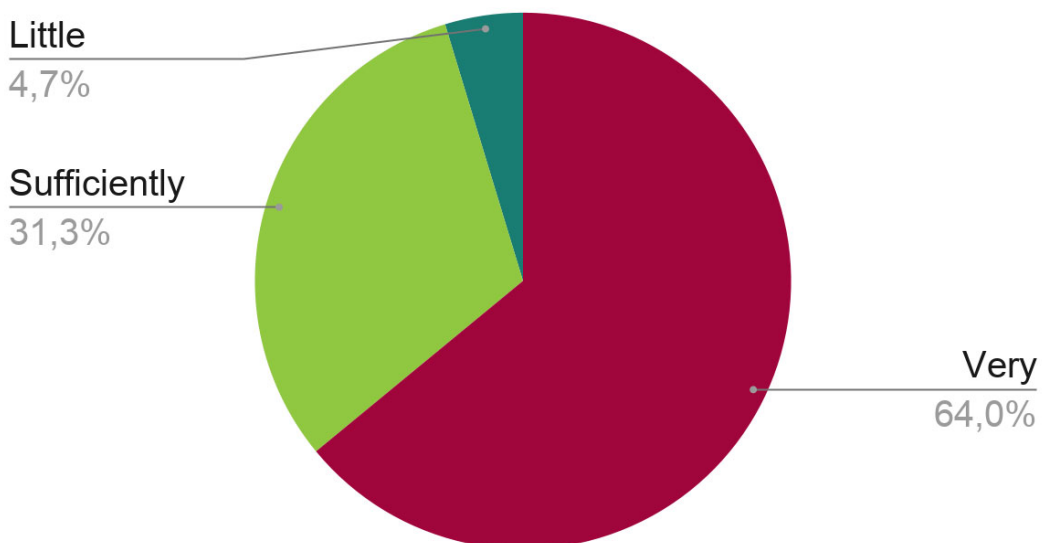
6. SECOND TOPIC: Housing policies

• Introductory information

Housing policies generally encompass the set of strategies, regulatory interventions and economic instruments implemented by public authorities to guarantee the right to housing and to regulate the real estate market, access to housing, and the quality of living conditions. The main objectives include: ensuring the right to housing for all, especially for vulnerable groups; reducing housing inequalities (in terms of costs, quality and accessibility); fostering social inclusion through a fair and sustainable distribution of housing spaces; upgrading the existing building stock; and promoting environmental sustainability. The areas of intervention vary widely depending on primary needs and generally involve a large number of actors, ranging from municipalities and regions to the state and public housing authorities, as well as non-profit organisations and private actors such as small property owners, corporate entities, banks and investment funds. At the international level, the right to housing is recognised and enshrined in several fundamental instruments: Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), Article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the European Social Charter (revised 1996). The issue is also addressed in various constitutions, including those of Spain, Portugal, South Africa, France, Brazil, South Korea and Sweden. The Italian Constitution does not explicitly mention the “right to housing”; rather, it is recognised as a “right to adequate housing” through ordinary legislation (Article 47 of the Constitution and Article 1022 of the Civil Code).

On the basis of this framework, the research focused on the importance attributed by municipalities to the theme under analysis. The first result is presented below:

