Missing voices: The absence of women from Italy's COVID-19 pandemic response

Journal:	*Gender in Management: an International Journal*
Manuscript ID	GM-07-2020-0218
Manuscript Type:	Original Article
Keywords:	Covid-19 pandemic, gender inequalities, Leadership, social justice, #DateciVoce

SCHOLARONE™
Manuscripts

Missing voices: The absence of women from Italy's COVID-19 pandemic response

Purpose:

This article explores the role of Italian women in society and at work during the pandemic. Specifically, it analyses Italian women's positioning in the work context and in the leadership coordinating the national response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Design/methodology/approach:

Inspired by feminist thinking addressing recent debates on women's livelihoods at the time of Covid-19, the article focuses on Italy's gendered response to the pandemic and its exclusion of women from decision-making roles in the management of the pandemic and the subsequent post-pandemic socio-economic recovery. Drawing on recent studies and media contributions it provides a thought-provoking analysis embedded in the country's history and culture.

Findings:

Despite their high involvement in the daily management of the pandemic, as key workers and family carers, Italian women's voices have remained unheard and concealed, even in face of movements towards their recognition (#DateciVoce). We trace this lack of inclusion in the sedimented gender inequalities characteristic of the Italian socio-political-economic context, combined with the effects of Covid-19. We suggest that the country needs a long overdue and radical shift towards the centring of women and their contributions in work and society.

Originality: The article offers insights into the gendered pandemic response of one of the first and worst affected countries. It specifically addresses women's continued marginalisation in the political arena vis-à-vis their key role in supporting the country's economy.

Key words

Covid-19 pandemic, gender inequalities, leadership, social justice, #DateciVoce

Introduction

The Covid-19 pandemic has brought to brighter light social inequalities concerning gender, race, and class. While men of colour are dying in higher number from the virus, women's livelihood and quality of life have been greatly affected by the pandemic (Doward, 2020; Gross, 2020). Research has shown that women are employed in higher numbers in jobs that have lower access to remote working, lower pay, and a higher exposure to occupational risks (He and Torres, 2020). In fact, during the pandemic lockdown the sectors that have remained active such as health and social care, essential retail and education employ up to 77% women (WBG, 2020). Yet, such 'key work' is generally precarious, low paid and exposed to higher risk of contagion.

In Italy, 12% of men and 28% of women work in professions with high risk of infection (Moducci, 2020). More specifically, women make up two-thirds of Italy's health workers, 90% of home care workers, approximately 70% of nurses, 80% of cashiers in supermarkets and nearly 82% of teachers (Politico, 2020). This horizontal segregation, combined with a lack of personal protection equipment, makes women more vulnerable to Covid-19 contagion, with 70% of women who contracted the virus being infected at work (Poggio, 2020). Simultaneously, since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, Italy has also seen, at the policy-making level, a lack of women's inclusion in national responses to the pandemic; a higher number of women than men whose jobs could not be converted to telematic work; and a problematic and significant increase of domestic violence and aggression against women by cohabiting partners (Cristoferi and Fonte, 2020).

On May 4, 2020, Italy started its 'phase two' of the lockdown lifting, with non-essential retailers opening for business, such as construction sites, manufacturers in the textile, fashion and automotive industries, furniture makers, functional wholesale traders and exports. It has been estimated that 2.7 million workers were back in work on May the 4th. Of these workers, 72% are men, leaving a high number of women managing home working and full-time childcare, in view of the closure of schools and child-care services (Casarico and Lattanzio, 2020; Amato, 2020). As the country attempts to restart its economic activities, women's position in the labour market remains precarious. Female-dominated sectors such as retail, tourism and part of the service economy that have closed or reduced their activities during the lockdown will continue to be negatively affected in the post-pandemic economy, with predictions for a reduction of GDP to the same levels as 1995 (Johnson and Ghiglione, 2020). Along with this, the pandemic has decreased the quality of life for women, who reported an increase on an already high level of housework responsibility, also due to the inability to have external help as a consequence of the lockdown. In Italy, 68% of working women with partners have dedicated more time to housework during the lockdown than before; interestingly, only

40% of men did the same (Del Boca et al, 2020). Similar disparities were found in relation to the sharing of home schooling and childcare responsibilities. In the midst of the social, economic and political contradictions that have been heightened during the pandemic, gender, class and racial inequalities became more evident than ever.

