

FOSTER CARE IN ITALY: POLICY, STRUCTURE & RESEARCH

**3rd International Network Conference Foster Care Research
Rorschach, 21-23 September 2009**

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Fondazione E. Zancan onlus

Policy and history I

1950-1970 → large residential institutions.

- 1) residential homes should serve local areas to facilitate the maintenance of relationships between children and their families
- 2) they should be “open” rather than “closed” institutions
- 3) they should only accommodate small numbers of children
- 4) they should be organised as family groups



Policy and history II

1970-1980 → community-based residential homes

- 1) Children lived in small groups
- 2) The residential settings were part of local life
- 3) Children had access to services available to other young people in town, such as schools and leisure facilities
- 4) The residential settings maintained close links with other child welfare services



The deep challenge

The fight against institutions represented a deep challenge: how to face the need of these children to be looked after outside of their family, without denying the need of a family for each individual?

→ It was not only a fight against institution but a more ambitious search for innovative solutions for those children who could not stay with their parents



Policy and history III

1980-1990 → towards community services

- 1) They had to respond to the requirements imposed by the local department
- 2) To employ professionals and regulate voluntary workers
- 3) To agree criteria for admission and discharge
- 4) To allow external control and supervision for facilitating the monitoring



The child's right to family life

1983 → law on adoption and foster care

The law allows to limit parental responsibility in situations where the children are at risk and need to be placed with a foster family, or in a community home or residential institution.

The law recognizes that all children have human rights, and states that the family and the wider community is responsible for ensuring that children's developmental needs are satisfactorily met.



Policy and history IV

1990-2000 → focus on planning

- 1) efficiency
- 2) accountability
- 3) cost control
- 4) output



Policy and history V

2000 → the reforms

- 1) A constitutional reform attributes legislative functions regarding social policies to the Regions: this led to a progressive and substantial decentralisation of social policies
- 2) Law 149/2001 on adoption and foster care reinforced the principle that the child has got the right to live in his/her own family and the central, regional and local government must remove the causes that impede to protect the child.



Synthesis

- 1) from central to local management,
- 2) from large institutions to small group settings,
- 3) supporting families (family centres...),
- 4) family-type interventions (law 184/1983...),
- 5) locally rooted (neighborhood, local community, health care district...),
- 6) with new professionals or new functions,
- 7) with new ways for protecting children (ombudsman...),
- 8) with new functions inside services (family mediation...) and new settings (contact centres...)



Definition and structure

Sometimes in a family there can be difficulties and problems arising from the following situations:

- temporary difficulties of parents or serious illness, including mental illness,
- death of one or both parents,
- family breakdown (separation, jail, etc.),
- other factors (social as unemployment, conflicts, parental incapacity, etc.)

→ In some cases, it may be appropriate to place the child with an alternative family or in a family-type setting in order to safeguard the wellbeing.



Foster family care

1. with parents consent: the foster care project is planned and supported by the local social services in collaboration with parents or caregivers who gave their consent to foster care; the judge is updated by the professionals who monitor the case;

2. with Court order: foster care is proposed by the social service, and decided by the Juvenile Court through a court order in all cases in which there isn't the consent of parents or in those cases in which the juvenile court consider it necessary.



Foster family care following the time length

1. Residential foster family care
2. Daily foster care
3. Part-time foster care
4. Brief family foster care
5. Long term foster care
6. Shared custody of children in case of family breakdown



Specialistic foster family care

1. With disabled children
2. With young children
3. With young people

Intra/Etero foster family care

1. Etero-familiare: no blood links
2. Intra-familiare (kinship): to relatives



Reimbursement

Example from the Veneto Region:

→ the foster family can receive € 458,20 per month per child for a residential foster care plus other support such as insurance.

→ If the foster care is part-time, the reimbursement is reduced, sometimes 50% or 30%, depending on the regulation of each municipality or region.

→ This happens only in some cases, depending on the resources



Small community-homes

Nevertheless the high investment in the promotion of foster family care, sometimes it is difficult to find foster families and it can be necessary to place the child in a small family-type community.

In these settings there are at least two adults (preferably a couple with children) who received a specific training for supporting children.

