Information, Communication & Society

ISSN: 1369-118X (Print) 1468-4462 (Online) Journal homepage: www.tandfonline.com/journals/rics20

(In)congruent synergies? Discursive boundary-spanning between the Italian anti-gender galaxy and anti-trans groups

elena pavan , Aurora Perego & Matteo Scianna

To cite this article: elena pavan , Aurora Perego & Matteo Scianna (12 Oct 2026): (In)congruent synergies? Discursive boundary-spanning between the Italian anti-gender galaxy and anti-trans groups, Information, Communication & Society, DOI: 10.1080/1369118X.2026.2743936

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2026.2743936

© 2026 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group

View supplementary material

Published online: 12 Oct 2026.

Submit your article to this journal

View related articles

View Crossmark data

Full Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at
https://www.tandfonline.com/action/journalInformation?journalCode=rics20

INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION & SOCIETY
https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2026.2743936

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

OPEN ACCESS Check for updates

(In)congruent synergies? Discursive boundary-spanning between the Italian anti-gender galaxy and anti-trans groups

elena pavan[a], Aurora Perego[b] and Matteo Scianna[c]

[a]Department of Sociology and Social Research, University of Trento, Trento, Italy; [b]Department of Sociology, Division of Gender Studies, Lund University, Lund, Sweden; [c]Department of Mathematics, University of Trento, Trento, Italy

ABSTRACT

This article investigates increasing alignment between the anti-gender galaxy and anti-trans groups by looking at the symbolic synergies that these two collective endeavors create in and through social media discourse. Building on social movement theory, we examine processes of discursive boundary spanning through which ecclesial and right-wing actors, dedicated anti-gender organizations, and anti-trans groups converge when discussing gender-related issues at large on social media, aligning around similar agendas, objects of interest, priorities, and frames, while setting aside differences that might hinder their collaboration. Empirically, the study relies on a mixed-method analysis of Facebook and Instagram posts published between 2021 and 2023 by twenty-two prominent actors mobilizing around anti-gender and anti-trans claims in Italy. Combining topic modeling with a computational adaptation of frame semantic grammar and qualitative frame analysis, we examine patterns of discursive convergence across the four sectors as well as the ideological differences that are bracketed to sustain it. Our findings reveal the existence of a transversal and yet fragile cross-sectoral discursive convergence. While all four sectors align around a limited set of shared interests and priorities, stronger discursive commonalities are found between anti-trans actors, dedicated anti-gender organizations and right-wing actors. Moreover, although common diagnostic frames emphasize the protection of women and children from *gender ideology*, divergent prognostic frames and long-term horizons persist within and across sectors.

ARTICLE HISTORY
Received 11 January 2026
Accepted 28 September 2026

KEYWORDS
Anti-gender galaxy; anti-trans actors; boundary-spanning; social media; computational analysis; frame analysis

Introduction

In May 2021, slightly a year before her appointment as Minister for the Family, Birth Rate Policies, and Equal Opportunities in Giorgia Meloni's government, Eugenia Roccella, a

CONTACT elena pavan elena.pavan@unitn.it Department of Sociology and Social Research, University of Trento, via G. Verdi n.26, Trento, 38122, Italy

Supplemental data for this article can be accessed online at https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2026.2743936.

© 2026 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group
This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives License (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/), which permits non-commercial re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, and is not altered, transformed, or built upon in any way. The terms on which this article has been published allow the posting of the Accepted Manuscript in a repository by the author(s) or with their consent.

spokesperson for the *Family Day* – an ultra-catholic march organized in Italy in support of cis-heterosexual families (Prearo, 2024) – published a Facebook post in defense of those whom she called 'difference feminists.'[1] In her opinion, these activists were being unfairly targeted by intellectuals, journalists and part of the public opinion for opposing the so-called 'Zan bill,' a legislative proposal (later rejected by the Italian Senate) to counter hate crimes based on gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, and disability. With this post, Roccella fed two birds with one scone. On the one hand, she took the chance to reiterate that 'heterosexuality is a necessary prerequisite for having children' – a core argument of the conservative Catholic activist milieu where she grew her political roots. On the other hand, while denying the existence of any formal alliance between 'difference feminists' and Catholic activism, she explicitly stated a 'convergence of aims' stemming from their common opposition to both the Zan bill and surrogacy.

Rather than merely contingent, the convergence acknowledged in Roccella's post echoes what recent studies identify as an increasing alignment between two distinct collective endeavors in the field of gender politics. On the one hand, the so-called 'anti-gender galaxy' (Garbagnoli & Prearo, 2018): a wide-ranging project that, in Italy as much as internationally, joins organizations rallying against what they call *gender ideology*, religious institutions and groups, and right-wing parties in a shared battle to oppose 'LGBT rights, reproductive rights, sex and gender education, gender studies and democracy' (Paternotte & Kuhar, 2017, p. 256). On the other hand, a more targeted opposition against the rights and, in fact, the very existence of trans* people advanced by a plurality of anti-trans actors – including 'gender critical feminists' (Thurlow, 2024) as well as anti-trans parent organizations (Prearo, 2023).[2]

Whether focused on fully fledged coalitions or, more simply, on common arguments and claims, extant scholarship agrees that the anti-gender galaxy and anti-trans actors converge through their shared transphobia and, in particular, transmisogyny (Bassi & LaFleur, 2022, p. 313). Increased political proximity – if not direct collaboration – between these actors has indeed been observed primarily in relation to the proliferation of anti-trans policies, the blocking of legislative proposals aimed at advancing LGBT rights in general (Prearo, 2023; Tudor, 2026), and right-wing parties' tactical opposition to LGBT rights in their alleged defense of freedom of speech and the *natural family* (Prearo & Scopelliti, 2025). However, studies are also providing evidence of growing symbolic alignment testified by the transnational diffusion of anti-trans rhetoric and discourses (Lavizzari & Beyer Gregersen, 2026; McLoughlin, 2026; Perego & Verlooy, 2026).

Current emphasis on what brings together anti-gender and anti-trans collective endeavors is typical of broader reflections on social movement alliances (McCammon & Van Dyke, 2010), which underline that common interests and ideological congruence are fundamental to forge political alliances – even unlikely ones (West, 1987) – while rarely engaging with how differences are handled to secure collaboration (Staggenborg, 1986). More recent scholarship has instead started to shift attention in this direction. In particular, specific convergences between traditionalist anti-gender organizations and gender critical feminists have been characterized in terms of 'senseless politics' (McLoughlin, 2026, p. 689) as actors with divergent positions with respect to patriarchy, gender roles, reproductive and same-sex rights exploit similar moral-panic-loaded rhetoric to jointly 'construct the threat of transness (and) generate affective energy which they then direct towards regulative regimes that share form but differ in ends' (McLoughlin, 2026, p. 689).

In this article, we seek to contribute to this emergent line of research by extending its focus and exploring the points of contact as well as the inconsistencies that emerge between the various components of the anti-gender galaxy – i.e., ecclesial and right-wing actors, and dedicated anti-gender organizations – and anti-trans actors when they discuss gender-related issues at large using social media. We do so by borrowing from social movement studies the concept of 'boundary-spanning' – i.e., collective actors' attempts to entwine their projects while negotiating differences in identity, organizational forms, and tactical repertoires (Wang et al., 2018). Drawing on studies that foreground the production and public circulation of discourse as foundational to both anti-gender and anti-trans politics (Lavizzari & Beyer Gregersen, 2026; McLoughlin, 2026; Tudor, 2026), we propose to investigate how boundaries between the components of the anti-gender galaxy and anti-trans actors emerge and are overcome in and through social media discourse – a dynamic that we call 'discursive boundary-spanning'. On this ground, we examine the extent to which actors mobilizing around anti-gender and anti-trans claims generate (in)congruent synergies on social media by articulating gender-related issues through shared agendas, objects of interest, priorities and interpretive frames.