How important is the issue of housing policy and



• Types of projects/activities implemented

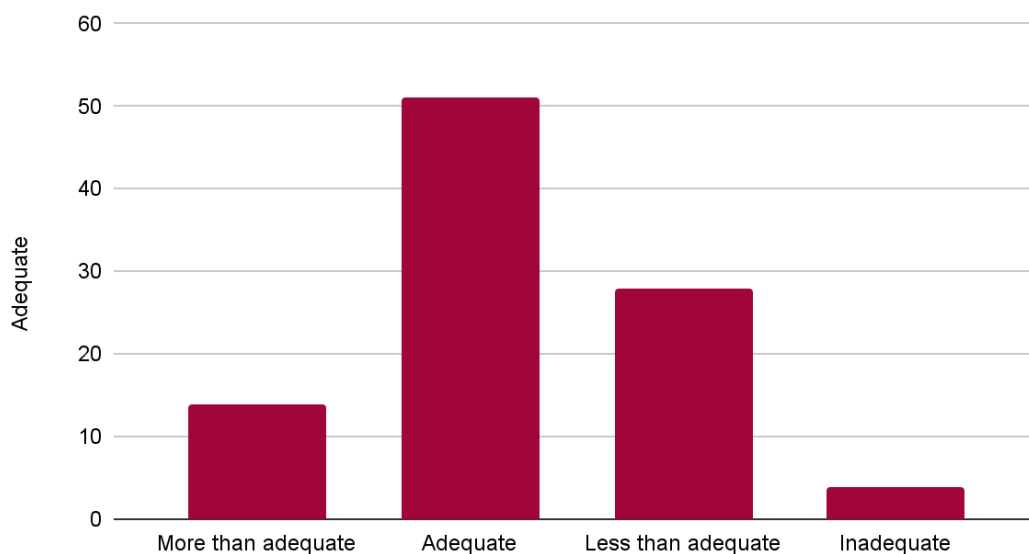
The ways in which municipalities address the housing emergency reveal a high degree of diversity in their approaches, ranging from the use of new facilities to the development of co-housing projects, from the establishment of guarantee funds for tenants to the regeneration of urban spaces.

Among these, certain practices emerge more frequently:

- Financial support to facilitate access to housing for vulnerable families
- Contributions towards the payment of utility bills
- Mediation between tenants and property owners to manage eviction procedures
- Alongside public calls, the independent launch of more targeted social housing calls (e.g. for young couples, low-income households)
- Organisation of information events for citizens
- Support and guidance in the search for housing
- Creation of rent-controlled agreements between private landlords and vulnerable families, mediated by the municipality
- Reduced rents in apartments owned by the municipality
- PNRR calls for the renovation of buildings for social housing

In response to the question, “*To what extent do you consider the resources allocated by the municipality to be adequate for this thematic area?*”, the answers yielded the following percentages:

How adequate are the existing resources?



Respondents who answered the previous question with “rather inadequate” or “inadequate” were invited to provide brief explanations of the reasons for this shortfall. The critical issues identified are numerous:

- 60.9% stated that the main shortcoming is due to a lack of financial resources
- 13% attributed responsibility to a shortage of staff
- 8.9% argued that adequate infrastructure is lacking

- 8.6% maintained that the reasons for the shortfall lie in all of the factors mentioned above (financial resources, staff and infrastructure)
- 4.3% claimed that a dedicated budget line cannot be established because there is no direct competence in this area
- 4.3% finally stated that greater institutional coordination would be necessary, as the underlying problem is extremely complex

- **Key points emerging from the interview phase**

The issue emerges as highly critical for all the administrations interviewed, at an almost emergency level: long waiting lists of citizens and households who have turned to municipalities are, in most cases, unable to find short-term solutions. Compared to previous years, and particularly since 1 January 2022, a sharp increase in housing demand has been observed, coupled with an inability to meet this demand. Some municipalities have managed to respond by renting out or allocating, including through co-housing arrangements, properties already owned by the municipality that were not originally intended for this purpose. Others, by contrast, have sought support at the regional level, as they are unable to offer prompt solutions.

All interviewees agreed on the need for state institutions to provide concrete and coordinated efforts to address the issue. At present, each initiative originates at the municipal level, resulting in a high degree of heterogeneity in approaches and in the pools of resources available. Numerous attempts at dialogue with the national government were reported, yet these were described as characterised by a “lack of listening”. In particular, reference was made to the past existence of two funds supporting housing emergencies (for rents and so-called “involuntary arrears”), which have since been abolished. Municipalities argue that, in the absence of coherent national housing policies, they are forced to act “creatively”, drawing on the limited and uneven resources at their disposal.

- **General observations**

Compared to the other themes examined in this research, housing policies represent the greatest and most challenging obstacle for the vast majority of the municipalities involved. Regardless of a municipality’s size, population, location or territorial characteristics, administrators agreed on the existence of a crisis that is far broader than what can be managed at the local level.

