

**Social Worker National Association**  
**AssNAS**  
**(Associazione nazionale assistenti sociali)**

**Graziella Povero, President and Vincenzo Bonomo Vice Presidente of AssNAS, Italy**

In 1946 the Italian Minister for Post-war Assistance decided to organise a seminar with the delegation of the Italian Government managing the relations with UNRRA (United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration) and the Italian UNRRA agency. The seminar was held in Tremezzo, a little village in Lake Maggiore, from September 16<sup>th</sup> to October 6<sup>th</sup> 1946.

This seminar represented a topical moment for the development of social policies and for the role of social workers in Italy.

After the seminar, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1948, a group of social workers decided to set up ANAS, now AssNAS (Social Workers National Association), the first professional community at that time.

From the beginning, AssNAS has always been the place where social workers meet and debate social topics of national and international relevance. AssNAS represents Italy in the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW)- European Region, since its inception.

The XXIV National Congresses of the Association contributed to the evolution of the Italian Social Service and the profession of social worker across multiple decades, thanks to many discussions and debates, the professional documentation produced, and the involvement in international and European organism initiatives such as IFSW.

The continuous activity of the Association can be followed in the minutes of the National Congresses through the years, and the many papers produced during and after them. For many years, AssNAS was been the only category association to fight for the recognition of a professional qualification, to define a deontological professional code of conduct, to propose to set-up a professional Order, and to require a university-level training for social workers.

AssNAS also promoted and documented the evolution of Italian Social Service, both as a discipline and a profession.

Nowadays, AssNAS is still active in promoting campaigns on social issues, both as a stand-alone entity and in conjunction with other organisations, such as the Order (founded in 1995) and the Social Workers Unions (founded in 1990).

AssNAS is also involved in knowledge sharing, keeping up to date with the constant changes of an increasingly complex social contest. To this end, the Association works closely with the other professional organisms part of the Professional Pact Committee (*Tavolo Patto della Professione*) which was created by CNOAS (Social Workers National Council, *Consiglio Nazionale Ordine Assistenti Sociali*).

There are still several issues to be tackled to fully develop the profession of social workers, e.g., a more differentiated social work degree as against the current undifferentiated five-year university degree for social science, the definition by law of the scientific and autonomous areas of Social Services activities, and a coherent set of regulations for social issues.

The Association recently submitted a bill about the social worker profession, together with the CNOAS and other associations in the field, which is now awaiting approval from the Upper Chamber of the Italian Parliament.

The Association has always used formal and informal communication channels to collect, disseminate and support opinions from its members and other stakeholders.

For example, the Congresses and Seminars have always been open not only to members but to all relevant stakeholders, including Members of Parliament; the Congress papers and the Association newsletter is disseminated in paper version and electronically to Universities and the Professional Orders involved in the social field; an historical archive has been created to keep in one place all papers and important documents relevant to the profession (e.g., the recognition of the professional

qualification, , evidence of the 1985 strikes and demonstrations, papers about social and healthcare policies).

The AssNAS manages its communication and PR trying to balance the need to disseminate knowledge as widely as possible, and the risk of creating misunderstandings or even alarmism in the general public about the profession.

The activities above are only impactful if associated with the commitment and the professional conduct of each and every social worker which AssNAS is committed to promote.

The Association has brought to public attention , at conferences and publishing articles and reflections on issues relating to discrimination and even violence against the weak. Denouncing the physical, sexual and psychological agitates against women , men , children , elderly, disabled , people who , in the course of their lives , may find themselves in the situation of " fragility / weakness " or "minority" . Violence that affects the right to life, safety, freedom , dignity , physical and mental integrity of the victim . Domestic violence also , put in place in what should be and is represented as the ultimate arena for emotional dimension , but that turns out to be sometimes the place of horrors Aggression and violence act thanks to forms of complicity and collusion of members of the same family or relatives . Home where violence shakes and assisted , sees such perpetrators and victims minors , women and even men as victims of violence not only by other men , but also women , less relevant phenomenon and we are talking less .

The Association is committed to request that the media take away the violence from advertising , which is not here to describe the violence in the details , which put an end " to use" offensive , insulting and denigrating the image of women and that do not contribute to the growth stereotypes and discrimination . Mass media which must commit to do to understand how the violence enactments are also a collective responsibility . Responsibility of citizens who should commit to implement , also together with the institutions , actions and measures of protection and prevention of violence .

The archive documents that over the years the AssNAS prepared and testify that the measures implemented , even against politicians and the media on specific issues , is available at the registered office located in Rome in Via Aurelia Station 169 and the [www.assnas.it](http://www.assnas.it) institutional website .