Our empirical investigation focuses on Italy – a country that has been defined as a 'lighthouse' for the consolidation of the anti-gender project (Garbagnoli, 2017, p. 164) and in which anti-trans and, more broadly, anti-LGBT positions have grown significantly both within and outside institutions (Perego & Verlooy, 2026; Prearo & Scopelliti, 2025) facilitated by the circulation of specific conspiracy beliefs on the existence of an alleged 'LGBT lobby [that] wants to spread homosexuality through the indoctrination of minors, the disruption of the natural/moral order and the foundation of a dictatorial ideology grounded on "gender theory"' (Salvati, Pellegrini, De Cristofaro, Costacurta, et al., 2024, p. 296). Starting from a set of posts published on Facebook and Instagram between 2021 and 2023, we look for similarities and differences in the social media discourses of a pool of twenty-two actors categorized in four sectors – i.e., ecclesial, right-wing, dedicated anti-gender, and anti-trans. Our work adopts a mixed-method approach that combines topic modeling and a computational adaptation of 'frame semantic grammar' (Vicari, 2010) with qualitative frame analysis (Benford & Snow, 2000) to assess whether discursive convergences between the four sectors are merely cosmetic or, conversely, signal the existence of a shared and solid 'ideological platform' (Prearo & Scopelliti, 2025, p. 159).

This paper is structured as follows. The next section introduces the concept of boundary-spanning and proposes to implement it by considering also processes of discursive boundary-spanning. On this ground, we formulate our research questions and illustrate the research design we adopted to address them. We then illustrate and discuss the results of our analysis to then suggest lines for further inquiry.

Spanning boundaries in and through social media discourse

Within social movement scholarship, 'boundary work' – that is, 'the territorialization, politicization, relocation, and institutionalization of boundaries' (Lamont & Molnár, 2002, p. 168) – is considered a key process in the construction of alliances within and between collective endeavors (McCammon & Van Dyke, 2010). Particularly important

for forming alliances is the crossing of 'symbolic boundaries' – that is, 'conceptual distinctions made by social actors to categorize objects, people, practices, and even time and space' (Lamont & Molnár, 2002, p. 168). It is indeed along these symbolic demarcations that collective actors make sense of themselves and of the reality around them, create feelings of solidarity and group membership (Diani & Pilati, 2011), and negotiate differences (Armstrong, 2002).

Symbolic boundaries have been categorized into three types: issue and identity, organizational, and tactical (Wang et al., 2018). Issue and identity boundaries concern the feelings of belonging shared by collective actors (Melucci, 1989) and the positions they take in support or against any given social struggle. They are thus often crossed at the movement level by 'forging ties among groups within a movement or across movements' (Wang et al., 2018, p. 171). Organizational boundaries, instead, concern the characteristics of organizations – e.g., their form, range of activities and level of mobilization – and are negotiated by forging inter-organizational ties (Wang et al., 2018). Finally, tactical boundaries define the repertoire of actions (Tilly, 1978) through which collective actors advance their claims and can be negotiated at the movement or at the organizational level (Wang et al., 2018, p. 175).

The analytical framework centered on boundary-spanning processes has been key in consolidating a research area that has developed in a fragmented manner, largely due to its focus on the diversity of forms and contexts in which alliances between collective actors emerge. At the same time, however, it has remained primarily concerned with formal convergences – such as shared campaigns, the formation of umbrella organizations, or the overlap of political projects cemented through joint votes or binding agreements (McCammon & Van Dyke, 2010). Even when informal collaborations are considered, scholarship rarely accounts for the synergies that may arise from the construction of specific discourses understood as 'ensembles of ideas, concepts, and categories through which meaning is given to phenomena' (Hajer, 1993, p. 45). This sits uneasily with the well-established recognition that discourse – and especially public discourse – is a terrain of conflict rather than merely the means through which conflict is expressed (Steinberg, 1998), and that contestation over meanings within public discourse is a core component of contemporary contentious politics (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989).

In fact, the construction and strategic circulation of discourse do more than reveal identities and communicate programs of action. Since 'discourse is always constitutive of (and by) ongoing sets of relations, which it continually constructs and reconstructs in response to the perceived (but negotiable) boundaries of particular social settings' (Mische & White, 1998, p. 701), it is primarily at the discursive level that actors coming from 'widely varying backgrounds' do join forces in the attempt to have their visions prevail over others and 'solidified into an institution, sometimes as organizational practices, sometimes as traditional ways of reasoning' (Hajer, 1993, p. 46). Thus, alongside boundary-spanning processes related to identities, organizational forms, and tactical repertoires, collective actors can synergize also through processes of 'discursive boundary spanning' by intervening on the same topics, setting the same priorities and discussing them along similar lines to maximize resonance and amplify the strength and legitimacy of their claims.

Recent research on social media use by the anti-gender galaxy and anti-trans actors implicitly points to ongoing discursive boundary-spanning within and between these

two collective endeavors. Looking at the use of social media during the 2019 World Congress of Families, a key event for the anti-gender galaxy, it has been shown that organizations mobilizing to defend the *natural family* relied on communication strategies structured in affective terms around the populist trope 'us vs. them' (Evolvi, 2023). Similarly, recent studies on social media use by populist and right-wing parties in Italy, Sweden, and Germany indicate that these actors tactically appropriate core arguments of the anti-gender rhetoric (particularly the defense of the *natural family* and anti-feminism) and more specific anti-LGBT claims in their political programs (Prearo & Scopelliti, 2025; Reinhardt et al., 2024). Converging trajectories are also showcased by the use of the same hashtags on Twitter which enabled actors from the far-right, gender critical feminists, and conservative feminists to form a shared discursive front against the German Self-Determination Act (Zahn & Lünenborg, 2024). Clear signs of the transnationalization of transphobic discourses have also been identified in public documents produced and circulated online by organizations of the anti-gender galaxy as well as by anti-trans groups (Lavizzari & Beyer Gregersen, 2026; McLoughlin, 2026).

Yet, a comprehensive assessment of the discursive boundary-spanning processes that both sustain and bring these collective endeavors into relation beyond specific occasions – such as pivotal events or parliamentary debates – is still lacking. The common opposition to *gender ideology* that has been holding together the anti-gender galaxy grows its roots in a shared hostility toward anything that questions a social order governed by a binary, hierarchical, and essentialist view of genders and their relationships (Garbagnoli, 2017). However, the ability to consistently rally against the 'gender phantasm' (Butler, 2024, p. 4) also depends on anti-gender actors' capability to treat the very concept of gender as an 'empty signifier' (Paternotte & Kuhar, 2017, p. 259), which can be filled in ideologically incompatible ways while such incompatibilities are deliberately set aside to favor convergence. Analogously, what is generally approached in a unifying way as an 'anti-trans camp' (McLoughlin, 2026, p. 696) gathers highly diverse entities: from gender critical actors that, in turn, mobilize different strands of feminist reflection to ground their transmisogyny (Cabral Grinspan et al., 2023) to anti-trans parent organizations who claim their expertise on the grounds of their parenthood experiences (Prearo, 2023). Crucially, when the anti-gender galaxy reaches out to potential new allies such as gender critical feminists, an ideological short-circuit sparks (McLoughlin, 2026; Tudor, 2026), requiring a significant effort of sideling differences despite shared transphobia – an effort not all actors may be willing to undertake.

Against this background, we analyze discursive boundary-spanning processes between four sectors of actors – i.e., ecclesial, right-wing, dedicated anti-gender, and anti-trans – that rely on the strategic use of social media to sustain their respective projects while fostering mutual symbolic synergies. We do so through three broad research questions:

RQ1: To what extent do the four sectors share similar agendas when discussing gender-related issues on social media?

RQ2: What specific objects of interest provide occasions of cross-sectoral convergence? Do the four sectors also share the same priorities?

RQ3: Are there deeper differences that are sidelined to allow discursive convergence to happen?

