



*Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri*  
*Dipartimento per le Pari Opportunità*

**Thirtieth anniversary of the  
Fourth World Conference on Women and adoption of the  
Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995)**

**NATIONAL REPORT**

**ITALY**

## Section One: Highlights

The present national review illustrates Italy's progress in implementing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action over the last five years, from 2020 to 2024. The structure of the national review complies with the guidelines established by UN Women. The Department for Equal Opportunities at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers has played a leading role in collecting comprehensive and up-to-date information and engaging all relevant Ministries to describe the positive outcomes and challenges related to the key thematic areas under attention for completing the national review: the Department for Family Policies at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies, the Ministry of Education, University and Research, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of the Environment; also the National Equality Council and the National Institute for Statistics were included in this exercise.

- During the COVID-19 pandemic in Italy, progress towards gender equality and implementing the BPfA has been affected. This situation has revealed old and new issues related to ensuring women's rights and empowerment. Throughout the pandemic, women have played a crucial role in our society by providing essential care, managing family relationships, and fulfilling critical roles in healthcare, education, and service industries without receiving the recognition they deserve. There has been a global backlash in terms of advancing gender equality. Still, it is true that the healthcare crisis, with its economic and social implications, has fueled a new impetus in Italy and globally toward the definition of a more reliable normative production to promote gender equality.
- The measures outlined in the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRPP) and the definition of the first National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021-2026 represent the most important examples of programmatic and strategic tools that, in the recovery phase, have guided the strengthening of policies for the empowerment and support of women, complemented by a conspicuous regulatory update that has significantly expanded the legal framework dedicated to the protection of women and girls.
- In the context of strengthening public-private sector relations to foster women's empowerment, the creation and implementation of a National Gender Equality Certification System for Business is undoubtedly to be considered a good practice accompanied by the Code for Businesses in Favour of Motherhood, a self-disciplinary tool aimed at creating a cultural and economic environment of collaboration between employer and employee regarding motherhood so that being a mother does not have to represent for women an alternative desire to the professional career.  
This measure aims to promote the adoption of policies for gender equality and women's empowerment at the company level and consequently to improve the opportunity for women to access the labor market, leadership positions, and balance work and private life. Moreover, it is highlighted that female entrepreneurship is a significant phenomenon in Italy: 22,2% of businesses, about one in five, are led by women.
- Italy has confirmed its firm commitment to the prevention and countering of gender-based violence and domestic violence, offering prompt response to the so-called Shadow Pandemic in the lockdown stages and subsequently strengthening the legislative framework aimed at reinforcing prevention

and victim protection activities, creating a concrete and reliable framework that could serve as an example for many other countries. Italy has demonstrated a strong commitment to creating a more equitable society, showing significant improvements in narrowing the gender gap.

- Despite remaining structural difficulties in women's employment and non-participation in the labor market to cope with family care activities. Italy's performance is improved, as highlighted, along with other profiles, including violence against women, the wage gap, and representation in parliament and managerial positions. In 2023, the employment rate of women aged 25-49 with pre-school children and those aged 25-49 without children improved for the first time in the past four years, returning to the level recorded in 2021. The government's commitment to the issue of gender equality and women's participation in the labor market has resulted in adopting a series of measures and investments to promote motherhood and parenthood empowerment and prevent the vulnerability of families and children. Also indirectly linked to SDG n.5 are the NRRP measures that aim to improve work-life balance, including the plan for strengthening childcare services and extending full-time in schools. At the national level, in the past year, the current government has strongly supported the implementation of concrete measures to promote women's participation in the workforce. As a result, there has been a 1.2 percentage point increase in women's employment over the year, reaching the highest female employment rate ever recorded in Italy. As of the fourth quarter of 2023, the female employment rate in Italy has reached 53.4%, marking a significant milestone in the country's efforts to enhance women's participation in the workforce.
- In 2023, the Gender Equality Index, a tool developed by the European Institute for Gender Equality to monitor disparities between men and women in EU countries, ranks Italy 13th with a score of 68.2 out of 100, where 100 indicates full gender equality. The index also highlights that since 2010, Italy's score has increased by 14.9 points, marking the largest overall score increase among all member states. This significant improvement has propelled Italy up eight positions in the rankings, the most substantial advancement ever recorded by a member state.
  - **Overall Ranking and Score:** Italy ranks 13th among EU countries with a score of 68.2 points, two points below the EU average.
  - **Progress Since Previous Edition:** Compared to the previous edition (data from 2020), Italy has gained one position and improved its score by 3.2 points.
  - **Long-term Improvement:** Since 2010, Italy's score has increased by 14.9 points, the highest improvement among EU countries, resulting in an eight-position climb in the ranking.
  - **Key Area of Improvement:** The long-term improvements are mainly attributed to better performance in the domain of power.