In particular:

- In recent years, a sharp increase has been recorded in the share of the population seeking support from municipalities due to an inability to meet housing costs. Alongside the growing number of applicants for subsidies and/or social or regulated housing, an increase has been observed in the number of households, particularly young couples, who, despite having employment income, are unable to cope with the high prices of the private housing market.
- In many cases, it was highlighted that, despite the existence of a public housing supply, forms of subsidised housing are no longer able to meet current needs. In particular, three problematic elements were identified:
 1. The total number of available housing units is too low, pointing to a strong need to expand existing facilities
 2. The housing units in use are very outdated and require renovation, as they do not comply with current regulations. This results in higher costs being borne both by residents and by municipalities themselves
 3. Difficulties in enabling turnover among eligible beneficiaries in public housing. Most users who manage to enter the ATER system tend to remain there for many years, often across generations, thus preventing the reallocation of housing units for the benefit of other users or those with urgent needs. Two main reasons were identified: the absence of “re-accompaniment” processes towards the private housing market;

and bureaucratic procedures and regulations that do not facilitate exit from public housing (such as ISEE documentation requirements and the presence of minors).

4. A lack of national frameworks for the management of housing emergencies, with responsibility being delegated entirely to the municipal level
- With regards to properties on the private housing market, the issues identified can be summarised as follows:
 1. Housing units intended for long-term rental are extremely scarce in relation to demand. Among the causes of this shortage are the growing tendency to develop short-term accommodation linked to tourism (e.g. B&Bs, Booking.com) or a preference for selling properties. Both options are perceived as offering greater guarantees than renting out an apartment. Among property owners, there is a prevailing sense of mistrust towards the medium- to long-term rental market.
 2. The absence of structured guarantees, and the resulting uncertainty on the part of property owners, leads to an over-selection of tenants, with the consequent marginalisation of large segments of society, particularly families, couples and foreign nationals. In practice, single individuals of Italian nationality are often preferred.

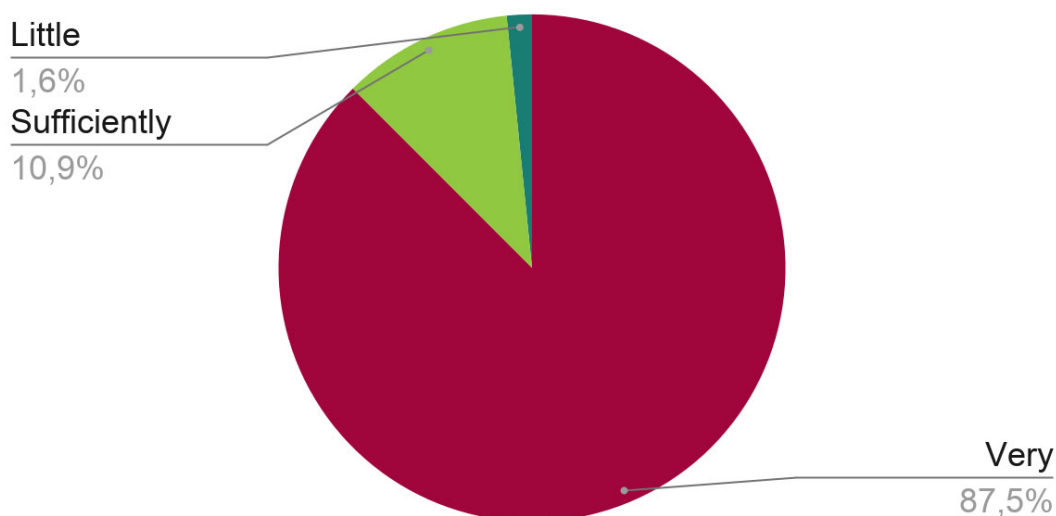
7. THIRD TOPIC: Equal opportunities and combating gender-based violence