Case study, data and methods

Our research grounds in a close examination of Italy as a key case study. Especially following the emergence of coordinated campaigns in the 2010s, anti-gender mobilizations in the country have involved a heterogeneous constellation of actors, including Vatican institutions and ultra-conservative ecclesiastical organizations, dedicated anti-gender groups, and right-wing politicians and parties (Prearo, 2024). These actors have interacted across multiple mobilization cycles, progressively aligning around a shared opposition to *gender ideology* – a rhetorical device (Garbagnoli & Prearo, 2018) formulated by the Vatican in the early 2000s through which *gender* is constructed as a threat to the heterosexual nuclear families, conceived of as the foundation of contemporary (Christian) societies (Garbagnoli, 2017). At the same time, recent research highlights increased activation of anti-trans actors – ranging from gender-critical feminists to parents' groups who, while not always explicitly identifying as anti-gender, have increasingly endorsed and contributed to these campaigns (Gusmeroli, 2024; Prearo, 2023). Not only was this convergence particularly evident in opposition to the abovementioned Zan bill, which fostered what has been described as an emerging 'anti-trans coalition' (Prearo, 2023, p. 116). More broadly, recent accounts find the country's persistent hostility to LGBT rights not to be reducible to 'a general conspiracy mentality' (Salvati, Pellegrini, De Cristofaro, and Giacomantonio, 2024, p. 907), but rather to be rooted in deeper and very specific 'ideological profiles' characterized by traditionalism, authoritarianism, and a vision of the world as a 'dangerous place' that requires living in a constant state of alert against manifold threats and enemies (Salvati, Pellegrini, De Cristofaro, and Giacomantonio, 2024) – all attitudes that are highly consonant with the rampant growth of right-wing forces in the country (Lavizzari, 2025).

Empirically, we lean on an original dataset of Facebook (FB) and Instagram (IG) posts in Italian published between January 1st, 2021 and June 30th, 2023 by a sample of twenty-two actors mobilizing around anti-gender and anti-trans claims and managing at least one public page/profile on Facebook or Instagram (Table 1A in Appendix): ecclesiastical and ecclesial organizations ($N = 3$), right-wing politicians ($N = 5$), dedicated anti-gender organizations and activists ($N = 9$), anti-trans organizations ($N = 5$). Actor selection was based on a combination of two interviews conducted in 2024 with academic experts in anti-gender campaigns and right-wing gender politics in Italy, and a systematic review of the literature published between 2015 and 2024, which together informed a purposive sampling strategy (Patton, 2015) aimed at capturing the heterogeneity of actors that support the two collective projects under scrutiny.[3]

Our observation period allowed us to consider the contents produced by the four sectors during a timeframe characterized by the institutionalization of anti-gender politics in the country after the 2022 national elections (Lavizzari, 2025) and the growth of anti-trans claims during the discussion of the Zan bill (Gusmeroli, 2024). During this period, social media such as Facebook and Instagram were extensively used to circulate anti-gender and anti-LGBT content to different audiences: an older generation in the case of FB, and a younger one in the case of IG (Prearo & Scopelliti, 2025). Through CrowdTangle (CrowdTangle Team, 2020), we collected 39,864 posts (29,465 Facebook posts and 10,399 Instagram posts, see Figure 1), which we processed through a sequential mixed-method approach (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007) that combined topic modeling, quantitative

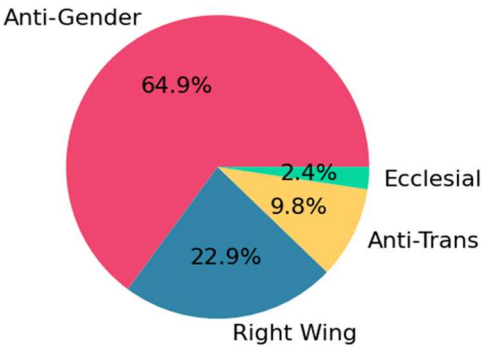

Figure 1. Percentage of posts collected for each sector ($N = 39{,}864$).

text analysis based on a computational adaptation of frame semantic grammar and frame analysis.

Topic modeling

First, we combined the FB and IG posts into a unique dataset and processed them through a topic modeling algorithm to obtain an overview of the topics discussed in the posts and select those addressing gender-related concerns. We preprocessed our data by removing URLs and non-alphanumeric characters, as well as Italian stop words provided by the *nltk* Python package. Subsequently, we applied a variation of the TF-IDF function to provide a vectorial representation of the text on which we performed topic modeling via the BERTopic Python package (Grootendorst, 2022).[4] We reiterated this last step on a subsample of posts, initially gathered in a null topic, to finally obtain 131 topics, which were manually evaluated by two coders to remove inconsistencies, merge similar ones, and assign labels. Ultimately, we identified 33 viable topics, 14 of which are gender-related (Figure 2), for a total of 4,751 posts that form our analytical corpus.[5]

Computational frame semantic grammar and sector similarity

In a second step, we adapted computationally the 'frame semantic grammar' approach (Vicari, 2010) to analyze the clause-level semantic structure of the posts in terms of subjects, verbs, and objects, identify the main objects of interest and the priorities of the four sectors, and lay the groundwork to examine the framing strategies through which common interests are discussed. First, we tokenized selected posts through the *nltk* Python library to detect all verbs (whether in active or passive form) in the corpus. Next, we identified all objects associated with transitive verbs and the subjects of any verb in a passive form, then joined every verb and corresponding objects into dyads that were then assigned to each sector depending on whether they could be found in posts of actors belonging to that sector. We further simplified each dyad by conjugating verbs in the present tense and lemmatizing the objects.[6]

To address RQ1 on agenda overlap between the four sectors, we first operationalized agendas as the complete set of objects appearing in all verb–object dyads assigned to each

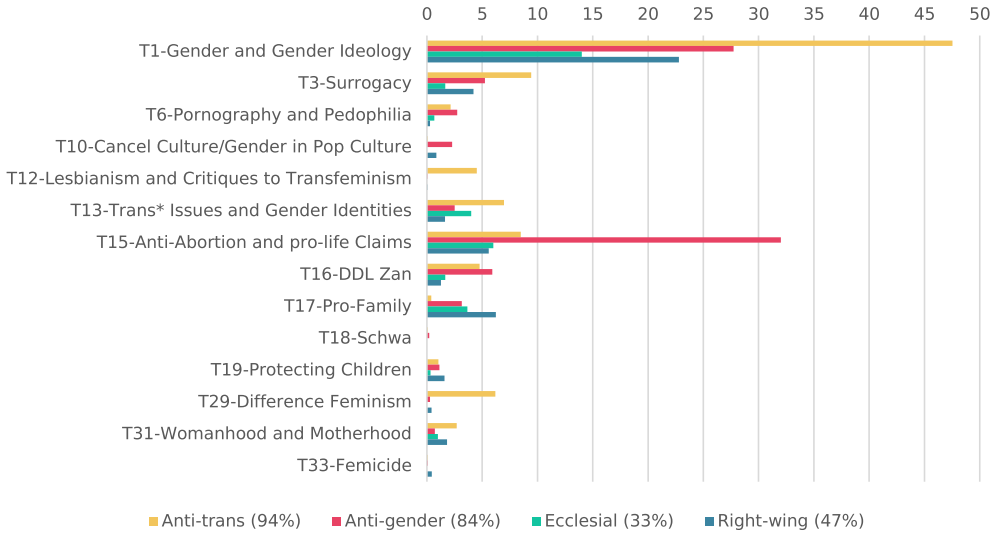

Figure 2. Distribution of gender-related topics across the four sectors. Note: Overall percentages of each sector posts discussing gender-related issues in brackets.

sector. Specifically, each sector $C_i$was represented by a vector $v(C_i) = [n_{w1}, n_{w2}, \ldots, n_{wj}, \ldots, n_{wn}]$, which includes all objects appearing as nodes in its dyads, where n_{wj} represents the relevance of a given object relative to the overall set of objects mentioned by sector C_i in its posts.[7] We then assessed pairwise similarities in terms of distance between the corresponding vectors through cosine similarity defined as:

$$Sim(v(C_i),\ v(C_j)) = \frac{C_i \cdot C_j}{||C_i|| \cdot ||C_j||}$$

Cosine similarity yields a 0–1 score capturing the distance between vectors: values close to 1 indicate similar agendas in terms of both the range and frequency of addressed objects. In other words, cosine similarity captures similarities and differences between the four sectors by simultaneously accounting for their foci of attention and their relevance. To address RQ2 on shared objects of interest and sectoral priorities, we focused on objects common to all four sectors and assessed the relevance each of them assigns to them to determine whether they share similar priorities.

