

## **An innovative service in the field of Bioethics in Italy: opportunities offered by the SIBIL “Events” section**

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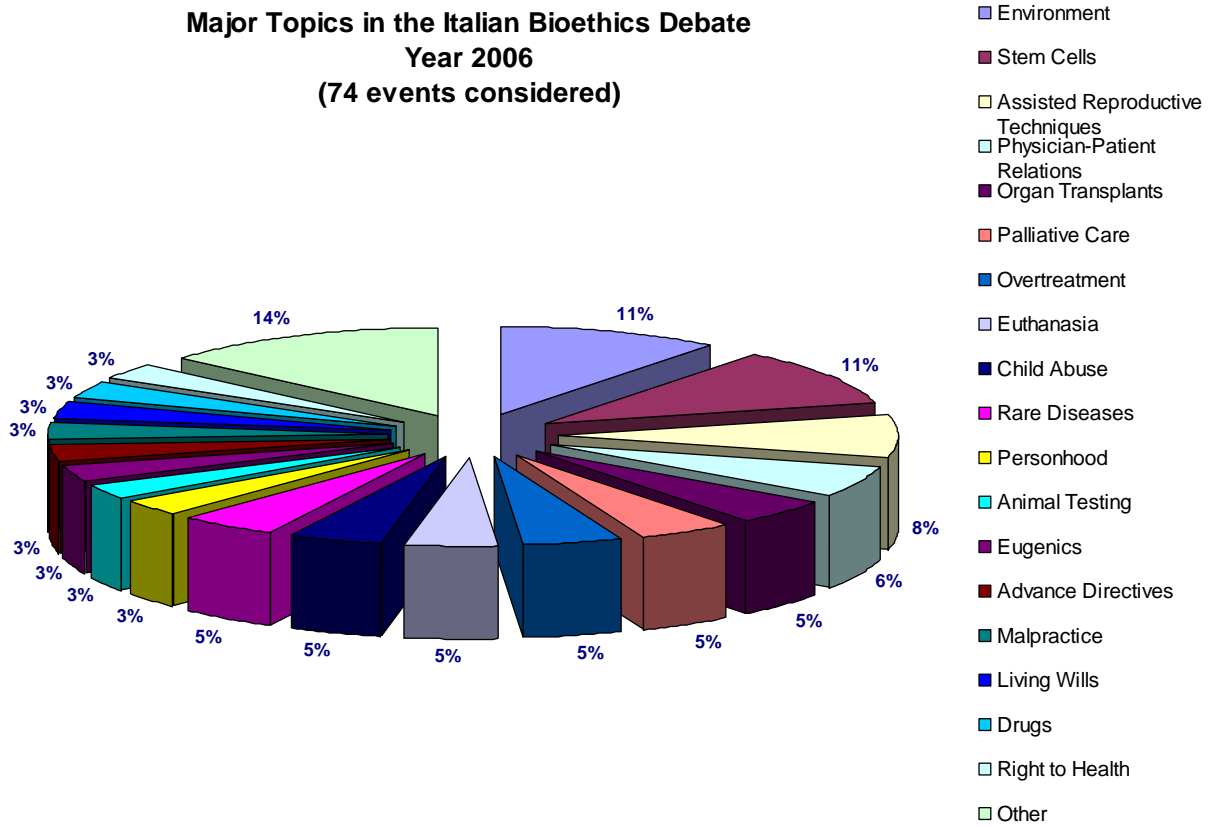
### **Introduction**

Information in Bioethics can't always keep pace with the development of scientific results. Retrieving and disseminating exhaustive Bioethical documentation is essential to ensure a continuous updating. Although newspapers and mass media daily face ethical issues, actually it is the scientific community that produces basic information, mostly by presenting scientific results at conferences, or publishing them in scientific journals. This study intends to demonstrate that the analysis of the scientific community's production is method to monitor the information trend of Bioethics in Italy.