• Introductory information

Equal opportunities refer to a set of actions aimed at ensuring that all people, regardless of gender, enjoy the same conditions of access, participation and recognition across different areas of life, such as education, the labour market, access to political life and healthcare. Measures to combat gender-based violence, by contrast, refer to actions intended to prevent and sanction harmful acts committed against a person on the basis of their gender, with the aim of undermining their dignity, freedom and/or physical and psychological integrity. These issues are addressed at the international level in numerous forums and instruments. To date, key references to these principles can be found in the following frameworks: the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW, 1979), the Beijing Platform for Action (1995), the Istanbul Convention (2011), and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Goal 5). With regard to the Italian context, the Constitution itself enshrines the principle of formal and substantive equality in Article 3, provides protection for women's work in Article 37, and promotes equal opportunities in access to public office and public positions in Article 51. In addition, further legislative instruments are in place, such as the Code of Equal Opportunities (Legislative Decree No. 198/2006) and the Golfo-Mosca Law (2011) on gender quotas on corporate boards. The National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR) also includes a cross-cutting mission dedicated to gender equality.

Based on this data, the research focused on the importance attributed by municipalities to the theme under analysis. The first result is presented below:

How important is the issue of equal opportunities and combating gender-based violence in your municipality?



● Types of projects/activities implemented

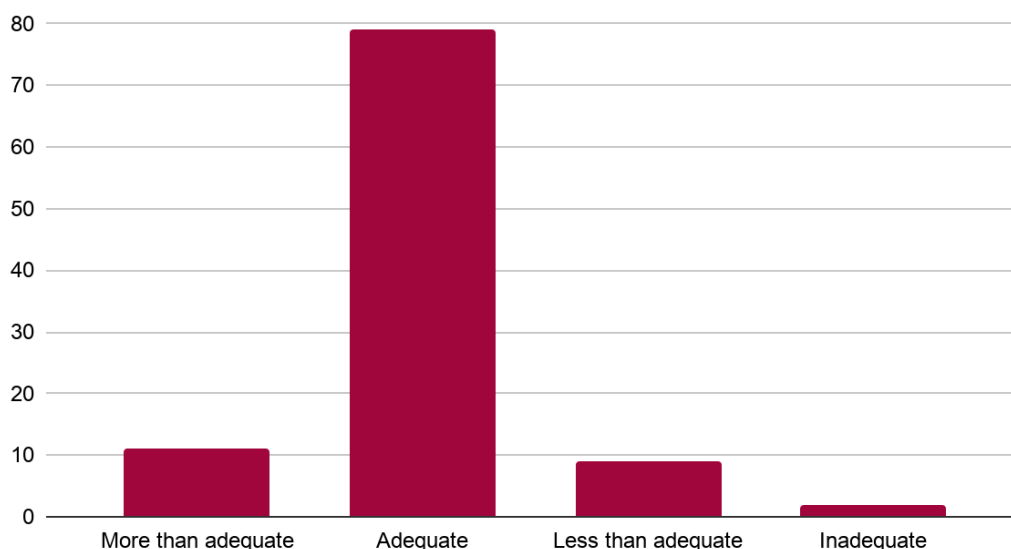
The questionnaires reveal a strong municipal presence in supporting projects related to equal opportunities and actions to combat gender-based violence. In a fully cross-cutting manner, both politically and territorially, there is a high level of engagement and institutional ownership of these issues.

Among the activities implemented, the following can be highlighted:

- Opening of anti-violence centres, including emergency accommodation (shelters) and psychological support services
- Cooperation with law enforcement agencies and healthcare facilities
- Establishment of commissions and/or permanent working groups to discuss the issue and develop strategies tailored to local contexts
- Public awareness-raising initiatives such as demonstrations, theatre performances, book and film presentations on the topic, debates, conferences and public events (e.g. Equal Opportunities Festival, *Passo in Libertà*, the mural project *Il Segno delle Donne*, *Sedia Libera*, *Equal Pay Day*)
- “Pink Taxi” (*Taxi Rosa*) project
- Literary competitions for lower and upper secondary school students
- Free psychological counselling services
- Projects on affective relationships and consent/emotional education in schools, in partnership with specialised organisations (e.g. SOS Rosa Associations, ZeroSuTre, Voci di Donne)
- Labour market reintegration programmes for women victims of violence
- Financial support measures
- Self-defence courses
- Creation of cultural spaces dedicated to women (e.g. “Casa delle Donne” / Women’s Houses)

In response to the question, “*To what extent do you consider the resources allocated by the municipality to be adequate for this thematic area?*”, the answers yielded the following percentages:

How adequate are the existing resources?