Frame analysis

To address RQ3 on sidelined differences, we conducted a qualitative frame analysis on a subsample of 1,966 posts that contain at least one object of interest common to all four sectors. This allowed us to compare the framing strategies through which the four sectors discuss their common objects of interest. We coded diagnostic, prognostic and motivational framing tasks (Benford & Snow, 2000) to examine how the four sectors interpret problems, solutions, and motivations for collective action. Diagnostic, prognostic and motivational framing tasks within each sector were then 'keyed' together (Johnston &

Alimi, 2013) to examine how issues discussed in diagnostic terms relate to the proposition of solution and the values that guide actors' mobilization.

Findings

Overlapping agendas

Our first research question concerns the extent to which the agendas of the four sectors overlap. Using pairwise similarity scores, we built a network where the four sectors are modeled as nodes and agenda similarities are encoded as edge weights (Figure 3). The presence of a tie between all nodes in the network confirms the presence of discursive boundary spanning dynamics, indicating that the four sectors share, at least in part, a common agenda on gender-related issues. At the same time, our findings indicate that certain overlaps are more marked than others. The wider overlap occurs between dedicated anti-gender and right-wing actors, as illustrated by previous studies on the 'symbiotic relationship' between these two sectors (Lavizzari, 2025, p. 210). Our findings extend this evidence by showing that relevant agenda overlaps also exist between dedicated anti-gender and anti-trans actors, as well as between anti-trans and right-wing ones. In contrast, ecclesial actors appear to have less in common with the other three sectors. Not only does this result confirm evidence of a progressive distancing of this sector from the broader anti-gender galaxy (Prearo, 2024). It also hints at its limited symbolic alignment with anti-trans actors.

Common objects of interest

Our second research question examines the shared objects of interest upon which the discursive convergence between the four sectors does occur. As illustrated in Figure 4, our analysis reveals that, out of 3,522 objects of interest addressed by the actors we considered, only 63 are a common focus of attention. This suggests that discursive boundary-spanning dynamics rest on a handful of elements that co-exist with a variety of other peculiar interest targets. Additionally, these shared objects are not equally relevant for actors in the different sectors: they count for little more than half of all objects of interest of ecclesial actors (53%), whereas they represent only a small portion of the agenda of anti-trans (8.1%), anti-gender (3.5%), and right-wing ones (7%). Hence, distinct trajectories of discursive alignment seem to emerge: ecclesial actors share a greater portion of their project with those in other sectors, which, particularly in the case of dedicated anti-gender organizations, instead discuss and invite public attention toward a variety of other elements.

While symbolic alignment between all four sectors seems to lean on a rather fragile base, a heavier commonality of interests appears to exist between dedicated anti-gender, anti-trans and right-wing actors. The objects shared across these three sectors ($N = 267$) correspond respectively to 24.8%, 34.4% and 29% of all their objects of interest. In other words, the overlap of agendas discussed above does not necessarily imply a substantial and equally distributed overlap in interests, suggesting that discursive boundary-spanning processes may be less solid and diffused than they may appear at first sight.

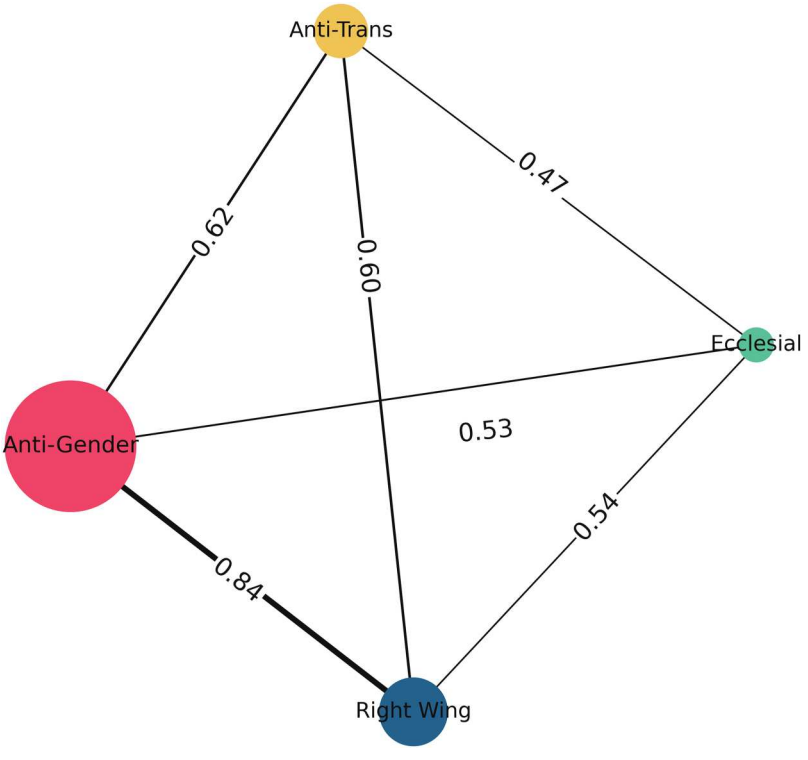

Figure 3. Agenda overlap between the four sectors.

Moreover, looking more closely at common objects reveals that, even when the four sectors share interests, they do not necessarily have the same priorities (Figure 5). Rights (*diritto*) and law (*legge*) are transversal priorities. This finding is in line with studies suggesting a recent reframing of anti-gender claims (Lavizzari, 2025) aimed at presenting anti-gender groups as legitimate interlocutors of democratic institutions in light of their commitment to protect the rights of cisgender children and mothers (Bellè & Donà, 2021) first of all by preventing their erosion. Women (*donne*) are also a common priority, but it is in particular anti-trans actors that insist on this element, while the ecclesial sector seems less concerned with it. Indeed, previous investigations highlight how, within the anti-trans sector, gender-critical feminists mobilize against trans* rights and assisted reproduction techniques, claiming to protect 'biological' (i.e., cisgender) women (Bassi & LaFleur, 2022; McLoughlin, 2026; Tudor, 2026). In contrast, issues such as abortion (*aborto*), life (*vita*), and, to a lesser extent, children (*bambino*) and offspring (*figlio*) are central only for the traditional sectors of the anti-gender galaxy while they appear to be residual for anti-trans actors.

Sidelining differences

Our third research question concerns possible differences that are sidelined to enable discursive convergence. The frame analysis conducted on the posts containing the 63 objects common to all four sectors revealed that, while boundaries are discursively spanned also

Figure 4. Common, shared and exclusive objects of interest within and across the four sectors.

through frame alignment processes (Benford & Snow, 2000), differences in framing persist.

As displayed in Figure 6, all sectors share two main concerns. In line with recent scholarship (Bassi & LaFleur, 2022; Cabral Grinspan et al., 2023; McLoughlin, 2026; Tudor, 2026), trans* rights emerge as the first. Importantly, this concern resonates loudly with conspiracy theories and beliefs surrounding an alleged 'LGBT lobby' (De Cristofaro et al., 2025; Salvati, Pellegrini, De Cristofaro, & Giacomantonio, 2024; Salvati, Pellegrini, De Cristofaro, Costacurta, et al., 2024) insofar as all four sectors fear malicious *indoctrination practices* allegedly carried out by trans* individuals to deliberately spread *gender ideology* and, ultimately, erase biological sex. A second shared concern, which has received comparatively less attention in recent scholarship, is surrogacy, which is portrayed as a threat to the 'natural order', thereby providing another expression of a core motif of LGBT conspiracy beliefs (Salvati, Pellegrini, De Cristofaro, Costacurta, et al., 2024).

