

## Methodological note

1522 is the public utility number made available by the Department for Equal Opportunities of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers to support and help victims of gender-based violence and stalking, in line with the provisions of the Istanbul Convention<sup>1</sup>. It is free of charge, guarantees anonymity and covers various forms of violence 24 hours a day, in 9 languages in addition to Italian (English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Farsi, Albanian, Russian, Ukrainian, Portuguese, Polish). This *helpline* provides first-aid information in case of emergency, or useful guidance on the local services and anti-violence centres that victims of violence, or other users, can turn to. The database of services to contact is constantly updated by Regional Administrations and by associations active in the local area: as soon as a new centre, service or help desk is activated, all the information on addresses and how services are provided is supplied, enabling 1522 operators to provide up-to-date and timely guidance.

The information provided during the call is recorded on a computerised platform for which data have been available since January 2013. The analysis of the phenomenon of violence and stalking that emerges from the 1522 data provides a useful picture for understanding its dynamics and characteristics, one that is strikingly close to the profile already found by the sample surveys conducted by ISTAT on the same subject.

Recording takes place following questions asked by the toll-free number operators according to a standardised path, the filter for which is the reason for the call. Depending on the various reasons for the call, the operator enters information and data, reporting what is stated by 1522 users.

Depending on the reason given, calls are classified into two macro-groups:

- Valid calls, from callers who call for information or to request support for themselves, or for other people who are part of their circle of friends and/or family;
- Invalid calls, i.e. calls from users whose purpose is not to ask for help but to joke around or disparage the service, and calls made unintentionally in error.

During 2022 the call-archiving platform was modified, both to update response categories (in line with new forms of violence and new online channels through which violence spreads) and to improve the quality of the information collected, through the adoption of filters that make it possible to better identify the type of caller. For this reason, the tables relating to 2023 mark a break in the series. This release presents tables for the quarters of 2023, 2024 and 2025. The processing carried out on the released data makes it possible to produce tables that are fully comparable between 2023 and 2024, whereas the 2025 data present specific methodological discontinuities, described in a dedicated paragraph further on in this note.

Information on valid calls is broken down into the categories of “users” and “victims”; however, as shown in Table 1, the detailed information on the reasons for calls makes it possible to further distinguish, among users and victims, those who call to ask for help (either for themselves or for others) from those (including victims) who use 1522 to obtain information and not solely to receive help.

The move to a new archiving platform, as noted, responds to the need for greater rigour and statistical quality of the data, but also to the need for a more practical and flexible working tool for the operators responsible for

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<sup>1</sup>The telephone support service for victims of violence is provided for by the Istanbul Convention, which states in Article 24 that governments “take the necessary legislative or other measures to set up state-wide round-the-clock (24/7) telephone helplines free of charge to provide advice to callers, or with due regard for their anonymity, in relation to all forms of violence covered by the scope of this Convention”.

responding to the needs of 1522 users. The standardisation process applied to the database has also made it possible to carry out further data cleaning. This is why some tables show new data even with reference to previous quarters, recovering more precise data and information on the scale of the phenomenon that this service is able to capture, as well as further information on victims and perpetrators (differences are noted in the footnotes to the tables).

Lastly, in this new edition, additional response categories have been added to the previous tables; these are indicated, as they occur, with a footnote in each table.

### **The 2025 data**

The data relating to 2025 combine two different sources: the 1st quarter (January-March) comes from the previous 1522 service manager, while the subsequent quarters (April-December) derive from a monitoring extraction of microdata combining information from the previous and the new manager. The tables on the reasons for calls and on how the service became known are calculated at CALL level: the relevant totals (valid calls, invalid calls, total) are fully additive across the two sources. The tables on the characteristics of violence, on the other hand, are calculated at VICTIM level: for the April-December period, the definition used is the one available in the monitoring extraction whereby it is the caller who self-identifies as a victim (“Interlocutor is a victim = Yes”). This definition is the closest to the criteria adopted for the 1st quarter.

The 2025 data presented here should therefore be read bearing in mind the different approach adopted by the new 1522 manager in conducting phone calls and the new information-recording system: whereas the previous system allowed for one-directional recording (once the reason for the call was selected, the operator proceeded to collect information without being able to go back), the new management system allows the operator, at the end of the conversation with the user, to review and even correct the reasons for the call. The data-collection form is also far more detailed and makes it possible to record instances of violence identified in multi-problem families, where violence is inflicted not only on the victim who calls but also on other members of the household.

In line with the definition adopted in the monitoring, male victims are excluded from the victim count; they are nonetheless counted under the reason “out-of-scope calls”. Lastly, it should be noted that some variables (reason for the call, type of violence in the “total” version, relationship with the perpetrator) allow multiple responses: the sum of the categories may therefore exceed the total number of calls or victims.

Particular attention should be paid to the number of cases involved: since these are calls (by phone or chat) and not persons, the figures and comments always refer to this unit of observation, and not to the user/victim contacting the service. It is in fact possible for the same person to call the toll-free number several times, either for themselves or for others. To date, the system does not check for this, partly for privacy reasons. Likewise, since it is not possible to verify the information collected during the call or the message sent via chat, it is possible for a call to be recorded under the name of a possible caller (other than the victim) when, in reality, it is the same victim who does not wish to report information about themselves. In such cases, since the database captures all the socio-demographic information, the record is marked as a victim.

One final consideration must necessarily be made in order to guide the correct reading of the information reported, closely connected to what has just been indicated: the fact that the database consists of calls (by phone or chat) results in a very high and variable amount of missing data. Calls are often interrupted before the conversation is concluded, and in many cases it is not possible to attribute such missing data (N.A. in the tables) to an unwillingness to respond or to the call being interrupted. Wherever it has been possible to distinguish intentional “no response” from unintentional non-response, this coding has been applied.