In this article we analyse the gendering of Covid-19 in the Italian context and discuss the practices that have excluded women from participating to decision-making regarding the responses to the pandemic and the subsequent management of the post-pandemic socio-economic recovery. In order to do so, we first explore the socio-political-cultural patterns that underpin the social injustices that have characterised the Italian response to Covid-19. Subsequently we analyse the gendering of COVID-19 leadership, before offering some reflections and suggestions for a future that accounts for greater gender inclusion.

The Italian socio-political-cultural context

The Italian strong feminist tradition, which started in the renaissance period (Ross, 2009) has been deeply affected by the country's historical legacy, specifically its fascist past and its governments' entanglement with the Catholic Church. Both fascism and Catholicism envisage woman's duty to be procreation, placing great emphasis on women's role within the traditional family (Pecis and Priola, 2019). The effects of such influences continue to be felt to date as the feminist movement renews its attempts to dismantle representations of women as objects of desire and/or located in the realm of the house (as wives and mothers). These coexist alongside enduring representations of the virile, macho, breadwinner man (Pozzo, 2013). This is confirmed by current statistics that reveal that approximately 33% of Italian women work part-time, with 74% of women admitting that male partners do not participate to household labour (Ferrario and Profeta, 2020). In the 1970s and 1980s, the feminist movement won battles leading to legislations on divorce, abortion, honour killing and violence against women. Since then, there have been many set-backs for the movement in Italy as recent governments, in particular those led by Silvio Berlusconi and more recent coalitions, have reinforced discourses of women's objectification (as sexual objects) or 'sanctification' (as angels, Madonnas and mothers) (Coladonato, 2014). This picture rests against a backdrop of a greater proportion of women with higher education qualifications than men (Istat, 2019).

Social pressures for change, concerning greater participation of women in the labour market, greater formal support for alternative models of family, including same-sex marriages, are part of political agendas of many groups in the country (including some political parties) (Pecis and Priola, 2019). Nonetheless, Italy still has the lowest gender equality index in the EU (EIGE, 2019), and one of the lowest percentage of women's participation in the labour market (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2018), at 56.2% as compared to an EU28 average of 68.3% (Carta, 2019). Differently, Italian men reach a 75.1% participation rate, as compared to the 78.2% EU28 average. Yet, as mentioned, women in Italy have higher education levels than men, and are present in many highly skilled jobs, albeit remaining in positions of low authority and responsibility. For example, among those holding a Ph.D., 54% are women; yet they struggle to secure stable jobs and remain in precariat positions for longer time than men holding a Ph.D. (Sabbadini, 2020). Gender differences of highly skilled professionals are also evidenced in the type of occupation, with more men occupying highly remunerated roles. More broadly, women with an undergraduate degree find it more difficult to get a job than men with equivalent qualifications (Sabbadini, 2020). Vertical segregation remains high with 27% of women in managerial positions, compared to 33.9% in the EU (Moresco, 2020). For young women (15-24 years of age) the unemployment rate reaches 34.8%, far above the 14.5% EU average (Censis, 2019). In other words, studying does not help young Italian women to get a job, let alone one appropriate for their level of education.

Such socio-political-economic context, combined with the effects of Covid-19, has a strong impact on women's lives and work. This is evident in the dramatic differences between the presence of women in front line work and their absence from decision-making positions in politics and the economy, including in decisions regarding the management of the Covid-19 emergency and the planning of the post-pandemic recovery.

The Gendering of COVID-19 Leadership

Media reports have shown that among the countries that have managed to limit the negative effects of the coronavirus are countries led by women, such as New Zealand, Norway, Germany, Denmark, Taiwan, Finland and Iceland among others (Wittenberg-Cox, 2020). On the other hand, countries who have excluded women from leadership roles in the response to coronavirus, such as Italy, the UK and the USA, have had a higher number of deaths and longest period of emergency. These countries have also failed, so far, to consider the disproportionate impact that coronavirus has and will have on women in relation to economic opportunities, work-life balance, gender and domestic violence (CARE, 2020). The charity CARE has surveyed 30 countries[i] across the global north and global south and revealed that 74% of these had less than one-third female membership in national committees established to respond to the Covid-19 emergency, with only one country having equal representation. Italy was not included in the CARE's study but it is interesting to highlight that one of the findings reported is that those "countries that have more women in leadership, as measured by the Council on Foreign Relations Women's Power Index, are more likely to deliver responses that consider the effects of the coronavirus crisis on women and girls. On average, the higher the country's score on the index, the more likely it was to craft a gendered response" (p. 4).