Importantly, all sectors connect these two concerns to the same diagnostic frames, according to which cisgender women are constructed as facing discrimination and erasure, and children as being under threat. It is precisely in the construction of such a two-tiered threat that the four sectors discursively converge. This is well exemplified in the following extract:

> Never in my life did I think I would find myself agreeing with feminist associations. And yet, I can't help but side with the numerous groups that, in recent days, have signed an appeal to Parliament against the Zan bill. […] What does it even mean to say "gender identity refers to a person's perceived and expressed identification with a gender, even if it does not correspond to their sex, regardless of whether they have completed a transition process"? To me, it sounds like utter nonsense – without any scientific, philosophical, or legal foundation – aimed at placing biology and self-perceived feelings on the same level. As I have already pointed out, this provision would allow males to enroll in women's sports competitions, benefit from gender quotas, or access services reserved for females, and anyone who dares to oppose this could be reported for incitement to discrimination. To me, this is

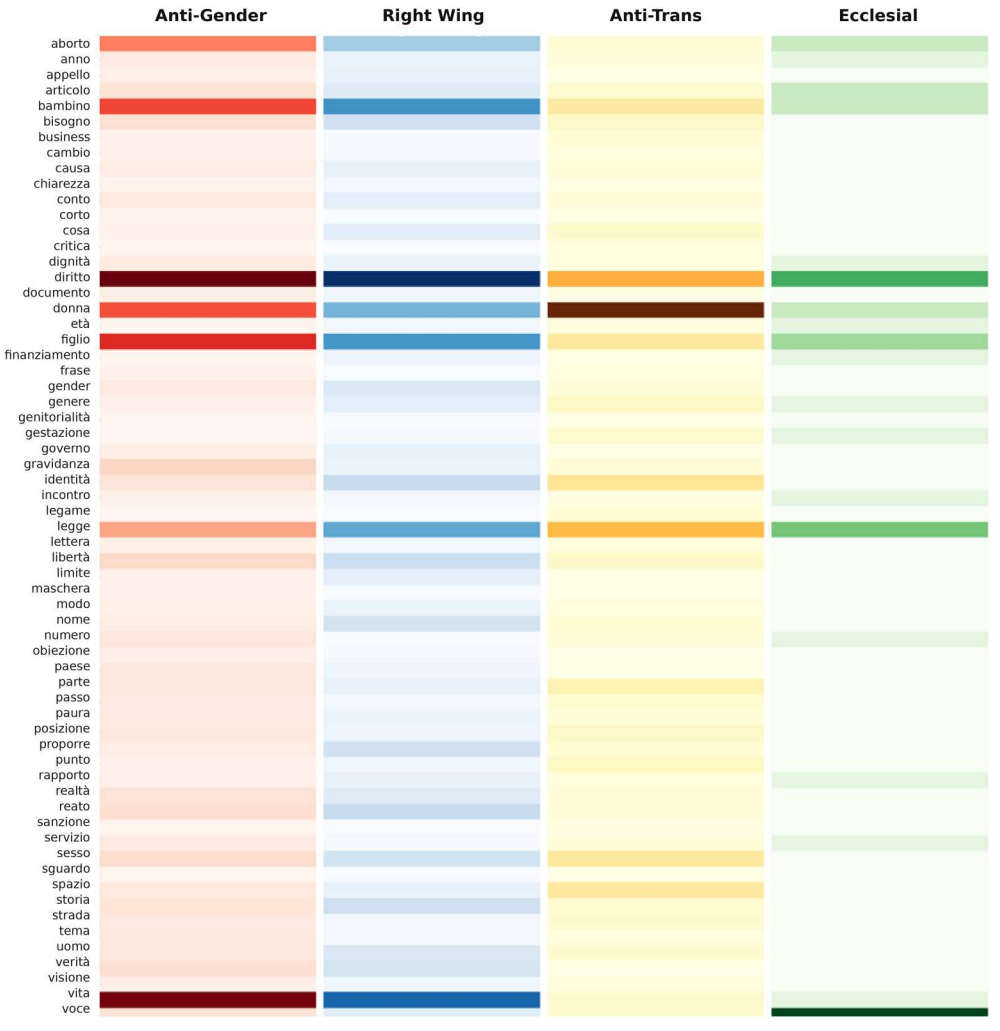

Figure 5. Shared objects of interest and their priority level for each sector.

> madness. Women are half the sky – not a pink shade in the false LGBTQ + rainbow. (FB2006_Right-wing actor)

At the same time, an in-depth assessment reveals heterogeneity in the emphasis that different sectors – as well as actors within them – place on these two aspects. Within the anti-trans sector, it is primarily gender-critical feminist groups that characterize trans* rights as a threat to the very existence of *womanhood*:

> Promoting gender identity means asserting that being a woman is a feeling a self-defined, subjective perception based on sexist stereotypes. It means erasing the fundamental protections based on sex that women have won through hard-fought struggles. It means losing statistical data on crimes, injustices, and inequalities between women and men. It means losing sex-segregated spaces and all positive actions aimed at ensuring equal opportunities. It means losing awareness and ability to fight real and substantial inequalities, oppressions, and discriminations. (FB2042_Anti-trans actor)

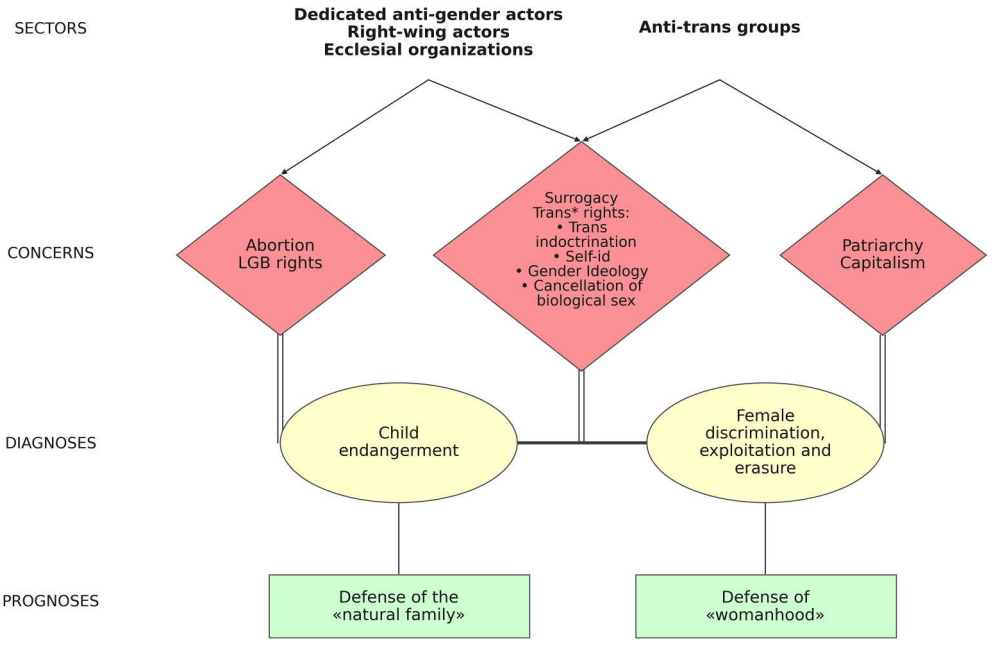

Figure 6. Framing strategies by the four sectors.

