

A SEGUIRE TRADUZIONE IN ITALIANO

THE TIMES

In Italy's tinderbox flats, neighbourly rows can turn deadly

luglio 14, 2024



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Italy

Whether it's the smell of boiled broccoli wafting down a stairwell or cigarette butts flicked off a balcony, these days it takes very little to trigger a furious row between Italian neighbours.

"Something has changed - the courts are backed up with flat owners suing each other over the sound of high heels on parquet," said Giuseppe Bica, the head of Anammi, Italy's biggest association of building managers.

Fifteen per cent of Anammi's 13,000 members have reported being on the end of verbal or physical assaults by residents this year - a sharp rise on previous years. Fights often end up in court, with half of all civil cases in Italy prompted by rows between neighbours.

"When one manager in Naples pointed out to a flat-owner that his bike was blocking an entrance, the owner broke two of his fingers," said Bica.

More than ever, Italy's army of often-maligned building managers are forced to keep the peace.

In a country where 70% live in apartment buildings, and where any block with eight or more flats must by law hire a manager to handle maintenance and decorum, coexistence has always been tense, with bickering common at residents' meetings.

Increasingly bad behaviour is fuelling the fighting. Bica said, "Graffiti is a growing problem. In one building someone painted a series of increasingly explicit sex scenes up the lift shaft, which you could see through the cage of the lift as you rose to the top floor, where the sex act was consummated."

Despite the assault in Naples, Bica said feuding was most common in Milan in northern Italy. "Everyone is clued up on the law there which makes them keener to start legal battles," he said.

Managers report 45% of feuding occurs in the north, with 35% in central Italy including Rome, which made the headlines in 2022 when an aggrieved resident walked into a meeting of 30 of his neighbours and opened fire with a Glock pistol.

Claudio Campiti, who had refused to pay his share of housing bills, yelled, "I will kill you all" and fatally shot three women before he was overpowered. "He was taking aim at the building manager when his pistol jammed," said Luigi Frezza, a manager who runs 24 buildings with a team of two colleagues in Rome's middle-class Gianicolense neighbourhood.

Frezza blamed the breakdown in civility on the months of lockdown during the pandemic. "The isolation put distance between people and they cannot and don't want to restart relationships," she said.

Listing the top reasons for shouting at meetings, Frezza started with cigarette butts thrown off balconies, watering devices for plants leaking water onto lower balconies and flying crumbs as people shake tablecloths out of windows. "At meetings it all comes out and we're in the middle," she said.

Food smells accentuate cultural differences. Eastern Europeans have been castigated for cooking with excess garlic; Bangladeshis have had complaints about spicy aromas.

"We tell managers to encourage residents to host dinners for neighbours so they can taste food they don't know," Bica said.



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- Times Newspapers

Negli appartamenti polverizzati d'Italia, i litigi tra vicini possono rivelarsi mortali

L'altro lato della Città Eterna sono le discussioni che esplodono quando i mozziconi di sigaretta vengono gettati dai balconi, i dispositivi di irrigazione per le piante perdono acqua sui balconi più bassi e le briciole volano mentre le persone scuotono le tovaglie dalle finestre.

Che sia l'odore dei broccoli bolliti che si diffonde giù per le scale o che sia l'odore dei mozziconi di sigaretta lanciati dal balcone, di questi tempi basta davvero poco per scatenare una lite furiosa tra vicini italiani.

"Qualcosa è cambiato: i tribunali sono occupati da condòmini che si fanno causa a vicenda a causa del rumore dei tacchi sul parquet", ha detto Giuseppe Bica, presidente di Anammi, la più grande associazione italiana di amministratori di condominio.

Il 15% dei 13.000 membri di Anammi ha riferito di aver smesso di subire aggressioni verbali o fisiche da parte dei residenti quest'anno: un forte aumento rispetto agli anni precedenti. Le risse spesso finiscono in tribunale, e la metà delle cause civili in Italia sono innescate da liti tra vicini.

Quando un amministratore condominiale di Napoli ha fatto notare al proprietario di un appartamento che la sua bicicletta bloccava l'ingresso, il proprietario si è rotto due dita", ha raccontato Bica.

Più che mai, l'esercito italiano di amministratori condominiali, di cui spesso si parla male, è costretto a mantenere la pace.

In un Paese dove il 70% vive in condomini, e dove ogni condominio con otto o più appartamenti deve per legge assumere un amministratore che si occupi della manutenzione e del decoro, la convivenza è sempre stata tesa, con frequenti litigi nelle riunioni dei condòmini.

Un comportamento sempre più scorretto alimenta i combattimenti. Bica ha detto: "I graffiti sono un problema crescente. In un edificio qualcuno ha dipinto una serie di scene di sesso sempre più esplicite lungo il pozzo dell'ascensore, che potevi vedere attraverso la gabbia dell'ascensore mentre salivi all'ultimo piano, dove si era consumato l'atto sessuale"

Nonostante l'aggressione di Napoli, Bica ha detto che le faide sono più comuni a Milano, nel nord Italia. "Lì tutti sono informati sulla legge, il che li rende più propensi ad avviare battaglie legali", ha detto.

I manager riferiscono che il 45% delle faide si verificano al nord, con il 35% nel centro Italia, inclusa Roma, che ha fatto notizia nel 2022 quando un residente offeso è entrato in una riunione di 30 vicini e ha aperto il fuoco con una pistola Glock.

Claudio Campiti, che si era rifiutato di pagare la sua parte di bollette per la casa, ha urlato: "Vi ucciderò tutti" e ha sparato a tre donne prima di essere sopraffatto. "Stava prendendo di mira l'amministratore del condominio quando la sua pistola si è inceppata", ha detto Luigi Frezza, un manager che gestisce 24 edifici con una squadra di due colleghi nel quartiere borghese Gianicolense di Roma.

Frezza ha attribuito il crollo dei comportamenti civili ai mesi di blocco durante la pandemia. "L'isolamento mette distanza tra le persone e loro non possono e non vogliono riavviare le relazioni", ha detto.

Elencando le ragioni principali per cui si urla durante le riunioni, Frezza ha iniziato con i mozziconi di sigaretta gettati dai balconi, i dispositivi di irrigazione per le piante che perdono acqua sui balconi più bassi e

le briciole volanti mentre le persone scuotono le tovaglie dalle finestre. "Durante le riunioni viene fuori di tutto e noi siamo nel mezzo", ha detto.

Gli odori del cibo accentuano le differenze culturali. Degli europei dell'est ci si lamenta perché cucinano con troppo aglio, mentre per i bengalesi il problema sono gli aromi speziati.

"Diciamo ai gestori di incoraggiare i residenti a organizzare cene per i vicini in modo che possano assaggiare cibo che non conoscono", ha detto Bica.