The expectation of care placed on women in the Italian society, clashes with expectations of hegemonic masculinity placed on positions of authority. This was evident in the first stage of the coronavirus emergency when women were completely excluded from the political management of the pandemic. No woman, in fact, was included in the team of experts advising the government and no woman - apart from the sign-language interpreter - was included in the daily briefings of the civil protection. This is despite the fact that it was three Italian women scientists who first isolated the sequence of the coronavirus (one of whom was a precarious worker)[ii] and that a high number of women (many in precarious or zero-hours contracts) were providing the essential services in healthcare, essential retail, logistic, education and child-care. While the "crisis reaffirmed the importance of welfare, not only with reference to the health service, of which virtues and limits emerged" (Workers Inquiry Network, 2020: 40), the state continued to rely on low and unpaid women's work to cover the gaps of the welfare system, as more and more people were losing their livelihood.

The coronavirus crisis has exposed the inadequacy of the attempted heroic leadership of the prime minister Conte and his collaborators, evident in the war metaphors used to communicate the government 'battles' against the virus. Despite Conte's attempts to exercise a moral leadership, evidently strong, legitimate and present (Gabriel, 2015), he clearly failed to demonstrate a consistent and empathetic duty of care. According to Thomkins (2020: 339), in times of crisis an effective leadership extends beyond the physical presence of the leader, who "must embody and enact their care by surviving distressing situations without deflecting, retaliating or crumbling. They need to do this for their own legitimacy and survival, but they also need to do this for our well-being and our efforts to nurture our capacity for self-care". As many Italians struggled to maintain a lucid sense of self-care in front of images of dozens of dead bodies been carried away from hospital morgues by the army, and of overwhelmed health care professionals, powerless in their efforts to save lives, their primordial need for a caring leadership revealed the void of a more feminine style of leadership. The intimate engagement, emotional resilience, and efficiency of women leaders such as Jacinda Ardern, the prime minister of New Zealand, drew further attention to the complete absence of women from leadership positions in the management of the pandemic in Italy.

The blatant exclusion of women from the national-level response to Covid-19 was met with political action in the form of mass mobilisation by civil society, social and political groups, including women parliamentarians, who campaigned in the traditional and social media (#DateciVoce – translated as #GiveUsVoice), requesting the inclusion of women in the task force set up to manage the Covid-19 national response. The two main task forces were initially composed of 90% men, one of which did not include any woman. On the 4th of May the prime minister Conte announced the inclusion of six women scientists to join the coronavirus technical-scientific committee of the civil protection, composed of twenty men scientists (led by Angelo Borrelli) who advised the government since the early days of the emergency. He also announced the inclusion of another five women experts (they were initially four out of 17) to the task force handling phase two (led by Vittorio Colao), aiming at bringing the country out of the crisis. The exclusion of women from decision-making at national level was denounced as the absence of an indispensable condition of democracy. A country that systematically excludes women from decision-making blocks the feminine perspective from influencing decisions regarding access, capabilities and potential actions that affect women's lives and their position in work and society.

Reflections: a future for Italy after the pandemic

What explains this exacerbation of deeply embedded gender inequalities in Italy? Why is the country still struggling to be on a par with its European counterparts? And why are there competent women whose voices have been marginalised during the COVID-19 crisis?

We propose that the answers to these questions lie in the rooted social and cultural notions of what constitute and reward competence (Ely and Meyerson, 2000), as well as an inability of 'letting go' a problematic cultural legacy of political entanglements with Catholic and fascist ideologies. Both traditions are embedded in patriarchal precepts that position women within the remit of the house (Pecis and Priola, 2019). These deeply rooted assumptions might explain some of the main obstacles to women's participation in decision-making roles, in politics and organisations that generally prevail over women's competences and abilities. This is also echoed in parental policies and their impact on mothers' employment choices (de Simone et al, 2018). According to Istat (2019), 11% of Italian women with a child has never worked since the birth of their child (as compared to an EU average of 3.7%), with regional differences strongly emerging (1 out of 5 women in the south of Italy declares to have never worked post maternity).

We suggest that to counteract these inequalities, two strategies are needed. First, Italian women are blocked in access to positions of decision-making by the differential structures of opportunity and power (Ely and Meyerson, 2000). Thus, institutional and policy interventions are needed to address the lack of equal access and opportunities. These include the remake of processes of hiring and promoting (at the local and state levels of governance), often based on clientelism rather than meritocracy, and the dismantling of structural discriminatory processes based on masculine practices that exclude women and femininity from positions of authority and decision-making (Kanter, 1977). Policy-based intervention would need to be supported by efficient and affordable public care services, such as children nurseries, after-school services and care services for the elderly. Public children nurseries for infant from 3 month to 3 years of age, in particular, are too few and cover only 6 per cent of the age group (NCEE, 2006).