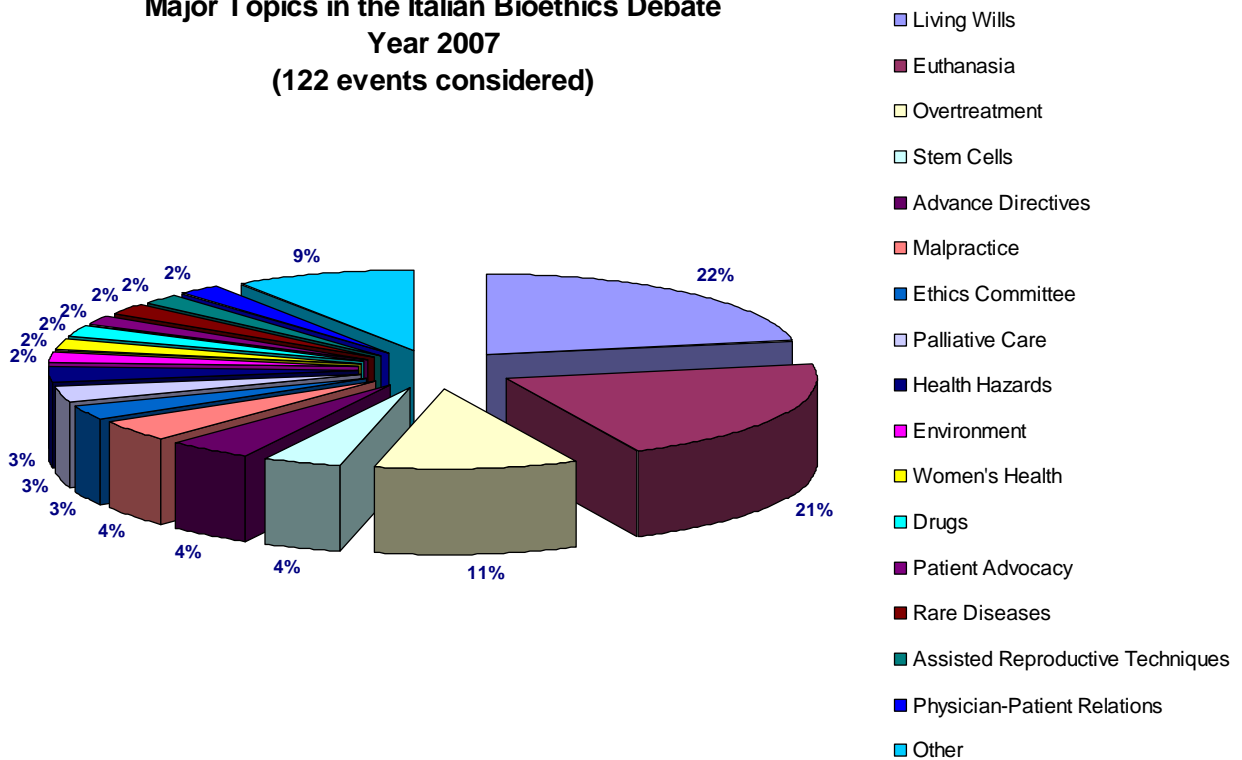
### **Methods**

The Istituto Superiore di Sanità (ISS), the leading research institute in the field of public health in Italy, has financed since 2001 a research project in the field of bioethical documentation, SIBIL (Sistema Integrato per la Bioetica In Linea). The Documentation Service of the ISS has developed a website (<http://www.iss.it/sibi/>) with a special section, weekly updated, devoted to conferences, seminars, workshops and meetings on Bioethics in Italy. The data have been obtained through the analysis of a total of 377 events that took place in Italy from 2006 to 2008. We assigned a key-word to each event taken from proceedings or oral presentations. Every key-word is the translation of a concept on Bioethics that reflects the Italian debate on this subject. The key-words derive from the English version of the Italian Bioethics Thesaurus, a semantic tool used for indexing and retrieving documents stored in the SIBIL database.

