



ISTITUTO NAZIONALE
DI GEOFISICA E VULCANOLOGIA

**THE CONFIDENTIAL COUNSELLOR
IN A RESEARCH INSTITUTION:**
A bridge towards the prevention of harassment.

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#wetooinscience

*Sexual Harassment in Higher Education Institutions and
Research Performing Organizations*

Pisa, 21 September 2018

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*The Confidential Counsellor in a Research Institution:
A bridge towards the prevention of harassment*

Research Institutions play a key role in the innovation process, interacting with Universities, governmental bodies, private sector and, other diverse stakeholders.

An appropriate management multi-faceted approach needs to be adopted in the prevention of harassment



due to the presence
of different employees

with such a variety of scientific,
technical, administrative attitudes
and interests

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*A set of measures need to be adopted within a Research Institution
in order to design a specific strategy, properly addressed
for the scientific environment.*

Workplaces, in which harassment
is not managed, tend to have:

- ✓ a falling productivity
- ✓ a lack of efficiency
- ✓ an increasing absenteeism
- ✓ a hostile work climate



with a very sensitive impact on staff performance resulting
in a very poor image of the Research Institution.

Scientific Community

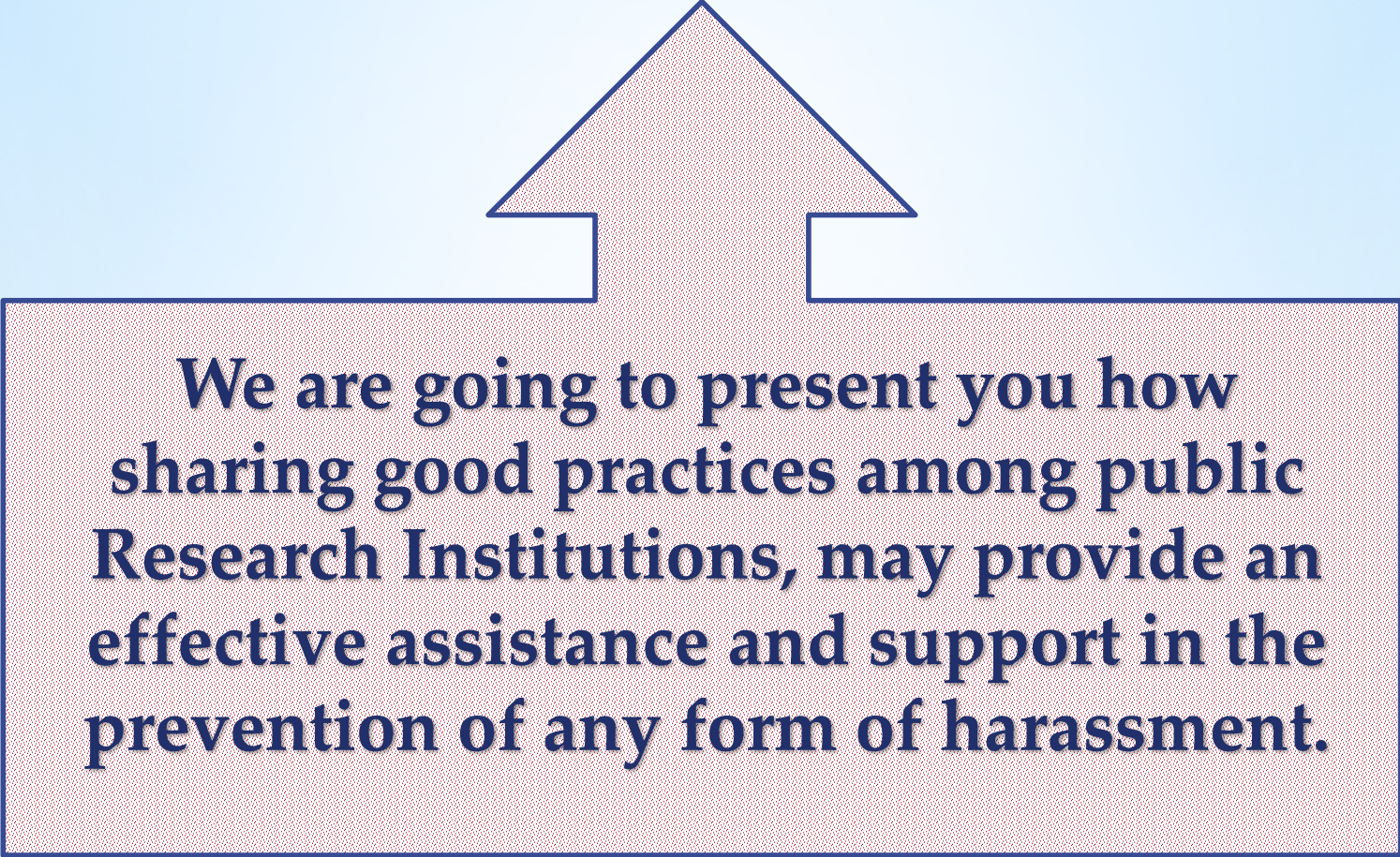
A research institution where competitiveness meets knowledge and intellectual property, harassment could potentially drive women out of their research environment, and as a consequence, contributing to produce a huge impoverishment in the scientific community