#### **Domain-Specific Insights:**

- **Work:** The GEI 2023 highlights pronounced gender differences in the work domain, with an index value of 65.0 points. Italy consistently ranks last among all EU member states in this domain.
- **Health:** Italy performs best in the health domain, ranking 9th with 89.2 points. Since 2020, Italy has improved by one position in this domain, although the score progress has stalled (+0.2 points).
- **Time:** With 67.4 points, the time domain shows the most significant improvement (+8.1 points) compared to 2020, elevating Italy from the 16th to the 12th position. This change is mainly driven by improvements in the sub-domain of care activities (+13.0 points).
- **Money:** Progress in the money domain has stalled since 2020 (-0.2 points), with Italy scoring 80.3 points and maintaining its 14th position.

- **Power:** In the power domain, Italy scored 59.1 points, with a modest increase of +2.2 points in the last year. Despite this, Italy's position remains unchanged at 12th.
- **Knowledge:** Italy remains in the 13th position in the knowledge domain with a score of 60.8 points (+1.3 compared to last year).

These results demonstrate Italy's strides in gender equality over the past decade, with notable improvements in specific areas such as power and time, although challenges remain in the work and money domains.

## Section Two: Priorities, achievements, challenges and setbacks

### 1. **Over the past five years, what have been the most important achievements, challenges and setbacks in progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of women?**

Italy prioritizes promoting gender equality, protecting women's rights and combating discrimination against women and girls in all governmental actions, both at the domestic and international levels. Over the years, the first line of interventions has focused on implementing Article 51 of the Constitution (which aims to ensure equal access for women and men to elective office) and then promoting women's participation in the boards of listed companies. The legislative action has also been dedicated to the world of work concerning regulatory interventions aimed, for example, at reducing the gender gap in opportunities for growth in the companies, implementing policies for enhancing maternity protection, supporting instruments for the creation and development of enterprises with predominantly or entirely female participation. Growing attention has also been paid to measures to counter violence against women, pursuing three goals: preventing crimes, punishing perpetrators and protecting victims.

Over the last five years, Italy has adopted concrete policies to strengthen gender mainstreaming in all its actions and measures, including by integrating the gender perspective throughout the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRPP). Gender equality is a cross-cutting priority in this measure, with significant resources dedicated to building - through reforms, education and investments - a gender equality culture and equal economic and social opportunities between women and men in all sectors addressed by the Plan. Moreover, the NRPP includes specific measures favoring gender equality, mainly aimed at encouraging greater female participation in the labor market through direct interventions to foster women's employment and entrepreneurship and enabling interventions, particularly strengthening care and education services for children and dependents. The measures under the NRPP also include the adoption of a National Gender Equality Certification System for Businesses, which represents a good practice: it is intended to encourage the adoption of policies for gender equality and women's empowerment at the company level and thus improve women's opportunity to enter the labor market and leadership positions, and work-life balance. Other NRPP interventions have the direct or indirect objective of reducing asymmetries that hinder gender equality from school age and enhancing welfare to ensure effective work-life balance. The Gender Equality Certification System for Business was accompanied by the Code for Businesses in Favour of Motherhood, a self-disciplinary tool aimed at creating a cultural and economic environment of collaboration between employer and employee regarding motherhood so that being a mother does not have to represent for women an alternative desire to the professional career.

