

GENDER EQUALITY COMMISSION
(GEC)

Drafting Committee
Recommendation on Migrant Women (GEC-MIG)
Questionnaire of June 2020

ITALY'S REMARKS

Italy is pleased to provide the following information concerning the key areas covered by the GEC-MIG, in line with the contents of the replies from other CoE MS.

Employment

The issue of access to employment was mentioned very often (eight responding countries), notably:

- Promoting access to employment for migrant women including at an early stage within or before arrival.
- Eliminating discrimination in employment.
- Addressing the recognition of previous vocational training and work experience.
- Regulating and improving migrant women working conditions.
- Challenging the assumption that women want part-time employment.

Three responding countries mentioned the issue of childcare/conciliation of private and working life.

Migrants represent 25% of the agriculture workforce, of which 7% are women, mostly with temporary job (80%), generally connected to seasonal harvest, and mainly working in the Centre-South of Italy (60%), with higher percentages in Calabria, Apulia and Campania Regions. Most migrant women working in agriculture are young (47% aged less than 40) and wishing to change work due to low salaries.

In 2015, to combat irregularities in the agricultural sector - which affect mainly women and migrants, the Government has established the Network for the quality agricultural job, which certifies the quality of agricultural farms.

Moreover the Parliament passed Law No. 199/2016 in October 2016 to fight against undeclared work and labour exploitation in agriculture ("Legge sul Caporalato"), which extends the objectives of the Fund for Trafficking of Human Beings (THB) victims under Act No. 228/2003 also to victims of illegal recruitment and labour exploitation, including assistance and social integration/protection programs.

Within the rural policy framework women's participation in Regional Rural Programs accounts for about 32% and is focused on measures to increase human capital through educational and informational activities, strengthening the competitiveness, and facilitating generational exchange or new agricultural farms. Under the Programme of activities of the National Rural Network (2014-2020), the Italian Government, in collaboration with research agencies (CREA, ISMEA) is committed to promote several measures such as the project on "Female job, juvenile entrepreneurship, first establishment in agriculture", that is aimed at awareness-raising and at valuing and exchanging best practices.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Policies is about to start a project in collaboration with Unioncamere, aimed at promoting migrant entrepreneurship in Italy. A first action concerns the development of an Observatory on social, economic and financial inclusion of such enterprises, with a web platform and a specific focus on gender (e.g., female enterprises/entrepreneurs). A second actions aims at favouring the creation, development, and strengthening of migrant enterprises while assuring gender equality through specific measures (e.g., a constant focus on gender will characterize all programs and services targeted to entrepreneurs). The goal is, thus, also to favour the development of female entrepreneurship.

Social services

The question of access to social services was mentioned by seven responding countries. Different topics were mentioned: education and training (five countries), health, including sexual and reproductive health and rights (five countries), housing (three countries).

Within the 2012 EIF annual Programme the project "Autonomy and integration for young foreign women" was launched in order to support the autonomy of particularly vulnerable migrants: unaccompanied minors aged 16-17 and young women under 24 at risk of social exclusion. The project involved 380 young women.

Furthermore resources from the European Social Fund have been allocated to facilitate access of migrant women to the labour market.

The project Malaika (concluded in 2014) was financed by ESF and the European Fund for the Integration of TCNs and promoted by the Directorate-General for immigration and integration policies (DGIMM) of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies. It was centred on the development of innovative models aimed at supporting the autonomy and empowerment of young migrant women, e.g., unaccompanied minors (16-17 years old) and young women (up to 24 years old) at risk of social exclusion. Actions included the development of personalized paths, based on sets of integrated services, aimed at social, education and labour inclusion (including legal assistance, intercultural mediation, psychological support, assistance in the search for a house, job orientation, supporting the access to labour market, skills profiling and skills enhancing). 17 territories were involved across 10 Italian regions. 350 young migrant women were involved in the project. Results related to the replicability of Malaika model include the publication of a handbook concerning the multi-disciplinary approach to the take-in-charge of migrant young women.

Trafficking

The issue of trafficking and the particular vulnerability of migrant women in this respect was mentioned by four respondents, including:

- Preventing trafficking in human beings in the migration process.
- Addressing the factors that put women at higher risk to become victims on their way to the destination country and at refugees' reception centres.
- Improving access to protection facilities.
- Implementation of the relevant provisions of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings.

The first National Action Plan against Trafficking in and Serious Exploitation of Human Beings was adopted by the Council of Ministers on 26 February 2016, in line with Legislative Decree No. 24/2014 transposing Directive 2011/36/EU on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims. The Plan is aimed at identifying multiannual intervention strategies for the prevention and fight against these phenomena, as well as measures aimed at increasing public awareness, social prevention, emergence and social integration of victims.

Within this framework a political and institutional Control Room, chaired by the Undersecretary of State in charge of gender equality, was established. In the SC four ad hoc working groups have been created to work on the THB traditional dimensions of 'Prevention', 'Protection' and 'Cooperation', also covering the relation with the protection system for refugees and asylum seekers. The implementation of the Plan and the results achieved at the national, regional and local level have been monitored through a specific System of Monitoring and Verification.