Respondents who answered the previous question with “rather inadequate” or “inadequate” were invited to provide brief explanations of the reasons for this shortfall. The responses that emerged relate to three main aspects:

- 42.9% consider that there is a need to invest greater financial resources in this area
- 42.9% maintain that there is a shortage of staff and human resources
- 14.3% report a lack of adequate infrastructure to support activities and projects

• Key points emerging from the interview phase

In some cases, Equal Opportunities Commissions have been established with the aim of bringing together politically diverse groups around a common and shared issue: it was repeatedly emphasised that this does not generate divergent political “visions”, but is instead regarded as a universal and cross-cutting theme. In certain instances, commissions are composed exclusively of women, while some municipalities have extended participation to male members in order to incorporate more integrated perspectives or, more generally, the viewpoint of those who may often find themselves “on the other side”. Most interviewees reported good cooperation with law enforcement agencies and the existence of a strong outsourcing network involving associations and third-sector organisations. Nevertheless, based on the experiences of individual municipalities, there is a perceived need to strengthen preventive measures in this area. The presence of anti-violence centres and/or the prompt response of law enforcement is not seen as an indicator of system effectiveness, but rather as evidence that gender-based violence is deeply rooted and insufficiently addressed at an early stage, such that these services represent the final stages of the process (“Once you get there, it is already too late”).

Another issue frequently mentioned during the interview phase concerns the involvement of young people not only in awareness-raising projects but also in actual cases of violence. Although it might be assumed that younger age groups are more distant from certain violent dynamics, in reality they account for a large proportion of cases.

- **General observations**

The topic of equal opportunities and the prevention of gender-based violence emerges as a very high priority for the majority of the municipalities that participated in the research. While significant differences in project design were observed, all municipalities make extensive use of awareness-raising as a key instrument. The sectors most actively involved are schools, but not exclusively so: numerous initiatives are organised for the wider public in public spaces (such as squares, streets, bookshops, cinemas and theatres), employing a wide range of formats to capture public attention, including debates, films, theatre performances, musical events and similar activities.

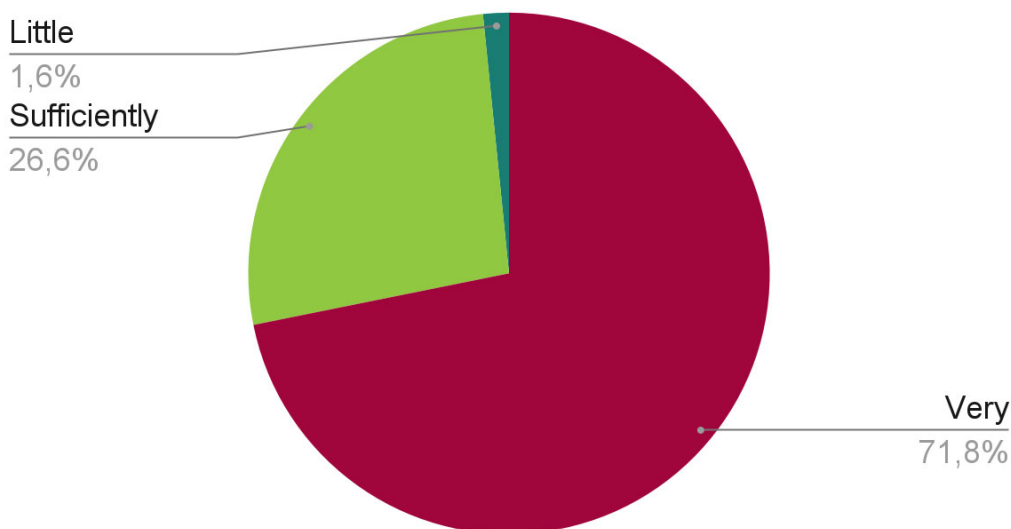
8. FOURTH TOPIC: Integration and social cohesion