Italy has adopted its first National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021-2026 - elaborated in line with relevant European Strategy and to pursue the achievement of the UN SDG 5 within the broader framework of the 2030 Agenda - outlining values, policy direction, and goals for gender equality. The Strategy identifies five priorities to outline and guide government action: employment, income, skills, time, power. Regarding employment, the aim is to support equal opportunities in terms of career, competitiveness and flexibility, facilitating work-life balance, stimulating women's entrepreneurship, supporting the increase of women's employment - also considering the quality of work - and eradicating persistent occupational segregation. As for income, the focus is on reducing the wage gap by facilitating women's permanence in employment and recognizing equal pay for occupations with equivalent socio-economic value. To enhance skills, it is necessary to ensure equal opportunities to develop individual skills in every area of knowledge, with particular attention to STEM disciplines characterized by rooted gender stereotypes and equitable gender representation in academia. Concerning time management, it is essential to promote equitable family sharing of care and assistance activities and to ensure the widespread presence throughout the territory of dedicated early childhood services that are qualitatively good and affordable. Finally, regarding power, it is essential to enhance women's leadership in the economic, political, social, and cultural spheres.

Italy continues to pursue its efforts in fighting and countering violence against women and girls, gender-based violence and domestic violence. Many measures have been adopted to improve the prevention of the phenomenon, the protection of its victims, and to ensure prosecution for its perpetrators, while working with civil society at the local level and increasing the economic resources allocated to this cause as never done before: Law No. 69/2019, known by public opinion as "Red Code", which introduces four new types of crime into the Italian Criminal Code and aims to speed up the establishment of criminal proceedings for crimes of domestic and gender violence, consequently speeding up the possible adoption of measures to protect victims; Law No. 53/2022, which regulated the collection of data and information on violence perpetrated against women in order to monitor the phenomenon and develop policies to prevent and address it; Law No. 168/2023, that has tightened the obligation introduced for domestic or gender-based violence crimes by the Red Code, including the duty of taking information from the offended person within three days and introducing amendments to the Criminal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure, the Code of Anti-Mafia Laws and Preventive Measures, and some special laws to make the framework of measures to prevent and combat violence against women more effective; in addition, the Government introduced measures to provide economic support for women victims of violence, also recognizing the existence of economic forms of violence.

The Extraordinary Action Plan Against Sexual and Gender-Based Violence was adopted for the first time in 2015, after the ratification of the Istanbul Convention in 2013: it has always represented a good practice, and for this reason, with the 2022 Budget Law, it became structural. The National Strategic Plan on Male Violence against Women 2021-2023 (the third Plan adopted by the Italian Government), in line with the four pillars of the Istanbul Convention, aims in particular at strengthening the network of support to women beneficiaries of assistance (territorial services, anti-violence centres 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. The National Strategic Plan on Male Violence against Women 2021-2023 continues to apply until the new Plan, currently being drafted, is adopted. Moreover, to strengthen actions to combat violence against

women and girls, in 2022, the Ministry of Justice established the "Permanent Observatory on the effectiveness of rules on gender and domestic violence".

In 2022, Italy appointed a woman as President of the Council of Ministers for the first time, leading a government that has a good representation of women in the positions of Ministers, Deputy Ministers, and Undersecretaries of State. Under the 19th parliamentary term (the first term with a general reduction in the number of parliamentarians), the representation of women declined slightly in both Chambers: women elected to the Parliament accounted for approximately 33 per cent of the total (of whom 128 in the Chamber of Deputies and 72 in the Senate, respectively out of a total of 400 and 200).