physical, moral or social sexual harassment by marginalizing individual researchers damages.

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How are we proceeding?

The example of Istituto Nazionale di Geofisica e Vulcanologia INGV

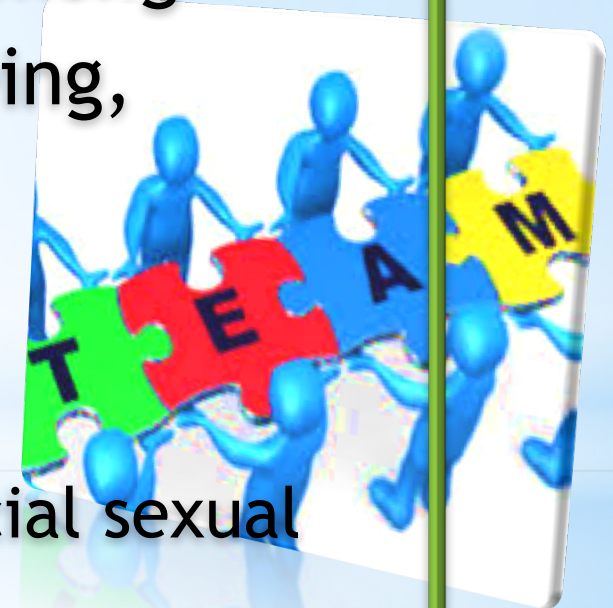


**We are going to present you how
sharing good practices among public
Research Institutions, may provide an
effective assistance and support in the
prevention of any form of harassment.**

The Importance of Teamwork

A joint strategy need to be defined implying
the mutual interaction
of the overall key players among
the organizational well-being,

- Providing a clear set of principles;
- Implementing the Code of Practice
- Ensuring that physical, moral or social sexual harassment does not clear occur



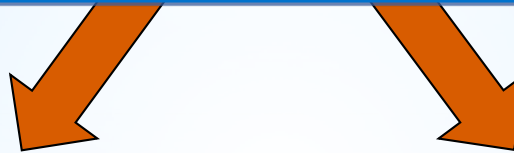
Key Players

- CUG- Gender Equality Committee
- Confidential Counsellors
- Qualified Health Professional
- Health and Safety Manager
- Safety Representatives



Providing a clear set of Principles

In compliance with European and National Legal Framework INGV fully recognizes that its staff, need to be protected in order to guarantee respect for the dignity of women and men at the workplace.