Family-type group: max 6 children

Community home: max 10 children



Data on foster care

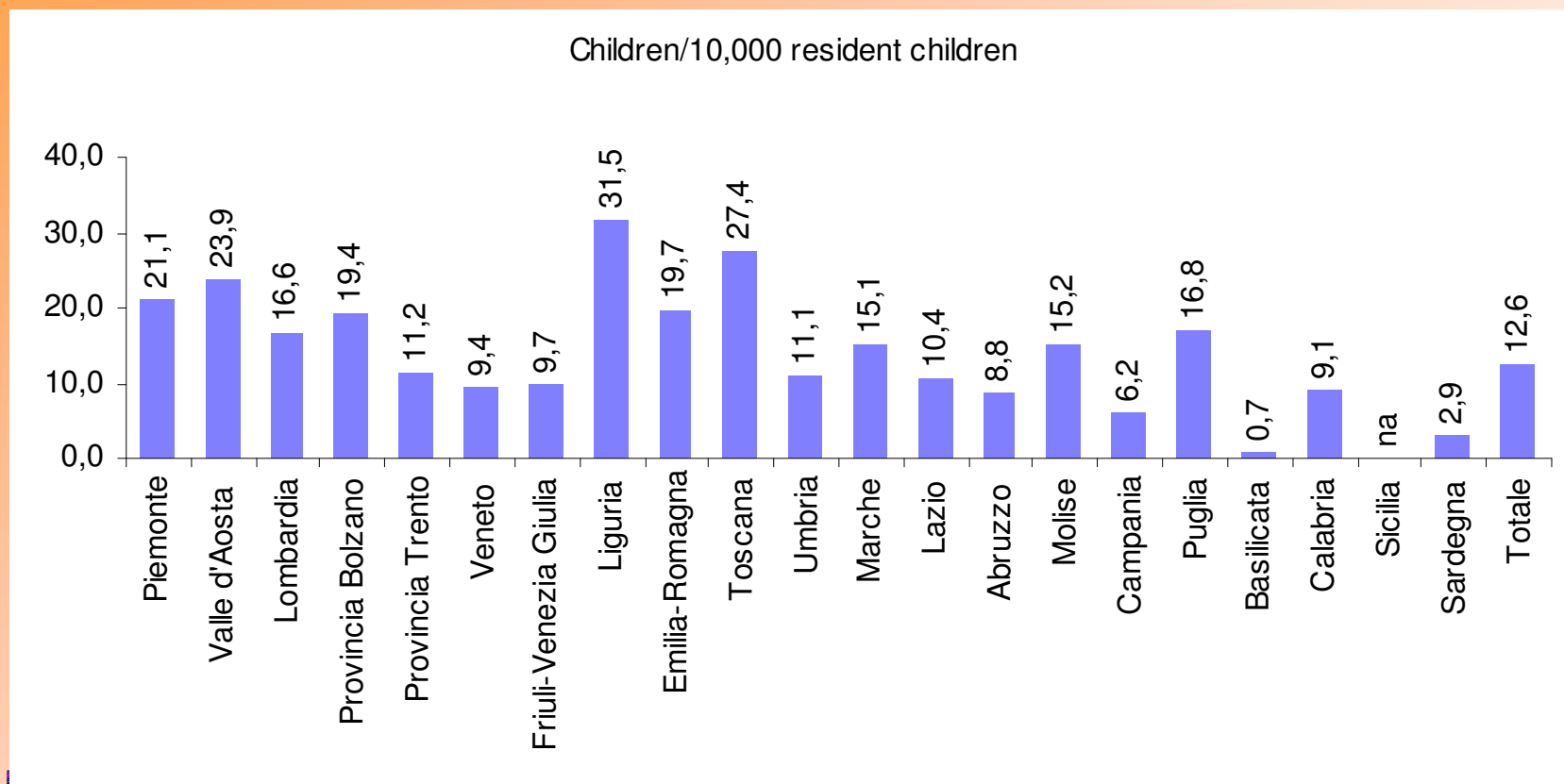
Children and adolescents in foster family care (single, families, relatives) and in residential settings, 2005-2007 (source: www.minori.it)

	Foster family care		Residential settings	
	31.12.2005 (a)	31.12.2007 (b)	31.12.2005 (a)	31.12.2007 (b)
Italy	1251	16304	11543	13037