In Italy, the percentage of women on the boards of directors of listed companies has also continued to grow, reaching 42.9 % in 2022 (+1.7 compared to 2021), approaching the target set by the mentioned National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021-2026 (45%). The number of women in the decision-making bodies of the Constitutional Court and the Superior Council of the Judiciary has also increased to 21%, marking a 1.9 percentage point rise compared to June 2022.

Italy continues to promote and implement initiatives to address the under-representation of women in science and research, particularly in top positions. This under-representation limits the potential for research and development and hinders countries' economies. The initiatives encourage female students to access scientific, technological, engineering, and mathematical (STEM) fields.

2. **Over the past five years, what have been the top five priorities for accelerating progress for women and girls in your country through laws, policies and/or programmes?**

*In the narrative report, please explain why your country considers these priorities and how it has addressed them. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses (3-5 pages).*

**Quality education, training and life-long learning for women and girls**

Education provides the most powerful tool for the empowerment of women and girls. ISTAT data for 2022 shows that women in Italy are more educated than men: 65.7% of 25-64 years olds women have at least a diploma (60.3% among men), and female graduates reach 23.5% (17.1% among men). However, the female advantage in education does not translate into an employment advantage. In 2022, 23.8 % of young graduated adults (25-34 years old) have a degree in the fields of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics); the share rises to 34.5% among men (one in three graduates) and falls to 16.6% among women (one in six graduates), highlighting a significant gender gap.

Among the existing stereotypes is the assumption that female students are less inclined towards STEM disciplines. This results in a gender gap in these fields, both in the choice of study and later in career paths. There is still a need to provide better training and support for women to pursue careers in science and technology, which currently have the highest employment rates.

Impact on the education system, to encourage girls to pursue careers with a traditional male majority, is the starting point for a required trend reversal to counter the under-representation of women in strategic and crucial sectors for economic growth.

Furthermore, promoting education and career paths in STEM fields also enables women and girls to contribute to the governance and technical management of climate change and environmental risks.

Within the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021–2026, specific attention is paid to education and women; among the initiatives related to the strategic priority on Skills are: introducing upgrading courses in scientific and mathematical disciplines as well as in financial education; setting up STEM-themed summer camps for primary, secondary and tertiary students to promote scientific subjects from an early age over the summer break, especially for girls; strengthening mathematics curricula in terms of hours and quality of teaching; granting of public scholarships for female STEM students; strengthening individual educational guidance services to promote access to STEM studies; promotion and guidance for vocational qualifications in traditionally male-dominated jobs and vice versa; having places reserved for female students in STEM disciplines through entry tests, especially in universities with a meager female presence. The NRRP has provided a specific investment line called “New skills and new languages” (Mission 4, Component 1, Investment 3.1). The measure promotes the integration, within the curricula of all school cycles, of activities, methodologies and content to develop STEM, digital and innovation skills, according to an approach of full interdisciplinarity and ensuring equal opportunities in access to STEM careers in all schools.

The Ministry of Education and Merit, by Decree No. 184 of September 2023, adopted the "Guidelines for STEM disciplines" that implement the reform included in the NRRP. The Guidelines also outlined education and training actions that include exchanging best practices and implementing initiatives, including extracurricular ones, aimed at primary and secondary school students to stimulate the study of STEM and digital disciplines. Information, awareness-raising, and training actions for families may be supported, particularly on the International Day for Women and Girls in Science in educational institutions, to encourage girls' participation in STEM studies and overcome gender stereotypes.

With the approval of Law no. 187/2023, the ‘National Week of Scientific, Technological, Engineering and Mathematical (STEM) Disciplines’ was established to promote orientation, learning, training, and the acquisition of skills in these disciplines, which are necessary to foster innovation and the country's economic growth.