- **Introductory information**

Inclusion refers to a process through which all individuals, regardless of their personal or group characteristics, are able to participate fully in the social, cultural, educational and economic life of the community in which they live, without barriers and/or discrimination. This principle generally concerns persons with disabilities, ethnic or linguistic minorities, migrants and refugees, LGBTQIA+ communities, and socially disadvantaged or marginalised groups. The concept of social cohesion, by contrast, can be understood as a society's capacity to ensure the well-being of all its members by reducing inequalities, promoting solidarity, and strengthening a sense of belonging and shared responsibility. These themes are addressed at the international level in a number of key frameworks: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Goal 10), the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), the European Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021–2030, and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. With regard to the specifically Italian context, the following elements are particularly relevant: Article 3 of the Constitution, national social inclusion plans (including the Citizenship income – inclusion allowance, the National Recovery and Resilience Plan – PNRR, and youth and education policies), and legislation on inclusive education, special educational needs, and the inclusion of students with disabilities and specific learning disorders (DSA).

Based on this data, the research focused on the importance attributed by municipalities to the theme under analysis. The first result is presented below:

How important is the issue of integration and



● Types of projects/activities implemented

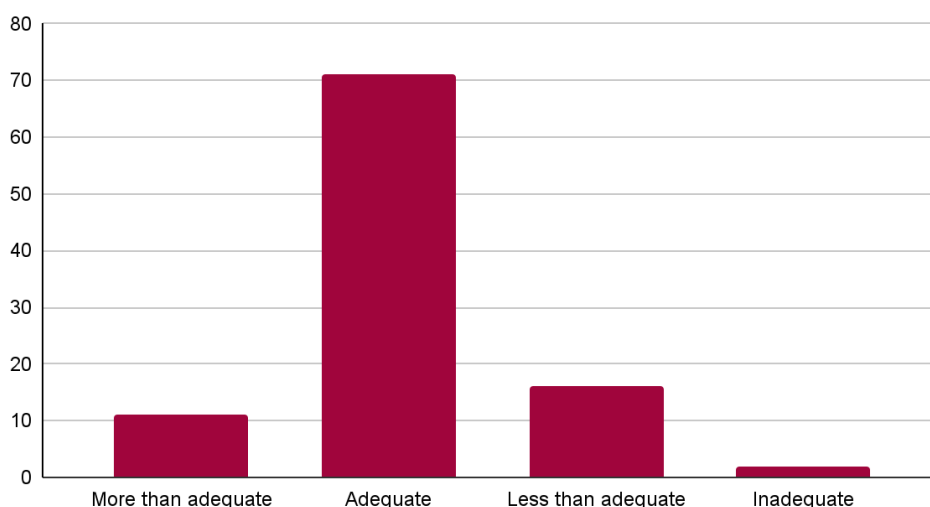
The topic is addressed on the basis of various aspects of the social components of the territory.

Among the main activities identified, the following are particularly noteworthy:

- Italian language courses for foreign women
- Libraries offering illustrated children's books in two languages (with a focus on Arabic/Italian)
- Collaboration with local associations working on culture and integration (e.g. ASSALAM)
- The presence of community centres as spaces for youth aggregation and socialisation
- Establishment of a commission representing residents with foreign citizenship
- Support for co-housing initiatives aimed at fostering autonomy for persons with disabilities
- School-based projects on conflict mediation
- Membership in the "Navigare" network (promoted by the Veneto Region) to combat human trafficking and exploitation
- Awareness-raising activities involving citizens (e.g. *Festa dei Popoli*, *Festa del Volontariato*)
- Regular meetings with the foreign communities most represented in the local area
- Activation of help desks for foreign residents to facilitate communication with public administration
- Recruitment of cultural mediators
- Adult training courses (digital skills and Italian language)
- Support for job-seeking
- Expansion of SAI reception places
- Use of GOL funds
- Welcome initiatives
- Intercultural training courses for early childhood education teachers
- Homework support services
- Projects aimed at preventing early school leaving (e.g. *Street Education Project*)
- Establishment of food banks
- Exemptions from municipal surtax on personal income tax (IRPEF) and waste tax (TARI) for low-income households
- Hospitality projects for foreign and non-EU students
- Opening of intergenerational social spaces
- Grants to associations for cultural, sporting and solidarity events
- Active ageing projects

In response to the question, "To what extent do you consider the resources allocated by the municipality to be adequate for this thematic area?", the answers yielded the following percentages:

How adequate are the existing resources?