Pre-pandemic Istat data (2019) shows that on average only 31% of families with children below 14 years of age make use of public or private services for care, with an over reliance on grandparents and friends for tapping into the gaps left from public services (De Simone and Priola, 2015). This has particularly emerged at the time of COVID-19, when non-cohabiting grandparents were shielded and could not fill the gap of care caused by the schools' shutdown and the absence of targeted policies. We suggest policy changes that are more attuned to the diversity of contemporary Italian families (single parents, dual earners, separated and/or recomposed families, and non-heterosexual parenting models) are needed. This should be accompanied by cultural changes regarding the recognition and expectation that fathers do want and should be part of childcare work, by taking on caring and emotional responsibilities of the family (Pecis and Priola, 2019).

Second, we argue that addressing inequalities through equal opportunities policies is not enough. These policies still accommodate existing systems but do not fundamentally challenge the status quo (Ely and Meyerson, 2000). We suggest that much of the challenges encountered by Italian women in having their voice heard when it comes to making decisions that directly (and mostly) affect them, lay on a cultural misrecognition of women's contributions and value. Patterns of cultural value (Fraser, 2003) perversely deny Italian women the recognition needed to be fully participative in the economic and political arenas. Women's status remains subordinate to the one of men, due to different institutionalised patterns, reinforced in the pandemic crisis. First, the use of a war-like language and metaphors to describe and address the pandemic by institutional leaders (e.g. as a battle, a war to be won) is detrimental because it positions men (and masculinity) as those that can best strategize and fight the war. To this, women may contribute from the margins as support figures – mainly at home by caring for the family whilst possibly working remotely or doing the care work in hospitals and care homes. This does not match with the vast presence of women working in laboratories to find measures to contain the virus, nor with their increasing education levels.

At last, one of the biggest challenges remains the changing attitudes of both women and men towards care and domestic work. According to Ipsos data (as reported by Profeta and Ferrario, 2020), 71% of the men interviewed agreed that for women paid work is important but what women really want is a home with children. Only 18% of women and 18% of men interviewed believe that fathers are as capable of caring for children as women are; and only 14% of women think that working mothers are as capable as non-working mothers to establish an intense and safe relationship with their children. These figures show a daunting prospect for new generations that seem trapped in a cultural pattern based on a patriarchal understanding of family roles, and that affects women's recognition of valuable work outside the house. We also argue that cultural models based on patriarchy and hegemonic masculinity (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005) support traditional discourses of manhood, associated with the figure of the breadwinner (Cockburn, 1991) that continue to influence construction of contemporary Italian masculinities (Pecis and Priola, 2019), and place women in marginalised positions.

Calls for social justice through the recognition of women's value in society as on a par with men's have been evidenced in recent feminist movements and outcries for the continuing violence against women. In 2019, during a manifestation for the international women's day, a group of feminist activists - part of the movement 'Non una di meno'- painted in pink the statue of Indro Montanelli (prominent figure of Italian journalism who in the colonisation of Ethiopia in the 1930s bought and had a sexual relation with a 12-year-old girl). The protest raised attention towards the acceptance of urban symbols as reminders of gender and race violence linked to the fascist past - still marking the country's present. It seems hard to dismantle such assumptions, but we hope the aftermath of the pandemic crisis might bring a more social just future for women living in Italy.

References

Amato, R. (2020), “La pandemia aggrava la condizione femminile: Il 72% dei lavoratori che rientrano il 4 maggio sono uomini”. *La Repubblica,* 01/05/2020. Available at https://www.repubblica.it/economia/2020/05/01/news/il_72_dei_lavoratori_che_rientrano_il_4_maggio_sono_uomini_donne_italiane_ancora_piu_a_rischio-255370123/ (accessed on 12/06/2020)

CARE (2020), “Where are the women? The Conspicuous Absence of Women in COVID-19 Response Teams and Plans, and Why We Need Them”. Available at https://insights.careinternational.org.uk/media/k2/attachments/CARE_COVID-19-womens-leadership-report_June-2020.pdf (accessed on 12/06/2020)

Carta, F. (2019), “*Female labour supply in Italy: the role of parental leave and child care policies*”. Report for Banca d’Italia. Number 539 – December 2019. Available at https://www.bancaditalia.it/pubblicazioni/qef/2019-0539/QEF_539_19.pdf (accessed on 12/06/2020)