### **Eliminating Violence against women and girl**

Gender-based violence is undoubtedly the first and most significant obstacle to achieving full and effective equality between men and women. Since the birth of the Italian Republic, the national legislation has gradually adapted to the progressive social and legal recognition of the phenomenon of gender-based violence, suffering, however, from the general reluctance to overcome the consideration of women's submission in the social and economic spheres, from the public to the domestic context. In 1996, the criminal law regulation of the crime of sexual violence was finally approved with the adoption of Law No. 66/1996, which contains rules against sexual violence. This law represents a milestone as it finally criminalizes the phenomenon of violence against women. The legislation is aligned with an international sensibility and guided by the definition of actions to combat gender-based violence as defined by the 1995 UN World Conference on Women in Beijing and BPfA. The ratification of the Istanbul Convention in 2013 marked a progressive evolution of the Italian regulatory system, which has been gradually enriched and strengthened to shape a solid framework for preventing, responding to, combating, and punishing gender-based violence.

Since 2015, Italy has developed a strategic approach to violence against women and girls supported by adequate human and financial resources. The first Extraordinary National Action Plan against Sexual and Gender-Based Violence 2015-2017 established a multi-level governance framework of public policies for combating the phenomenon and supporting its victims. To further strengthen and reaffirm its concrete commitment towards women, the Italian Government has worked on the elaboration of a new National Strategic Plan on Male Violence against Women for 2017-2020. The structure of the Plan follows the so-

called "4 Ps" of the Istanbul Convention: Prevention, Protection and Support, Prosecution and Punishing, and Integrated Policies. It was necessary to wait for the adoption of the third "National Strategic Plan on Male Violence Against Women 2021-2023," which follows the new emergency phase of the COVID-19 pandemic, to transform the Plan into a structural framework. By an official Communication to the Council of Ministers, the Minister for the Family, Natality and Equal Opportunities extended the 2021-2023 Plan until the adoption of the new Plan 2024-2026, which is currently being finalized according to a broad and participatory process that will involve central and territorial administrations, institutions, sector associations, trade unions and employers' organizations.

The 2022 Budget Law has designed an appropriate governance mechanism for the Plan, consisting of an Interinstitutional Steering Committee and an Observatory on the phenomenon of violence against women and domestic violence under the Department for Equal Opportunity of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers.

Specialized services (Anti-Violence Centers and Shelter Houses) represent one of the pillars of territorial anti-violence networks. In Italy, specialized services are managed at the regional level but operate with central funding allocated, specifically by an annual decree signed by the Minister for Equal Opportunities. Funding can only be allocated to facilities that meet specific requirements and can ensure minimum service standards established by a MoU between the State, Regions and Municipalities of 14 September 2022. Specialized services must be provided with adequate structural funding. On 16 November 2023, the Minister for the Family, Natality and Equal Opportunities allocated 40 million euros to the operation of specialized services alone, representing an increase of more than 30% over the previous year.

With regard to the most up-to-date legislative developments, the following should be noted: Law No. 69/2019, known by public opinion as "Red Code", which introduces four new types of crime into the Italian Criminal Code and aims to speed up the establishment of criminal proceedings for crimes of domestic and gender violence, consequently speeding up the possible adoption of measures to protect victims; Law No. 53/2022, which regulated the collection of data and information on violence perpetrated against women in order to monitor the phenomenon and develop policies to prevent and address it; Law No. 168/2023, that has tightened the obligation introduced for domestic or gender-based violence crimes by the Red Code, including the duty of taking information from the offended person within three days and introducing amendments to the Criminal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure, the Code of Anti-Mafia Laws and Preventive Measures, and some special laws to make the framework of measures to prevent and combat violence against women more effective.

Two critical measures were introduced in 2020 to address economic violence: the Freedom Income and the Freedom Microcredit. The Freedom Income for Women Victims of Violence was introduced by Decree-Law 34/2020 to initially contain economic effects of COVID-19, especially for women in a more vulnerable situation, besides facilitating autonomy pathways for poor women victims of violence. Freedom Microcredit consists of two components: business microcredit to support microenterprise or self-employment business initiatives and social microcredit to promote social and financial inclusion for individuals facing particular fragility.