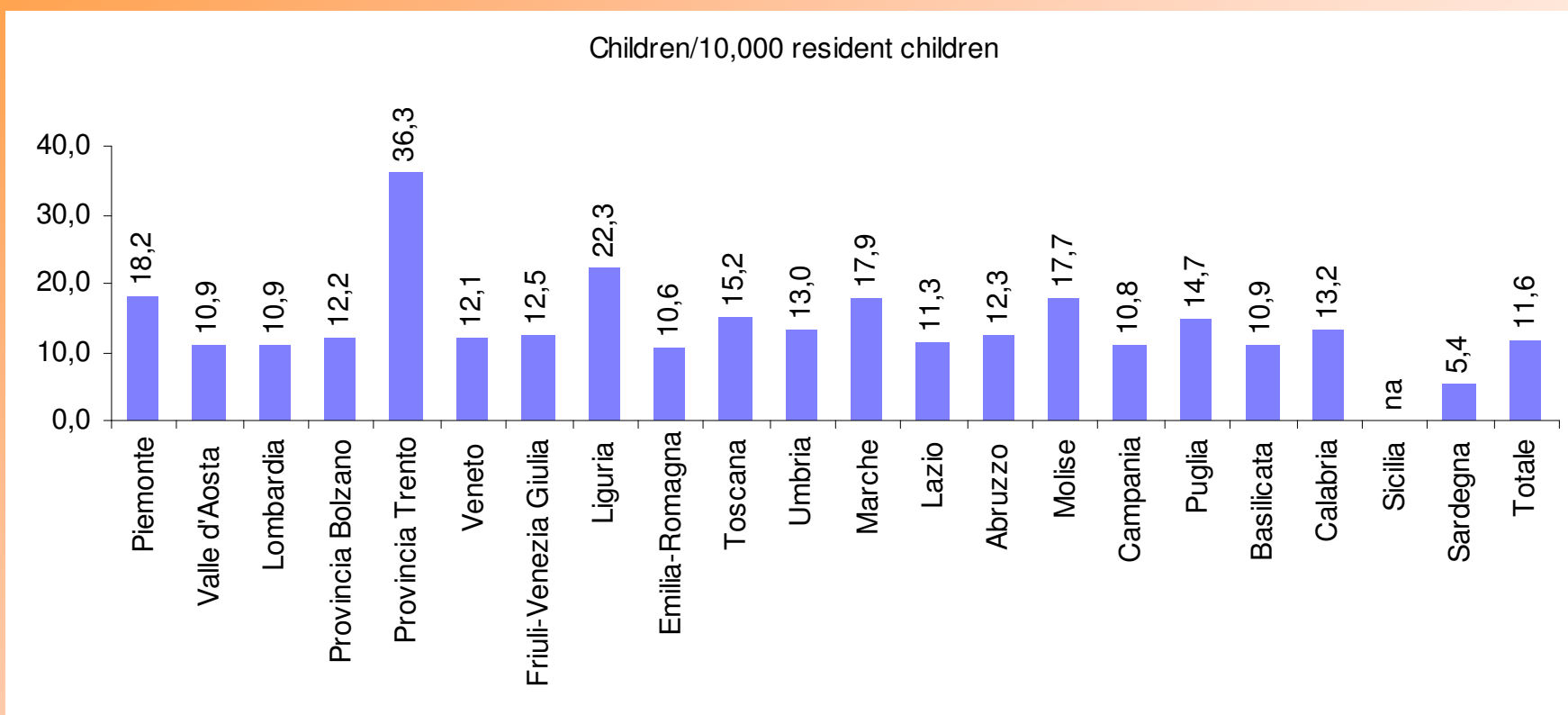
Data on foster care per Region

Children and adolescents in family foster care per Regions/Aut. Province - 31/12/2005 (source: www.minori.it)



Data on foster care per Region

Children and adolescents in residential settings per Regions/Aut. Province - 31/12/2005 (source: www.minori.it)



Case study 1 – Process RV 2008

Promotion	Promotion of solidarity Promotion of fostering	
Information and training	Orientation Increase awareness and knowledge of the process	
Assessment and knowledge	Motivation Competences	
<i>Steps and goals</i>	Matching	Compatible family as regards identity and history
		with the child with the birth family
	Support	Support to the foster family Facilitate access to services Support to birth family
	End and post-plan	Monitoring and evaluation Support to foster family at the end and post foster Support to birth family at the end and post foster



Case study 2 – Monitoring RT 2008

REGIONE TOSCANA **PROGETTO**
LIVELLI BASE DI CITTADINANZA SOCIALE
QUESTIONARIO DI MONITORAGGIO 

[home](#) | [assistenza](#) | [schede dati in pdf](#) | [esci](#)

MINORI | ADULTI | ANZIANI | ACCESSO | ALTRO

home

Assistenza domiciliare educativa
Assistenza domiciliare sociale
Assistenza domiciliare integrata
Adozione
Altri interventi di sostegno alla domiciliarita'
Interventi di natura economica per persone e famiglie in difficolta'
Contributo scuola
Struttura semiresidenziale sociale e sociosanitaria per minori