The NAP reflects a multi-level governance approach encompassing the national level represented by the Department for Equal Opportunities at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers as well as the operational actions developed, performed and managed both at the regional and local level. Indeed many Regions have been involved as Leader Applicants or Partners in the framework of 'Article 18 assistance programmes' funded by the Department along the lines of the ESF Regional Operational Plans (e.g. Piedmont, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Emilia-Romagna, Tuscany, Liguria, Marche, Umbria, Lazio, Campania, Calabria, Apulia, Trentino Alto-Adige). In this role they provided a great support to victims' assistance, implementing professional training, social and employment integration and social inclusion actions according to a 'system actions' approach with the direct involvement of public administrations/institutional actors (Prefectures, Police headquarters, Carabinieri Corps and financial police provincial headquarters, health authorities, district attorney's offices – Procure) and educational institutions, professional associations, trade unions, private stakeholders.

Since the introduction, in 2014, of the new single program of emergence, assistance and social integration aimed at victims of trafficking, the Department for Equal Opportunities has provided for the preparation of special calls for the identification of projects presented by accredited bodies for the implementation of social assistance and integration programs, registered in the second section of the Register of Bodies and Associations that carry out activities in favor of immigrants, established at the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies, giving rise to the Call for Proposals n. 1/2016 (15 million euros) and the n. 2/2017 Call for Proposals (22.5 million euros).

The current Government has continued and strengthened the interventions of the single program, increasing the financial resources available. The projects that were started last March 1, following the selection procedure referred to in the Call n. 3/2018, published on 21 December 2018, amount to 24 million euros. The selected projects are 21, corresponding to as many national territorial areas, 11 of which have been proposed by public bodies (Regions and Municipalities) and the remaining 10 by Associations specialized in combating trafficking. The project actions must be completed within the next 15 months and ensure continuity in terms of taking charge of the victims with the activities financed by the previous Call for Proposals. As soon as the process for registering the commitment decree has been completed, it will be possible to proceed with the disbursement of the first tranche of financing to the beneficiaries.

At the beginning of 2019, moreover, the collaboration agreement with the Municipality of Venice was renewed for the management of the anti-trafficking toll-free number (800 290 290). Already envisaged in the previous NAP, the anti-trafficking toll-free number is an important service of first telephone assistance and qualifies as an action system preparatory to interventions on behalf of victims of trafficking and serious exploitation, operating in close connection with the public subjects of the territory and with the projects that implement the unique Program on the territory. The toll-free number is also responsible for the implementation and management of the Computerized System for Collecting Information on the Slab (SIRIT) in collaboration with the Ministries concerned, the Regions and local authorities as well as with the relevant associations in order to monitor the cases treated and the protection and prevention measures for victims' rights, also to allow Italy to fully fulfil the data collection and analysis function required by EU Directive 36/2011.

In support of the Control Room, the Technical Committee operates, appointed with Prime Ministerial Decree of 10 April 2019 and composed of representatives of central and local administrations, law enforcement, third sector bodies involved in the fight against human trafficking and unions. The Committee will have to support the Control room in all its functions, first of all collaborating in the drafting of the new National Anti-trafficking Action Plan 2019-2021.

Italy offers social protection and integration programs and services to victims of trafficking and violence. The associations entitled to offer such programs to victims of trafficking must be enrolled in a specific national Register, held by the Directorate-General for immigration and integration policies of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies (Art. 52 of Presidential Decree No. 394/1999). At present time, the number of enrolled associations is 164. According to Art. 1, para. 220, of the Law No. 205 of 27 December 2017, social cooperatives that hire with open-ended contracts women victims of gender-based violence are given a contributory reduction for 36 months, with a maximum limit of 350 euros on a monthly basis. To that end, social cooperatives must submit the certification issued by the social services of the municipality of residence or by the anti-violence centers, stating the interested women' situation.

Violence against women

The issue of violence against women and gender-based violence was included by four respondents, including:

- Reference to the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) relating to refugee and migrant women.
- Addressing greater vulnerability to violence against women and sexual violence, including for refugees and those affected by humanitarian crises resulting from armed conflict and natural disasters.
- Access of migrant and refugee women and girls to shelters and the challenges arising from issues such as residence conditions

With regard to the issue of violence against women and girls, after the ratification of the Istanbul Convention in 2013, Italy adopted an Extraordinary action plan against sexual and gender-based violence, which established a system of multi-level governance of public policies to combat the phenomenon and support victims, through a total allocation of 40 million euros.

In order to further strengthen and reaffirm its concrete commitment to women, the Italian Government has worked, in collaboration with civil society, on the elaboration of a new National Strategic Plan on male violence against women for the period 2017-2020.

The objective of the Strategic Plan, in its operational dimension, is to provide a comprehensive and multidisciplinary response to the needs of women victims of violence, always ensuring that central and local institutional actors as well as the third sector act in its best interest.