Conversely, dedicated anti-gender organizations, ecclesial and right-wing actors emphasize the safeguarding of children, often in opposition to *gender ideology* and gender education in school:

> Very good! The Hungarian law that bans LGBTQ indoctrination of minors is a beacon of civilization that should be copied. In Italy and around the world, the number of children and adolescents experiencing sexual identity crises is growing out of control due to the constant bombardment of gender and rainbow ideology. It is a criminal psychological influence that pushes them toward heavy hormonal therapies and destructive, irreversible surgeries, planting in their minds the lie that they were 'born in the wrong body.' (FB2275_Anti-gender actor)

In doing so, they bridge mainly with only one part of the anti-trans sector – i.e., anti-trans parents' organization, who speak about *gender ideology* as a threat to their children while remaining more distant from gender critical feminists, who are instead more concerned with what they call *Gender Identity Theory* and *Queer Theory* (FB2059_anti-trans feminist actor) as the foundation of a *weakened* and *individualized* form of feminism that is detrimental to cisgender women.

Our analysis also shows remarkable differences in the articulation of prognostic frames – that is, the solutions proposed to overcome problems. As mentioned above, gender critical feminist organizations claim the need to defend *biological women* and *womanhood*, framed as a historically marginalized group within the patriarchal order. On the one side, *womanhood* needs to be protected by attempts to dismantle its ontological rooting and material manifestations through rights that are not 'sex-based' (Thurlow, 2024). On the other, *biological women* are to be safeguarded from the commodification of reproductive work and the exploitation of *female bodies* caused by capitalism, which is in

turn framed as a system that, within a patriarchal framework, primarily disposes of cisgender women. Gender-critical feminists hence propose to overcome the threats posed by surrogacy and trans* rights through anti-capitalist frames (McLoughlin, 2026). In contrast, dedicated anti-gender actors, right-wing actors and ecclesial organizations together with anti-trans parent organizations commonly propose to fight the 'gender phantasm' (Butler, 2024, p. 4) that threatens contemporary societies. These sectors advance a strenuous defense of the *natural family*, framed as the foundation of the social order and threatened by abortion and LGBT rights, while anti-trans parent organizations insist on the necessity to defend children, threatened by *gender ideology*. Thus, while the former articulate both *pro-life* and anti-LGBT frames (Prearo & Scopelliti, 2025), the latter mainly foster anti-gender ideology frames.

Discussion

Albeit derived from a sample which does not reproduce the totality of the Italian anti-gender galaxy and anti-trans groups, our results largely resonate with and, at the same time, integrate recent scholarship on the progressive alignment of these two collective endeavors within and outside the Italian context. As we extended the analytical focus to explore how ecclesial and right-wing actors, dedicated anti-gender organizations, and anti-trans groups discuss gender-related issues at large on social media, we noticed more complex geometries than those documented so far by looking particularly at increased symbolic and practical proximity between dedicated anti-gender organization and gender critical feminists (Lavizzari & Beyer Gregersen, 2026; McLoughlin, 2026; Tudor, 2026) or at the diffusion of anti-LGBT arguments within right-wing parties (Prearo & Scopelliti, 2025).

Indeed, our analysis shows that discursive boundary-spanning processes between the anti-gender galaxy and anti-trans actors unfold unevenly, redefining the symbolic synergies that underpin each project internally as well as their intersections. Although the ecclesial sector provided in the past the anti-gender galaxy with the discursive apparatus against *gender ideology* (Garbagnoli, 2017), its direct involvement in the Italian 'anti-gender crusade' (Garbagnoli & Prearo, 2018) has decreased over time due to the development of secular discourses that pushed this collective endeavor outside of the religious domain (Prearo, 2024). Our analysis suggests that this void is being filled, at least symbolically, by anti-trans groups, which are 'feeding the neo-conservative anti-gender rhetoric' (Gusmeroli, 2024) with discourses almost entirely centered on gender-related issues.

If these symbolic synergies closely recall the 'senselessness' (McLoughlin, 2026, p. 689) of anti-trans politics in 'right-wing times' (Tudor, 2026, p. 623), our results indicate that the 'shared ideological platform' (Prearo & Scopelliti, 2025, p. 159) that underpins it might be less stable than expected. The four sectors do indeed entwine their social media discourses on gender-related issues but they do so around a handful of common objects of interest and while sharing only one priority: presenting themselves as legitimate defenders of a binary social order based on the absolute correspondence between sex and gender – an order in which *rights* and *laws* are grounded in *natural* foundations and cannot become objects of claims, nor instruments of transformation.

This common discursive strategy seems both to draw on and reinforce conspiracy beliefs and theories circulating in the country. Rooted in traditionalist and authoritarian attitudes, as well as in a broader perception of the world as 'dangerous' (Salvati, Pellegrini, De Cristofaro, & Giacomantonio, 2024), these beliefs contribute to constructing gay, lesbian, and increasingly trans* individuals as public enemies while fostering conservative forms of collective action aimed at maintaining existing inequalities (De Cristofaro et al., 2025). In this respect, our findings suggest that, while all four sectors draw on core motifs of conspiracy narratives surrounding an alleged 'LGBT lobby' – particularly, the endangerment of children, and the subversion of the *natural order* – this is not tantamount to the existence of a shared plan of action – let alone a collective identity. Rather, each sector selectively articulates these motifs by channeling its ideological commitments into the diagnostic and, even more, prognostic frames advanced in its posts. The resulting synergies therefore amount to a largely cosmetic overlap that can hardly bridge the distance between the anti-gender galaxy and the anti-trans project as well as the cleavages that appear to run through each of these collective endeavors. Indeed, actors within the Italian anti-gender galaxy do continue to oppose *gender ideology* in its (allegedly) most pernicious forms (i.e., surrogacy and trans* people) while remaining committed to traditional Christian frameworks centered on anti-abortion and *pro-family* claims. At the same time, anti-trans groups seem to bring a more secular critique of surrogacy, gender identity and gender-affirmation pathways. However, this critique is itself internally fragmented insofar as anti-trans parent groups are rather insensitive toward gender critical feminists' wider call to protect cisgender women from perceived forms of neoliberal patriarchy (McLoughlin, 2026; Tudor, 2026) which include surrogacy.

Thus, the political benefits that come from capitalizing on these (in)congruent synergies may be harder to achieve as internal differences increase. Certainly, the actors we considered in our analysis seek to close ranks by masking their transphobia behind a call to defend an 'authentic womanhood that has allegedly been lost' (Bassi & LaFleur, 2022, p. 313). However, this effort also implies that they must ignore elements of one another's discourse that publicly showcase deep incompatibilities – particularly the clash between anti-abortion arguments and pro-choice positions and the 'different relationships to patriarchy' (McLoughlin, 2026, p. 689) that distance gender critical feminists from the whole anti-gender galaxy. It also entails bracketing internal tensions, particularly those faced by dedicated anti-gender organizations and right-wing actors seeking to position themselves as representatives of a Catholic social order (Bellè & Donà, 2021; Prearo, 2024), while progressively drawing further away from ecclesial organizations and closer to gender-critical feminists and their 'leftist' affiliation (Tudor, 2026).

Conclusions

This paper aimed to contribute to an emergent line of research examining the growing alignment between anti-gender and anti-trans collective endeavors. We did so by arguing that the symbolic synergies between collective projects established at the discursive level are crucial to facilitating and even strengthening more practical forms of collaboration among actors with different identities, organizational forms, and action repertoires. On this ground, we examined public discourse on social media and the symbolic

synergies that emerge in and through it between the components of the anti-gender galaxy and anti-trans actors. Focusing on Italy as a key case study, we used an innovative mixed-method approach to identify commonalities and differences in the agendas, objects of interest, priorities and frames advanced by selected ecclesial actors, dedicated anti-gender organizations, right-wing actors and anti-trans groups when discussing gender-related issues online. While confirming the existence of discursive convergences between these actors and their collective projects, our findings also suggest that these symbolic synergies are rather incongruent insofar as they rest on only a few commonalities and require sustained efforts to sideline deep-seated differences.