Casarico, A. and Lattanzio, S. (2020), “Nella “fase 2” a casa giovani e donne”. *La voce.* Available at https://www.lavoce.info/archives/66106/nella-fase-2-a-casa-giovani-e-donne/ (last accessed on 12/06/2020)

Censis (2019), “Donne: lontane dagli uomini e lontane dall’Europa, il gender gap nel lavoro.” Available at https://www.censis.it/sicurezza-e-cittadinanza/donne-lontane-dagli-uomini-e-lontane-dall’europa-il-gender-gap-nel-lavoro (accessed on 12/06/2020).

Cockburn, C. (1991), “I*n the way of men: Men's resistance to sex equality in organizations*.” London, UK: Macmillan.

Coladonato, V. (2014), “Virilità fascista e mascolinità berlusconiana nella ricezione di Vincere” [Fascist virility and Berlusconian masculinity in Vincere]. *Gender/Sexuality/Italy*. Available at http://www.gendersexualityitaly.com/321/ (accessed on 17/07/2020)

Connell, R. W., & Messerschmidt, J. W. (2005). Hegemonic masculinity: Rethinking the concept. *Gender and Society, 19*(6), 829–859.

Cristoferi, C., and Fonte, G. (2020), “In Italy, support groups fear lockdown is silencing domestic abuse victims.” Available at: https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-italy-violence-idUSKBN21M0PM (accessed on 12/06/2020)

Del Boca, D., Oggero, N., Profeta, P., Rossi M. C., and Villosio, C. 2020. “Prima, durante e dopo Covid-19: disuguaglianza in famiglia.” *La Voce*. Available at https://www.lavoce.info/archives/66645/prima-durante-e-dopo-covid-19-disuguaglianza-in-famiglia/ (accessed on 12/06/2020).

De Simone, S. and Priola, V. (2015), “‘What’s women’s work?’ Work-family Interface among women entrepreneurs in Italy”. In Broadbridge A. and Fielden S. (Eds) *Handbook of Gendered Careers in Management: Getting In, Getting On, Getting Out.* Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd.

De Simone, S., Putzu, D., Lasio, D. & Serri, F. (2018), “The hegemonic gender order in politics.” *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.* 37 (8), 832-846.

European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), (2019), “*Gender Equality Index*.” Available at https://eige.europa.eu/gender-equality-index/2019 (accessed on 12/06/2020).

Doward, J. (2020), “One third of UK women are suffering from lockdown loneliness.” Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jun/14/one-third-of-uk-women-are-suffering-from-lockdown-loneliness (accessed on 17/07/2020).

Ely, R. J., & Meyerson, D. E. (2000), “Theories of gender in organizations: A new approach to organizational analysis and change.” *Research in organizational behavior*, 22, 103-151.

Ferrario, T. and Profeta, P. (2020). “*Covid: un paese in bilico tra rischi e opportunità. Donne in prima linea*.” Laboratorio Futuro. Istituto Toniolo. Available at http://laboratoriofuturo.it/ricerche/covid-un-paese-in-bilico-tra-rischi-e-opportunita-donne-in-prima-linea/ (accessed on 12/06/2020)

Fraser, N. (2003), “Social Justice in the age of identity politics: redistribution, recognition and participation.” In Fraser, N., & Honneth, A. (eds). *Redistribution or recognition?: a political-philosophical exchange*. Verso, pp.7-109.

Gabriel Y (2015), “The caring leader: What followers expect of their leaders and why?”, *Leadership,* 11(3): 316–334.

Gross, T. (2020), “Pandemic Makes Evident 'Grotesque' Gender Inequality In Household Work.” NPR. Available at https://www.npr.org/2020/05/21/860091230/pandemic-makes-evident-grotesque-gender-inequality-in-household-work (accessed on 17/07/2020).

He, H., and Torres, N. (2020), "Women Are Bearing the Brunt of the Covid-19 Economic Pain." Available at https://www.bloomberg.com/graphics/2020-opinion-coronavirus-gender-economic-impact-job-numbers/ (accessed on 12/06/2020).

Istat (2019), "Conciliazione tra lavoro e famiglia." Available at https://www.istat.it/it/files/2019/11/Report-Conciliazione-lavoro-e-famiglia.pdf (accessed on 12/06/2020).