Usa il menu di sinistra per inserire i dati relativi all'area **minori**

Dati del responsabile gestione dati di zona

Nome

Cognome

Ruolo

Istituzione

Indirizzo



Case study 2 – Monitoring RT 2008

Macro level	Micro level	Sub-categories
Home services	Home care (socio-educational) Home care (social) Integrated home care Adoption	
	Economic support for vulnerable families	Loans Rent/Mortgage Support for health care Income support Social Transportation
	Other home care interventions for supporting families	Reduction in transport fares Housing Meals
Community services	Part-time foster family care	
	School allowance	
	Social and socio-health daily placement	
	Adoption centre	
	Rehabilitation centre	
	Family centre/Centre for counselling	
	Job centre	
School support		
Residential services	Meals	
	Socialization activities	Social aggregation centre Summer/Winter centre Laboratories
	Small residential community	
	Family-type community	
	Apartment for adolescents and young people	
Emergency	Centro di pronta accoglienza per minori	
Social work	Casa di accoglienza e gruppo appartamento	
	Comunità socio riabilitativa	
	Foster family care	
	Social emergency	
	Social work	

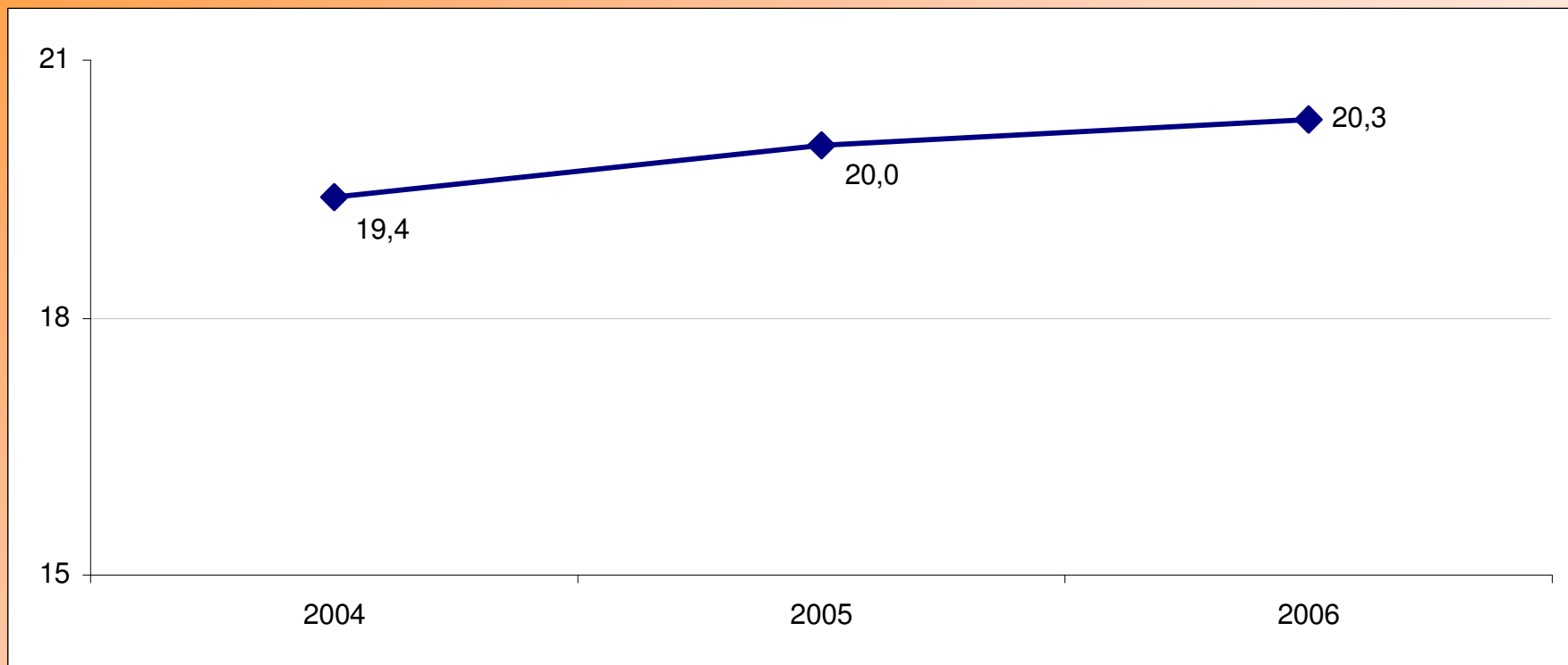


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	Residential services	Small residential community
Family-type community		
Apartment for adolescents and young people		
Centro di pronta accoglienza per minori		
Casa di accoglienza e gruppo appartamento		
Comunità socio riabilitativa		
Foster family care		
Emergency	Social emergency	
Social work	Social work	



Case study 3 – Cost of foster and residential care (Italy)



Research

- Foster care of non accompanied children
- Foster care with disabled children
- Share custody of children
- Foster care in different regional welfare
- The risk of placement (risc-research)



Experimental research



Abruzzo

Basilicata

Emilia

Romagna

Piemonte

Toscana

Veneto



Thank you!

**for information:
cinziacanalifondazionezancan.it**



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