Respondents who answered the previous question with “rather inadequate” or “inadequate” were invited to provide brief explanations of the reasons for this shortfall. Two main responses emerged:

- 76.9% of participants stated that financial resources are lacking
- 23.1% reported a lack of human resources dedicated to addressing this issue

- **Key points emerging from the interview phase**

Among the main aspects concerning inclusion and social cohesion, the majority of interviewees emphasised the need to improve efforts to reach younger people and to work with them directly. One factor that cannot be taken for granted is interest and participation itself. While it is possible to work to some extent through school-based projects, these are often constrained by the availability of schools, teachers and school curricula. For this reason, most municipalities develop projects in collaboration with third-sector organisations, parishes and sports centres, and place strong emphasis on social media campaigns.

- **General observations**

The key factor emerging from the research is the strong variability in the interpretation of the concepts of inclusion and social cohesion. Compared to the previous topics, these appear to be subject to wide interpretation both territorially and politically. They are not always identified as priority issues, and responses were often redirected towards other themes addressed earlier.

10. CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Among the objectives set by the project is the formulation of good practices and policy recommendations aimed at supporting the work of administrators and the entities involved in the implementation of social policies. For this reason, on the basis of the academic research conducted and the contributions collected during the workshop with local administrators held at the Human Rights Centre of the University of Padua on 8 July 2025, the following points are highlighted:

- The need to develop action plans accompanied by reference parameters for the evaluation of results and their monitoring (e.g. defining who commits to doing what, for whom, and within what timeframe). For the purposes of accountability and transparency, it would also be useful to establish what happens if commitments are not fulfilled.
- Local administrations consider the activation of forms of horizontal cooperation within their territory to be extremely valuable, in order to enhance and create synergies among their respective resources.
- Municipalities benefit significantly from joining networks of cities and other territorial entities with the aim of promoting the exchange of experiences and mutual learning based on good practices.
- The need to strengthen institutional communication with central government bodies was emphasised, in particular through the creation of a representative body of Italian municipalities to bring the most pressing issues to parliamentary level. Specific reference was made to the critical challenges related to housing policies and the housing emergency: the absence of equitable policies across the Italian territory leads regions to self-organise in order to address problems as quickly as possible. This does not necessarily result in efficient processes (with higher economic and human resource costs) or effective outcomes (including the emergence of social divisions and cases of marginalisation).
- The need to renew certain systems intrinsic to the Public Administration was highlighted. The presence of outdated laws and regulations does not provide sufficient tools to fully address the

challenges posed by current socio-economic contexts (e.g. the absence of linguistic mediators employed as full-fledged staff members; the increase in demand for subsidised housing extending not only to vulnerable households but also to individuals and families who are unable to access housing or rental opportunities on the private market).

- A revision of the concepts of inclusion and social cohesion is needed. The research reveals a high degree of volatility in defining these themes, mainly due to two factors: the absence of clear and effective political prioritisation, and differing political visions. While territorial heterogeneity gives rise to diverse phenomena, all contexts were shown to exhibit social differences that are not necessarily linked to “national” or “citizenship” issues, but rather to the configuration of different social groups (such as older people, persons with disabilities, and marginalised individuals).
- Limited references to the promotion of human rights emerged. In the majority of contributions gathered through the questionnaires and interviews, there is almost no explicit reference to the human rights paradigm as such. By contrast, strong emphasis is placed on aspects of citizenship, knowledge of Italian institutions (both local and national), and electoral processes. Within this framework, references to direct actions aimed at disseminating knowledge of the human rights paradigm are often absent.