Johnson, M. and Ghiglione, D (2020), "Italy's record casts shadows over hopes of post-Covid recovery." *Financial Times* 21/05/2020. Available at https://www.ft.com/content/e777c1ef-c031-42f1-8cb2-610920f7efbb (accessed on 15/06/2020).

Kanter, R. M. (1977), "*Men and women of the corporation*". New York: Basic books.

Moducci, R. (2020), "*Attività conoscitiva preliminare all'esame del Documento di economia e finanza 2020*." Presented at V Commissione "Bilancio, tesoro e programmazione" della Camera dei Deputati 5a Commissione "Bilancio" del Senato della Repubblica Roma, 28/04/2020. Available at https://www.istat.it/it/files//2020/04/Istat_Audizione-DEF_28aprile2020.pdf (accessed on 12/06/2020)

Moresco, C. (2020), "Un' Italia da disoccupate, tra famiglia e poche chance di carriera." *La Repubblica*, 20/01/2020. Available at https://www.repubblica.it/dossier/cronaca/gender-gap-le-donne-presentano-il-conto/2019/11/29/news/un_italia_da_disoccupate_tra_famiglia_e_poche_chance_di_carriera-242194757/ (accessed on 12/06/2020).

National Centre on Education and the Economy [NCEE] (2006), "*Italy Education Report*." Available at http://ncee.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Italy-Education-Report.pdf (accessed on 15/06/2020).

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2018), "*Closing the gender gap: Act now*." Paris, France: Author. Available at https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/close-the-gender-gap-now_9789264179370-en (accessed on 06/06/2020).

Pecis L, Priola V. (2019), "The 'new industrial man' as unhero: Doing postfeminist masculinities in an Italian pharmacological research centre." *Gender Work and Organisation*, 26: 1413–1432.

Poggio, B. (2020), "*COVID e squilibri di genere*." Online Presentation on 11/06/2020.

Politico (2020), “Italy’s ‘boys’ club’ politics shuts women out of coronavirus debate.” Available at https://www.politico.eu/article/coronavirus-italy-women-political-debate/ (accessed on 06/06/2020)

Pozzo, B. (2013), “Masculinity Italian style.” *Nevada Law Journal*, 13, 585-618

Profeta, P. and Ferrario, T. (2020), “Covid: un paese in bilico tra rischi e opportunità. Donne in prima linea.” *Il Corriere della Sera. La Ventisettesima Ora.* Available at: https://27esimaora.corriere.it/20_aprile_29/covid-paese-bilico-rischi-opportunita-donne-prima-linea-ad610dc0-8a4d-11ea-94d3-9879860c12b6.shtml (accessed on 12/06/2020).

Ross, S.G. (2009), “*The Birth of Feminism: Women as intellect in renaissance Italy and England*.” Harvard University Press.

Sabbadini, L. L. (2020), “*Misure a sostegno della partecipazione delle donne al mercato del lavoro e per la conciliazione delle esigenze di vita e di lavoro*.” Presented at XI Commissione Lavoro pubblico e private, Camera dei deputati Roma, 26/02/2020. Available at https://www.istat.it/it/files/2020/02/Memoria_Istat_Audizione-26-febbraio-2020.pdf (accessed on 12/06/2020)

Thomkins, L. (2020), “Where is Boris Johnson? When and why it matters that leaders show up in a crisis.” *Leadership*,16(3), 331-342.

Wittenberg-Cox A. (2020), “What Do Countries With The Best Coronavirus Responses Have In Common? Women Leaders.” *Forbes*, 13/04/2020. Available at https://www.forbes.com/sites/avivahwittenbergcox/2020/04/13/what-do-countries-with-the-best-coronavirus-reponses-have-in-common-women-leaders/#75ef00e73dec (accessed on 12/06/2020).

Women’s Budget Group (2020), “*Crises Collide: Women and Covid-19*”. Available at: https://wbg.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/FINAL.pdf (accessed on 28/05/2020).

Workers Inquiry Network (2020), “*Struggle in a Pandemic. A Collection of Contributions on the COVID-19 Crisis*.” Available at https://notesfrombelow.org/media/other/Struggle-in-a-Pandemic-FINAL.pdf (accessed on 12/06/2020).

---

[i] The 30 countries are: Australia, Bangladesh, Brazil, Canada, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Germany, Guinea, India, Jordan, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mexico, Myanmar, New Zealand, Niger, Norway, Pakistan, Rwanda, South Africa, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Turkey, UK, USA.

[ii] The three researchers are Maria Capobianchi**,** Concetta Castilletti and Francesca Colavita and work at the Spallanzani institute for infectious disease in Rome.