

The Same-Sex Civil Unions in Italy

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1. The same-sex civil unions in Italy

In May 2016, the Italian parliament approved the Law introducing the civil unions between people of the same-sex (Regolamentazione delle unioni civili tra persone dello stesso sesso e disciplina delle convivenze. Legge 20 maggio 2016 n. 76), called «Legge Cirinnà».

The Law establishes:

- two people of the same-sex, aged 18 years and over, can celebrate a civil union;
- through the same-sex civil union, people change marital status;
- same-sex couples who had married abroad before that the law were issued can register civil union in Italy without a new celebration.

In Italy, the celebration of the same-sex civil unions has begun in July 2016 after the enactment of the Implementing Regulation.

2. The sources

After the enactment of Cirinnà Law, since the edition 2016 the National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT) has introduced in the survey on Registered Civil Status Events the section relating to the constitution of same-sex civil unions celebrated in the Italian municipalities (about 7,900), by gender of the partners (both males, both females).

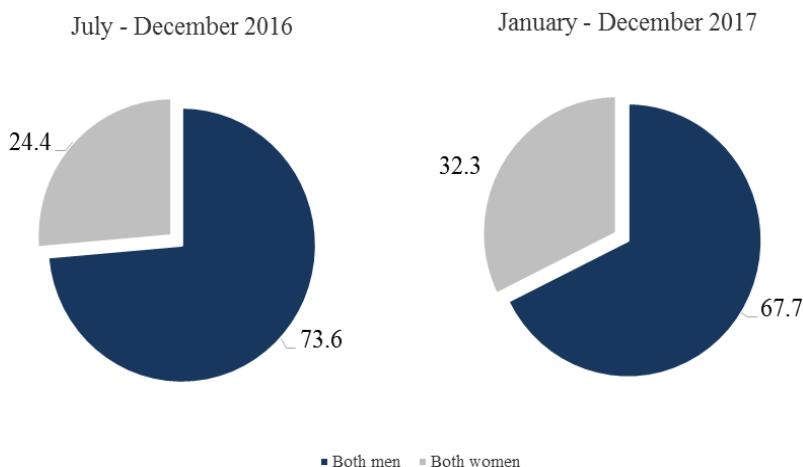
The aggregated data collected by ISTAT at municipality level allowed, for the first time, the accounting of the same-sex civil unions constituted in Italy from July 2016 to December 2017. Furthermore, in the survey “*Resident Population by Age, Sex and Marital Status*” carried out by ISTAT on the resident population of the Italian municipalities (about 7,900), broken down by gender, cohort and marital status at January 1st of each year, in the edition 2018 for the first time has been collected for the marital status the same-sex civil partner.

From January 2018 ISTAT has started the individual survey of same-sex civil unions celebrated in Italy. The individual data collected by ISTAT, at municipality level, will allow gathering more information on the people who celebrate the same-sex civil unions.

3. Aims, methods and work hypothesis

In Italy, from July 2016 to December 2017, 6,712 same-sex civil unions have been constituted (2,336 in the second half of 2016 and 4,376 in 2017). Couples of men are prevalent (4,682 unions, equal to 69.8% of the total), while in 2017 the percentage of couples of women increases compared to 2016 (Figure 1).

Figure 1 – Same-sex civil unions in Italy, by sex. Years 2016 e 2017, percentage values



Source: Istat, Registered Civil Status Events

Over the years 2016-2017, the aggregated data collected by ISTAT at municipality level did not allow having detailed information on the socio-demographic characteristics of the people who celebrated (or registered) a same-sex civil. Therefore, an attempt has been made to estimate these characteristics through the analysis of Municipal Registry Data at January 1st 2017 and at January 1st 2018.

In Italy, a quarter of same-sex civil partners lives in Turin, Milan and Rome. The registers of the municipalities in which the phenomenon immediately assumed particular importance, as in the case of Turin, Milan and Rome, were among those that more quickly updated their archives, noting the mode ‘same-sex civil partners’ in the classification of marital status (Figure 2).

Figure 2 – Residents who have a same-sex civil partner, at January 1st 2017 and 2018, by municipalities and sex

| CITIES | Men | Women | Total | Men | Women | Total | Men | Women | Total |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------|--------------|-------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------------------|------------|------------|
| | Absolute values | | | Percentage values | | | Rates by 1,000 residents | | |
| | January 1 st 2017 | | | | | | | | |
| Torino | 147 | 48 | 195 | 75.4 | 24.6 | 100.0 | 0.3 | 0.1 | 0.2 |
| Milano | 388 | 109 | 497 | 78.1 | 21.9 | 100.0 | 0.6 | 0.2 | 0.4 |
| Roma | 325 | 106 | 431 | 75.4 | 24.6 | 100.0 | 0.2 | 0.1 | 0.2 |
| Total | 860 | 263 | 1,123 | 76.6 | 23.4 | 100.0 | 0.4 | 0.1 | 0.2 |
| January 1 st 2018 | | | | | | | | | |
| Torino | 381 | 175 | 556 | 68.5 | 31.5 | 100.0 | 0.9 | 0.4 | 0.6 |
| Milano | 977 | 251 | 1,228 | 79.6 | 20.4 | 100.0 | 1.5 | 0.4 | 0.9 |
| Roma | 1,084 | 410 | 1,494 | 72.6 | 27.4 | 100.0 | 0.8 | 0.3 | 0.5 |
| Total | 2,442 | 836 | 3,278 | 74.5 | 25.5 | 100.0 | 1.0 | 0.3 | 0.6 |

Source: Estimation on Municipal Registry Data.

Starting from the number of persons registered in the Municipal Registry Data at January 1st 2018 as “same-sex civil partner”, it was possible to estimate the residents in these cities who have celebrated a same-sex civil union during 2017 from those who have celebrated it during 2016.

The method consists in a record linkage at individual level by comparing data at January 1st 2018 and January 1st 2017. The method has allowed estimating the number of people who probably have celebrated or have registered the union in 2017 by analysing possible changes in marital status in the previous year.

The analysis of the demographic characteristics of the two population groups has revealed interesting results.

Moreover, the availability of more recent official data will allow investigating further characteristics both of the same-sex civil unions constituted in Italy and of the partners.

References

Istat (2018), *Resident population by marital status*, Istat, September 6 2018,
<https://www.istat.it/it/archivio/220713>