



Data on drownings in Italy

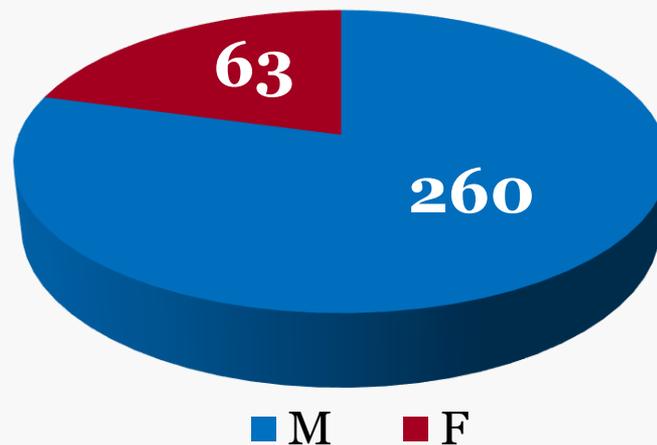
Giuseppe Balducci, Sabina Cedri

Italian National Institute of Health –
National Observatory for the Prevention of Drowning of the Ministry
of Health

Drownings in the world are a dramatic problem and the WHO, in the Global Report published in 2014, asks all countries to make the necessary effort to reduce their extent, by defining national strategies. For this purpose the **Observatory for the Prevention of Drowning in Italy** was born. Its main objective is to collect data on drownings at the national level and to define a strategic plan based on scientific evidence for the prevention of drowning.

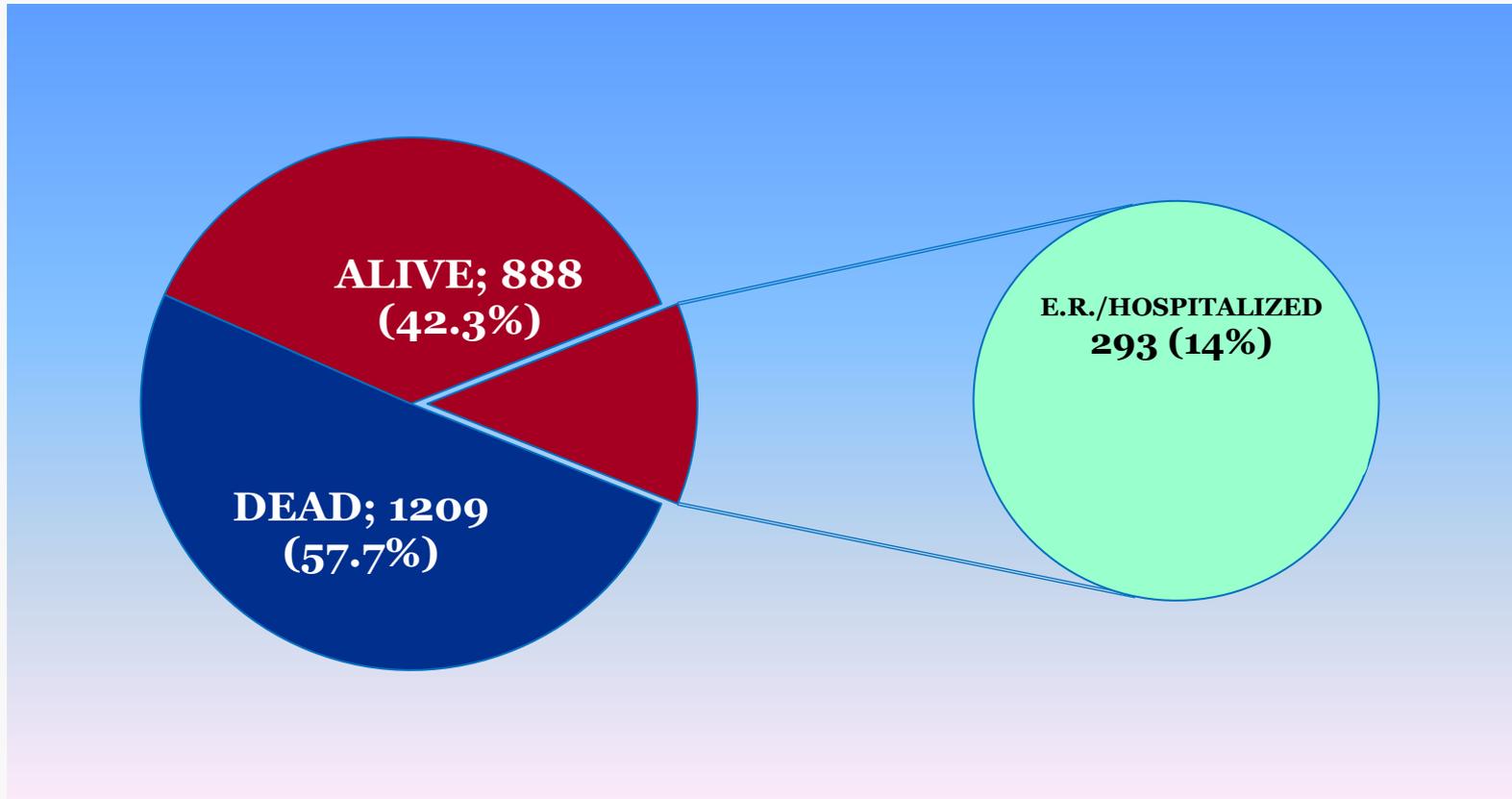
In the 2019, in Italy, there were **323 drowning deaths**, of which 260 males (80,5%) and 63 females (19.5%)

Drowning deaths – ITALY 2019



ISTAT Data

Methods: in Italy, as for the analysis of mortality data, there is a total lack of information on the place of occurrence and on the dynamics of drowning, essential for effective prevention of the phenomenon. For this purpose, a methodology has been developed that uses news from the main national and local online newspapers and from dedicated websites. Sources of drowning accidents were monitored **from 2015 to 2019**. **Results:** **2,097** cases of drowning and near drowning were identified and analyzed.



Data from the Observatory for the prevention of drowning in Italy, 2015-2019

Despite the low number of drownings recorded annually in Italy, mostly avoidable especially at a young age, the increase in cases of drowning in areas that are not strictly seaside (e.g. inland waters) is worrying, given the considerable danger of the water body

Age groups most at risk:

Middle age 45-64: 19.3%
Elderly 75-79: 17.2%
Children 0-10: 14.8%

Regions with more cases:

Lombardia, 13%
Emilia Romagna, 9.9%
Veneto 9.3%

Place of occurrence:

Coastal areas : 47.1%
Inland waters 31.1%



(80% of deaths vs. 52% deaths in coastal areas) ($p < 0,0005$)

Cause of drowning:

Sudden illness: 28%
Rough sea and/or strong currents: 15%
Fall into water or from rocks: 14%

Data from the Observatory for the Prevention of Drowning in Italy, 2015-2019