We acknowledge that our analysis is based on a carefully designed but limited sample that does not allow us to generalize to the entirety of the Italian anti-gender galaxy or anti-trans sector – let alone to exclusionary mobilizations unfolding outside the country itself. Nonetheless, we believe our work makes two main contributions.

First, it provides new empirical evidence that, although situated, complements recent studies on the growing entwinement of traditionalist, religiously grounded opposition to so-called *gender ideology* and a more targeted opposition to trans* people and their rights. Importantly, while existing studies in this domain stress the political benefits of the symbolic and practical coalescence of antithetical actors such as traditionalist anti-gender groups and gender critical feminists, our research instead highlights the potential challenges that emerge under such circumstances. Our results indeed call into question the durability of the symbolic alignment between anti-gender and anti-trans collective projects, given the persistent and profound differences separating them. While such differences do not necessarily imply the immediate dissolution of formal coalitions or preclude their future recomposition, they nonetheless make the common ground for shared political struggle rather bumpy.

Second, and more broadly, we provide evidence of the usefulness of integrating the analytical framework developed within social movement studies around 'boundary-spanning processes' (Wang et al., 2018) with a clearer focus on symbolic synergies discursively constructed and publicly circulated through social media. Social media discourse is key not only to identifying affinities and engaging with unlikely allies but also to revealing the rifts that threaten these connections. Additionally, our evidence complements available studies on the role of social media in fostering shared discursive fronts against self-determination (Zahn & Lünenborg, 2024) by suggesting that these tools can also expose tensions and divergences that may ultimately destabilize collaborations between exclusionary projects and undermine the tight interlocking of discriminatory and oppressive attitudes upon which they rest (De Cristofaro et al., 2025; Salvati, Pellegrini, De Cristofaro, & Giacomantonio, 2024).

Our contribution provides a starting point for further interrogating social media discourse as a crucial space of collective action. Future studies might extend our endeavor beyond its current limits – in the number and types of actors considered, the timeframe examined, and the lack of comparative and longitudinal perspectives – to elucidate whether specific contextual or political opportunities accelerate the formation of collective synergies and to examine the multiple online and offline venues in which public discourse unfolds in hybrid ways.

Notes

1. https://www.facebook.com/100058215904167/posts/3727334020704981/ [Last accessed 08.06.2026]. Full post available in Appendix.
2. In this article, "trans*" refers to individuals whose identities fall outside the gender binary, including non-binary and agender people (Stryker & Blackston, 2023). In line with previous research (McLoughlin, 2026; Prearo, 2023), "anti-trans" refers instead to individual and organizational actors opposing trans* rights. Amongst these, "gender critical feminists" denotes groups and individuals whose opposition draws on traditions of radical feminism, difference feminism, and state feminism, and which, in some contexts, are referred to as "trans-exclusionary feminists" (Cabral Grinspan et al., 2023; Thurlow, 2024). Finally, throughout the text, italics indicate terms/expressions employed by the actors under analysis, while the acronym LGBT (i.e., Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans*) is used for consistency between past and present research that we build our work on. In no way we argue that this acronym covers the myriads of subjectivities whose identities and experiences escape and contest the cis-heterosexual matrix (Butler, 2013).
3. While not encompassing all actors belonging to the four sectors, our sample includes actors consistently identified by both interviewees and extant scholarship as influential in shaping the four sectors' courses of action. Differences in group size reflect this theoretically informed choice; however, the results rely on normalized frequencies that account for the varying number of posts collected for each sector, thereby ensuring comparability across groups of different sizes. To approximate the right-wing sector, we included individual politicians and not parties in light of increased personalization of politics (McAllister, 2007) but also to avoid introducing excessive noise in our initial dataset, given the broad range of issues discussed by political parties through their social media accounts.
4. We employed the all-mpnet-base-v2 sentence-transformer model for semantic similarity, incorporating bigrams ($n = 2$) to capture richer semantic patterns. To manage the resulting increase in computational cost and noise, very frequent bigrams are down-weighted in the TF-IDF step.
5. A complete list of topics is provided in Table 2A in Appendix. The minimum topic size was dynamically set at each step as the higher value between 10 and 1% of the corpus, preventing over-fragmentation while enabling granular topic detection. Topic labeling and validation, and selection as relevant to gender-related issues were conducted jointly by the coders to ensure consistency. Coding inconsistencies and labeling disagreements emerging in both topic analysis and qualitative frame analysis were discussed within the broader research team, which collectively retains responsibility for final decisions. Given the iterative and collaborative nature of this process, conventional inter-coder reliability scores are not applicable.
6. In Italian the verbal form already contains information about the subject of the action. This allowed us to translate the tripartite structure of the semantic structure indicated by Vicari (2010) by considering only a combination of verbs and objects.
7. n_{wj} ranges between 0 and 1 depending on the number of occurrences of the object w_j as a node in a dyad of sector C_i, divided by the total number of occurrences for all the different objects in the given sector.

Acknowledgements

As non-native English speakers, the authors used ChatGPT (OpenAI; GPT-5.3) to support language editing and stylistic refinement. All interpretations, analyses, and conclusions remain their sole responsibility. The views and opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the funding body.

Author contributions

CRediT: **elena pavan:** Conceptualization, Data curation, Formal analysis, Funding acquisition, Investigation, Methodology, Project administration, Supervision, Validation, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing; **Aurora Perego:** Conceptualization, Formal analysis, Investigation, Data curation, Methodology, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing; **Matteo Scianna:** Data curation, Formal analysis, Methodology, Software, Validation, Visualization, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Funding

This research was funded by the European Union's Horizon Europe research and innovation programme under the CCINDLE project (grant agreement number 101061256).

Notes on contributors

elena pavan (lowercase intentional) is Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of Trento. Her work centers on social movements in the hybrid social space and grounds in a combined use between traditional social science methods and network, digital and computational analysis [email: elena.pavan@unitn.it].

Aurora Perego is post-doctoral fellow at Lund University. Her work centers on feminist and LGBTQIA + mobilizations and leans mainly on a combined use of network analysis and qualitative methods [email: aurora.perego@genus.lu.se].

Matteo Scianna is a PhD candidate at the University of Trento. His work spans across various domains from disinformation spread to social media networks modeling and employs a variety of large-scale computational methods [email: matteo.scianna@unitn.it].

Data availability statement

The data that ground this study are kept in the University of Trento Data Repository under closed access due to ethical reasons and privacy requirements. Data will be available after the end of the CCINDLE project (30 September 2026) – upon reasonable request to the corresponding author.

References

Armstrong, E. A. (2002). *Forging gay identities: Organizing sexuality in San Francisco, 1950-1994*. University of Chicago Press.

Bassi, S., & LaFleur, G. (2022). Introduction. TERFs. *Gender-Critical Movements, and Postfascist Feminisms. Transgender Studies Quarterly*, *9*(3), 311–333.

Bellè, E., & Donà, A. (2021). Power to the people? The populist Italian Lega, the anti-gender movement, and the defense of the family. In B. Vida (Ed.), *The gendered politics of crisis and Dedemocratization: Opposition to gender equality* (pp. 135–152). Rowman & Littlefield.

Benford, R. D., & Snow, D. A. (2000). Framing processes and social movements: An overview and assessment. *Annual Review of Sociology*, *26*, 611–639. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.soc.26.1.611

Butler, J. (2013). *Bodies that matter. On the discursive limits of «sex»* (2nd ed.). Routledge.

Butler, J. (2024). *Who is afraid of gender?* Knopf Canada.