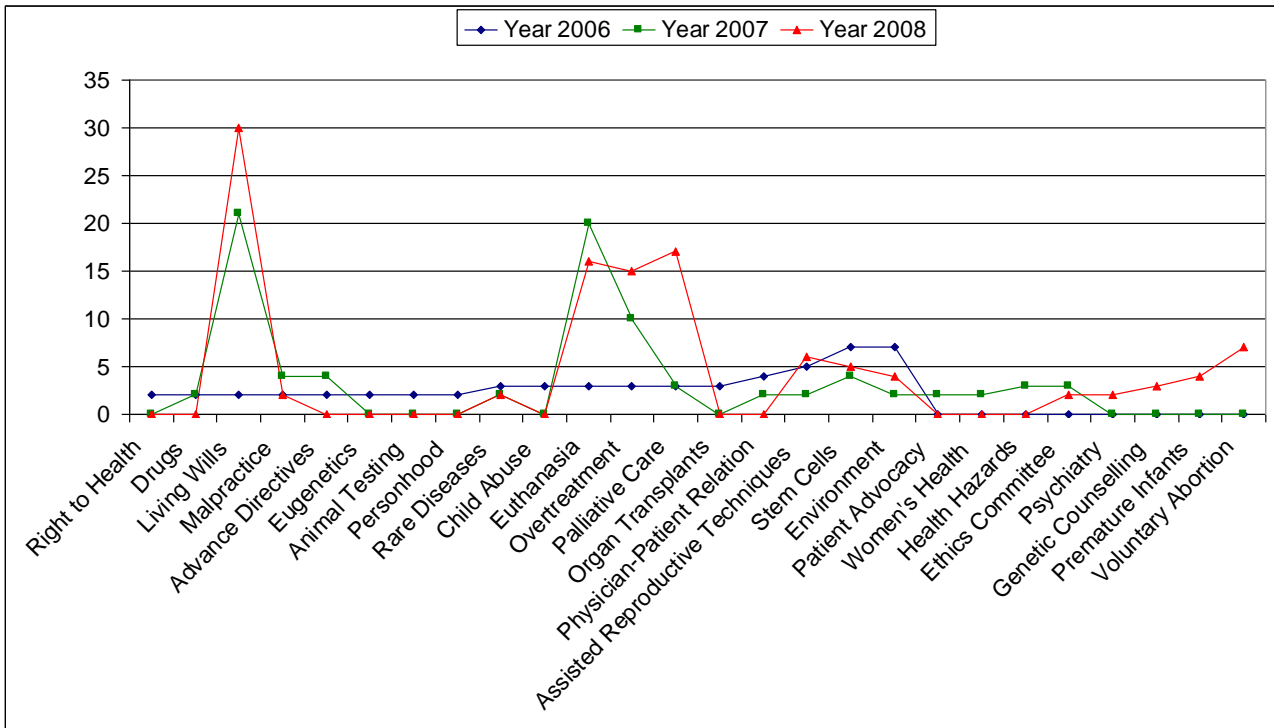
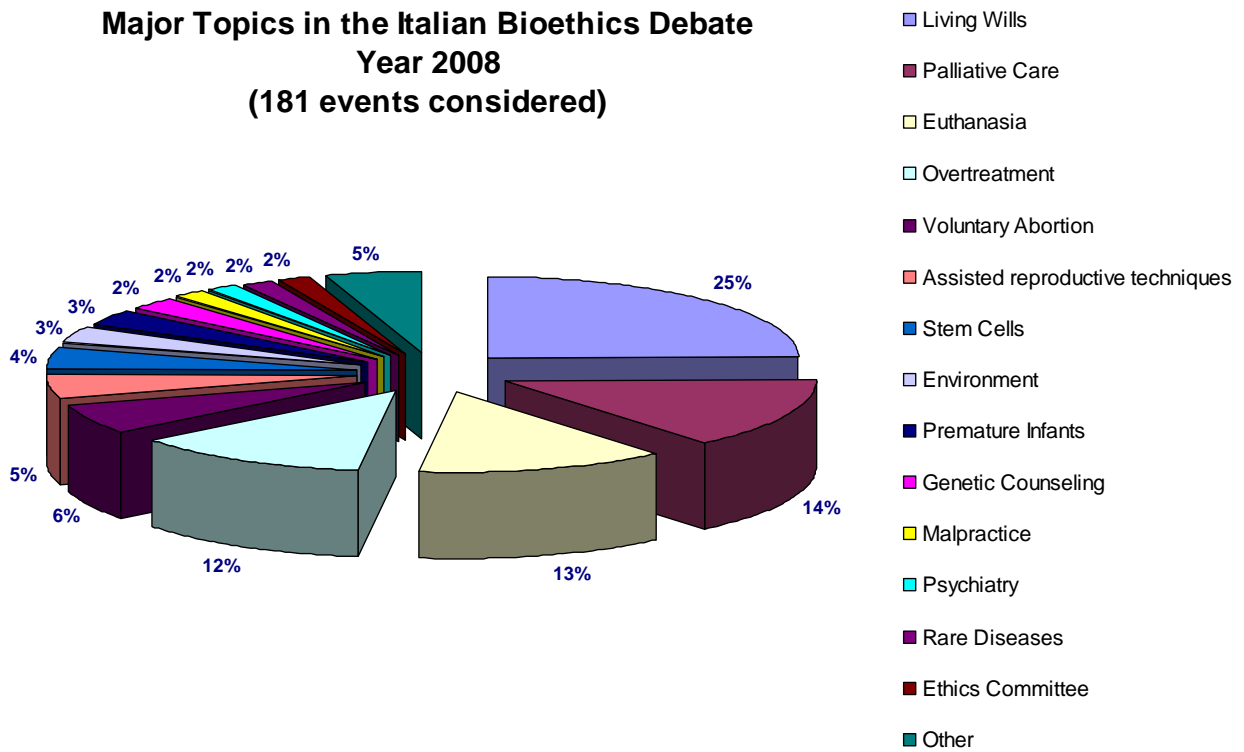
**Major Topics in the Italian Bioethics Debate  
Year 2006  
(74 events considered)**



**Major Topics in the Italian Bioethics Debate  
Year 2007  
(122 events considered)**



### Major Topics in the Italian Bioethics Debate Year 2008 (181 events considered)



## Results

The evolutionary trend of bioethical information identified four main themes that reflect issues discussed in the Italian society:

- LIVING WILLS
- EUTHANASIA
- OVERTREATMENT
- PALLIATIVE CARES

In 2006, the most relevant issues were Environment and Stem Cells (11% out of the total of analyzed events); in 2007 we found at the top of the debate Living Wills (22 %), followed by Euthanasia (21%) and Overtreatment (11%).

In the year 2008, the main topic is Living Wills (25%), followed by Palliative Care (14%), Euthanasia (13%), and Overtreatment (12%). Information produced from conferences, seminars, workshops and meetings on Bioethics reflects the main issues of the Italian Bioethics debate.

## References

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