The Strategic Plan represents a good practice, in line with the activities carried out and being implemented by the Department for Equal Opportunities of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, aimed in particular at strengthening the network of support to women beneficiaries of assistance (territorial services, anti-violence centers and shelters), to create an integrated system of collection and processing of data on the phenomena, to raise awareness and inform in a general and targeted way on gender-based violence as well as to educate the younger generations and to train operators who act in support of women who have been the victims of violence.

In synergy with the policies of the European Union and the Council of Europe, transversal to the lines of prevention and protection, it is important to emphasize the value of the Extraordinary National Action Plan action plan as a system of governance of the phenomenon between the different levels of government on the territory and with a total allocation of 40 million euros.

Developed also with the contribution of the civil society associations involved in the fight against violence and of the anti-violence centers with the aim of guaranteeing homogeneous actions on the national territory, the Plan was adopted subject to the agreement of the Unified Conference and acts through a plurality of actions in different areas.

Focusing on the four main axes of prevention, protection, persecution and integrated policies, the plan involves all the competent Public Administrations and provides for:

- Actions aimed at supporting recovery programs for men perpetrators of violence (art. 16 Istanbul Convention);
- Actions aimed at developing an intervention that prevents the reproduction and repetition of violence in Italy against migrant women;
- Taking charge of victims of female genital mutilation;
- Support for femicide orphans and children victims of direct and assisted violence;
- Initiatives to combat male violence against women perpetrated in the workplace;
- A clear and transparent resource management mechanism;
- A system for monitoring and evaluating the actions implemented and to be carried out by means of specific criteria and indicators, in clear adhesion to the Convention of the Council of Europe on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence.

On 24 July 2017, a public notice was issued by the Department for Equal Opportunities for the financing of projects aimed at preventing and combating violence against women, also in implementation of the Istanbul Convention, making available resources amounting to 10 million euros, a public notice to the purpose of promoting and supporting a series of project interventions, including those of an innovative nature, aimed at improving the implementation of all the obligations arising from the Istanbul Convention by strengthening the intervention capacities of general and specialized services and the wider involvement of possible beneficiaries on the issues of violence.

Specifically, the projects that can be financed pertain to the following lines of intervention:

- A. projects aimed at improving the capacity to take charge and protect migrant women, including refugee women;
- B. projects aimed at improving the methods of employment of women victims of violence;
- C. supporting projects for women and those who identify themselves as female prisoners who have suffered violence and awareness-raising actions on the issue of violence specific to the context of penitentiary institutions;
- D. treatment programs for abusive men;
- E. innovative projects of support and protection of women also subjected to the so called 'economic' violence;
- F. communication projects aimed at raising awareness and territorial prevention of gender violence, as well as education projects concerning cultural, artistic and sporting activities, to promote changes in socio-cultural behavior, eliminating prejudices, customs, traditions and any other practice based on stereotyped models of the roles of women and men.

The parties admitted to are proceeding to transmit all the documentation useful for the purposes of the liquidation of the payment tranche. The activities of most of the project proposals related to the different lines of intervention have already started.

By decree of the Department for Equal Opportunities, a Monitoring Committee was set up for detailed analysis, also through on-site interventions, of the activities carried out by each beneficiary, in order to verify their correspondence to what is described in the project proposals admitted to financing.

Gender sensitive asylum and migration policies

The need for gender-sensitive migration policies was mentioned by two respondents and the question of gender-sensitive asylum policies by a further two countries, including gender-based criteria for asylum requests (female genital mutilation, forced marriages) and gender sensitivity during the process (female interviewers and interpreters, allowing for enough time during interviews as victims of violence tend to keep silent about these issues). The question of giving migrant women an independent residence status was mentioned by two countries particularly in cases of divorce or violence.

The project ForWork-Fostering Opportunities of Refugee Workers (started in 2018 - ongoing) is co-financed by the European Union in the framework of the EaSI programme (2014-2020). It is promoted by ANPAL (the National Agency for Active Labour Market Policies) with several partners and associates, including DGIMM. The goal is facilitating access to labour market for vulnerable migrants, e.g., refugees, with a focus on Public Employment Services (PES) and migrant women.

Main activities include training of PES operators, mentors and cultural mediators as well as a set of targeted services (e.g., skills profiling, language and professional training, placement). FORWORK includes three gender-sensitive components. First, female mentors and cross cultural facilitators are assigned to all participating women – about 15% of the total sample – and individual interviews are held separately from family members. Second, PES staff involved receive training from experienced officials of the territorial government offices (Prefectures) about gender-sensitive identification of victims of human trafficking. The training of PES staff is done using the “standard training module”

prepared as part of the work activities of the Steering Committee for the new national plan Anti human trafficking (Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Labour and Social Policies, Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation). This training model has been the subject of the OECD’s “Combating human trafficking along migration routes” experimentation. The report from GRETA and the consortium’s knowledge of Piedmont suggest that criminal organizations might take advantage of the lengthy process for asylum-seeking to exploit women for profit. Refugee women are made aware of the services available to face the trauma, and of the country’s legislation against violence. Third, women with children are entitled to a monthly allowance for work/family reconciliation.