Cabral Grinspan, M., Eloit, I., Paternotte, D., & Verloo, M. (2023). Exploring ERFnesses. *DiGeSt-Journal of Diversity and Gender Studies*, *10*(2), 3–13. https://doi.org/10.21825/digest.90008
Creswell, J. W., & Plano-Clark, V. (2007). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*. Sage Publications.
CrowdTangle Team. (2020). *CrowdTangle. Facebook. Facebook, Menlo Park, California, United States*. List ID: 1804172; 1824184; 1805601; 1824193.
De Cristofaro, V., Costacurta, M., Pellegrini, V., Giacomantonio, M., & Salvati, M. (2025). LGBTQ + conspiracy beliefs and collective actions: Factors and processes that (de)motivate support for LGBTQ+ equality. *Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy*, *25*(1), 1–25. https://doi.org/10.1111/asap.70001
Diani, M., & Pilati, K. (2011). Interests, identities, and relations: Drawing boundaries in civic organizational fields. *Mobilization: An International Quarterly*, *16*(3), 265–282. https://doi.org/10.17813/maiq.16.3.k301j7n67p472m17
Evolvi, G. (2023). The world congress of families: Anti-gender Christianity and digital far-right populism. *International Journal of Communication*, *17*, 2805–2822.
Gamson, W. J., & Modigliani, A. (1989). Media discourse and public opinion on nuclear power: A constructionist approach. *American Journal of Sociology*, *95*(1), 1–37.
Garbagnoli, S. (2017). Italy as a lighthouse: Anti-gender protests between the "anthropological question" and national identity. In R. Kuhar, & D. Paternotte (Eds.), *Anti-Gender campaigns in Europe: Mobilizing against equality* (pp. 151–174). Rowman & Littlefield International.
Garbagnoli, S., & Prearo, M. (2018). *La crociata «anti-gender» dal Vaticano alle manif pour tous [The Anti-Gender Crusade from the Vatican to the Manif Pour Tous]*. Kaplan.
Grootendorst, M. (2022). BERTopic: Neural topic modeling with a class-based TF-IDF procedure. arXiv preprint arXiv:2203.05794.
Gusmeroli, P. (2024). Is gender-critical feminism feeding the neo-conservative anti-gender rhetoric? Snapshots from the Italian public debate. *Journal of Lesbian Studies*, *28*(3), 382–399. https://doi.org/10.1080/10894160.2023.2184908
Hajer, M. (1993). Discourse coalitions and the institutionalization of practice: The case of acid rain. In F. Fischer, & J. Forester (Eds.), *The argumentative turn in policy analysis and planning* (pp. 42–76). Duke University Press.
Johnston, H., & Alimi, E. (2013). A methodology analyzing for frame dynamics: The grammar of keying battles in Palestinian nationalism. *Mobilization: An International Quarterly*, *18*(4), 453–474.
Lamont, M., & Molnár, V. (2002). The study of boundaries in the social sciences. *Annual Review of Sociology*, *28*(1), 167–195. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.soc.28.110601.141107
Lavizzari, A. (2025). The anti-gender movement and the populist radical right in Italy: A symbiotic relationship. *European Journal of Politics and Gender*, *8*(1), 207–233. https://doi.org/10.1332/25151088Y2024D000000047
Lavizzari, A., & Beyer Gregersen, A. (2026). The transnational diffusion of anti-trans discourse: A comparative analysis of Denmark and Italy. *Journal of Gender Studies. Online First*, 1–30. https://doi.org/10.1080/09589236.2026.2651823
McAllister, I. (2007). The personalization of politics. In R. J. Dalton, & H. Klingemann (Eds.), *Oxford handbook of political behavior* (pp. 571–588). Oxford University Press.
McCammon, H. J., & Van Dyke, N. (2010). Applying qualitative comparative analysis to empirical studies of social movement coalition formation. In N. Van Dyke, & H. J. McCammon (Eds.), *Strategic alliances: Coalition building and social movements* (pp. 292–314). University of Minnesota Press.
McLoughlin, M. (2026). Transnational transphobias: Feminist and traditionalist anti-gender affective orientations. *Politics and Gender*, *22*(3), 689–713. https://orcid.org/10.1017/S1743923X26100610
Melucci, A. (1989). *Nomads of the present: Social movements and individual needs in contemporary society*. Hutchinson Radius.
Mische, A., & White, H. (1998). Between conversation and situation: Public switching dynamics across network domains. *Social Research*, *65*(3), 695–724.

Paternotte, D., & Kuhar, R. (2017). The anti-gender movement in comparative perspective. In R. Kuhar, & D. Paternotte (Eds.), *Anti-gender campaigns in Europe* (pp. 253–276). Rowman & Littlefield.

Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods: Integrating theory and practice* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.

Perego, A., & Verlooy, R. (2026). Transgender trouble: The construction of an embodied enemy in anti-gender mobilizations in Belgium and Italy. *The Sociological Review*, 1–20. https://doi.org/10.1177/00380261261431113

Prearo, M. (2023). The anti-gender and gender-critical roots of the Italian anti-trans parent activism. *DiGeSt - Journal of Diversity and Gender Studies*, *10*(2), 116–117. https://doi.org/10.21825/digest.89996

Prearo, M. (2024). *Anti-gender mobilizations, religion and politics: An Italian case study*. Taylor & Francis.

Prearo, M., & Scopelliti, A. (2025). Do LGBTIQ+ issues matter for populist radical right? An analysis of Italian parties' social media narratives. *South European Society and Politics*, *30*(1), 159–180. https://doi.org/10.1080/13608746.2025.2463915

Reinhardt, S., Heft, A., & Pavan, E. (2024). Varieties of antigenderism: The politicization of gender issues across three European populist radical right parties. *Information, Communication & Society*, *27*(7), 1273–1294. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2023.2246536

Salvati, M., Pellegrini, V., De Cristofaro, V., Costacurta, M., & Giacomantonio, M. (2024). Antecedent ideological profiles and negative socio-political outcomes of LGBTQ+ conspiracy beliefs. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*, *21*, 899–911. https://doi.org/10.1007/s13178-024-00949-w

Salvati, M., Pellegrini, V., De Cristofaro, V., & Giacomantonio, M. (2024). What is hiding behind the rainbow plot? The gender ideology and LGBTQ+ lobby conspiracies (GILC) scale. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, *63*, 295–318. https://doi.org/10.1111/bjso.12678

Staggenborg, S. (1986). Coalition work in the Pro-choice movement: Organizational and environmental opportunities and obstacles. *Social Problems*, *33*(5), 374–390.

Steinberg, M. W. (1998). Tilting the frame: Considerations on collective action framing from a discursive turn. *Theory and Society*, *27*(6), 845–872. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1006975321345

Stryker, S., & Blackston, D. M. (2023). *The transgender studies reader remix*. Routledge.

Thurlow, C. (2024). From TERF to gender critical: A telling genealogy? *Sexualities*, *27*(4), 962–978. https://doi.org/10.1177/13634607221107827

Tilly, C. (1978). *From mobilization to revolution*. Addison-Wesley.

Tudor, A. (2026). Right-wing times: Fascism, left/right convergences, and the relationship of "gender-critical" to anti-gender. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, *51*(3), 622–647. https://doi.org/10.1086/738994

Vicari, S. (2010). Measuring collective action frames: A linguistic approach to frame analysis. *Poetics*, *38*(5), 504–525. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.poetic.2010.07.002

Wang, D., Piazza, A., & Soule, S. A. (2018). Boundary-spanning in social movements: Antecedents and outcomes. *Annual Review of Sociology*, *44*(1), 167–187. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-soc-073117-041258

West, R. (1987). The feminist-conservative anti-pornography alliance and the 1986 attorney general's commission on pornography report. *American Bar Foundation Research Journal*, *12*(4), 681–711. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1747-4469.1987.tb00554.x

Zahn, P. H., & Lünenborg, M. (2024). #FrauenSagenNein - bridging the divide: Analyzing the affective network of gender-critical alliances. *Feminist Media Studies*, 1–19. https://doi.org/10.1080/14680777.2024.2400497