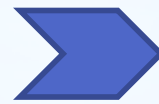
INGV has committed itself to prevent any form of harassment and to condemning such behavior establishing the position of the Confidential Counsellor

INGV has committed itself to take action to promote awareness that conduct of a sexual nature, or other conduct based on sex affecting the dignity of women and men at work is unacceptable

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A set of Measures

Spending review has forced research Institutions, including INGV, to cut funds for the indemnities of the Confidential Counsellors



Join the EX-Change Project coordinated by University of Verona in order to train internal resources

We recently worked on the implementation of an Agreement among Research Institutions that has been designed to set a mutual framework in the harassment prevention and management



The Agreement entered in force in 2017

Experimental interchange through Confidential Counsellors



Two ISPRA employees as Confidential Counsellors at INGV
Two INGV employees as Confidential Counsellors at ISPRA

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Ex_Change Project

**Training professional
Confidential Counsellors 2014-2015
in order to create a network among
Public Institutions
University of Verona**

*Master in Counselling including a Stage
within a Research Institution under the supervision
of the President of Gender Committee*

Implementation of a Collaboration Framework

Made between INGV and ISPRA setting out a free of charge Collaboration framework in order to establish Counselling Services aimed at preventing, managing and solving the overall issues of mobbing and sexual harassment occurring in the work environment.

An innovative experience for research institutions providing an effective assistance and support in hearing the alleged victims of any harassment, ensuring full neutrality, clear independence and total privacy.

Experimental Interchange of Confidential Counsellors

- Two ISPRA employees as Confidential Counsellors at INGV
- Two INGV employees as Confidential Counsellors at ISPRA



In compliance with the provisions of each respective
Code of Practice for the prevention and
protection of any harassment

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The Confidential Counsellor plays a crucial role in preventing, managing and solving mobbing issues and harassment occurring in the workplaces.

- ➡ the **Confidential Counsellors** provide advice and assistance to employees and all personnel involved in research in whatever form subjected to physical, moral or social sexual harassment
- ✓ They are in charge of hearing of those that believe they have been victims of such harassment or mobbing
- ✓ They analyze the work context in which the presumed offences arise
- ✓ They try to settle the case through an informal resolution, where informal attempts at resolution have been failed or refused a formal procedure can be provided
- ✓ They are in charge of Information and training activities, addressing managers to cultivate a working environment that is not conducive to psychological harassment and sexual harassment, or at least one in which they can be appropriately dealt

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In our experience, the activity of the Confidential Counsellor in the research sector, often goes beyond the usual advising and assistance role, in compliance with the European and National legal framework



Independence, impartiality, confidentiality and the total respect of the employee's will are crucial requirements

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The Confidential Counsellor plays an active role in proposing, drafting, and implementing ethic policies. It also informs about inappropriate behaviours, setting out targeted principles to promote a right attitude among managers and supervisors, ensuring their compliance

**Explain what harassment is
telling clearly
that it will not
be tolerated**

Contacts

Confidential Counsellors can be contacted to get information or to fix an appointment:

- writing an email
- through the Gender Committee

hearing the alleged victims of any harassment:

- ❖ Institutional Offices
- ❖ A reserved place as Caffetteria, Train Station, Underground
- ❖ Skype
- ❖ Phone
- ❖ Teleconference
- ❖ Simply Mail (by choice of the worker)

Anonymity

all information and contents of the interviews are confidential and managed exclusively by the Confidential Counsellors

Location:

- ❖ Institutional Offices *(by choice of the worker)*
- ❖ A reserved place as Caffetteria, Train Station, Underground,
- ❖ Skype
- ❖ Phone
- ❖ Teleconference

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Feedback



*Investing in human
resources
is worthwhile*

We have registered a very
positive feedback both from
staff and supervisors.

Both Research Institutions
recorded a preliminary
positive impact.



Next Steps

- **Strengthen** the Collaboration Framework on mutual training and information activities in order to promote awareness and a progressive cultural change
- **Updating** the internal Code of Practice taking into account the most advanced international Best Practices like AGU – American Geophysical Union Ethic Policy (*Harassment constitutes scientific misconduct as falsification and plagiarism. Consequences for the offender are provided including expulsions or sanctions - <https://harassment.agu.org>*)
- **Enhancing** a mutual collaboration with Research Institutions through “Forum CUG EPR”

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**Grazie per il vostro ...
ASCOLTO!**



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