On 22 November 2023, the Minister of Family, Natality, and Equal Opportunity, the Minister of Education and Merit, and the Minister of Culture also signed a Memorandum of Understanding to implement activities targeting students in secondary schools on the issue of violence against women.

### **Right to work and rights at work (e.g. gender pay gap, occupational segregation, career progression, job creation)**

The National Gender Equality Certification System has been introduced by the NRRP (Mission 5 "Inclusion and Cohesion", Component 1 "Active labour policies and employment support") and subsequently



regulated by specific national Law No. 162 of 5 November 2021 (the so-called "Gribaudo Law") and by the 2022 Budget Law. The Department for Equal Opportunities leads the implementation of the Certification System, which aims to encourage the adoption of policies for gender equality and women's empowerment at the company level, thus improving the opportunity for women to access the labour market and leadership positions and harmonize work-life balance; it also aims to ensure a higher quality of women's work by promoting transparency in work processes in companies, reducing the gender pay gap by increasing opportunities for growth in the company and protecting maternity. Certification takes place voluntarily. The certification is issued by accredited certification bodies, which operate based on specific Guidelines (UNI/PdR 125:2022 Practice) that have defined the minimum certification parameters. The Department for Equal Opportunity supports small and medium-sized enterprises and micro enterprises in the certification process by providing contributions to each company for technical assistance and accompanying services to cover certification costs. It has made available to companies a dedicated web portal that serves, among other things, as a platform for collecting gender-disaggregated data and information on certification, as well as the register of assessment bodies accredited for certification. Certified companies can benefit from incentives such as exemptions from social security contributions and bonus mechanisms included in the new Public Contracts Code and the acquisition of bonus scores for the evaluation of project proposals by national and regional European funding authorities to grant state aid to co-finance the investments made. The Gender Equality Certification System represents a good practice of the Italian government, which has registered many certified enterprises.

The Gender Equality Certification System has been complemented by the Code for Businesses in Favour of Motherhood. This self-disciplinary tool aims to create a cultural and economic climate of cooperation between employers and employees regarding motherhood. It ensures that being a mother does not hinder women's career aspirations.

The Code addresses companies that voluntarily wish to adhere to it by intervening in three critical areas for women and parents: favouring career continuity for mothers, prevention and care initiatives for health needs, and adapting working hours and support for childcare and education expenses.

### **Women's entrepreneurship and women's enterprises**

Women's enterprises in Italy comprise 22.2% of the total enterprises. Based on ISTAT data, female enterprises are characterized by a prevalence of individual sole proprietorships (64.1% compared to 58.8% of male enterprises in the year 2020), a lower average number of employees (only 2.9% have 10 or more employees, compared to 5.1% of male enterprises in the same year), and a lower age of enterprise. According to the latest data released by the Ministry of Enterprises and Made in Italy for 2022, female-dominated innovative start-ups represent 13.2% of the total number of innovative start-ups - compared to 12.3% in 2021 - amounting to 1.888.

The "Guarantee Fund for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises" (in Italian "*Fondo di garanzia per le piccole e medie imprese*") is one of the main instruments facilitating access to credit for SMEs; it consists of several Special Sections. The Special Section "Presidency of the Council of Ministers - Department for Equal Opportunity" (the so-called Special Section "Women's Entrepreneurship") was established in 2013 by an agreement among the Department for Equal Opportunity, the Ministry of Economic Development and the Ministry of Economy and Finance; it aims to provide guaranteed support for women-owned businesses and professional women.

The 2020 Budget Law instituted the "Fondo impresa donna" (Women's Enterprise Fund) to promote and support the establishment and strengthening of women's enterprises, programs, and initiatives to

disseminate the culture of entrepreneurship among the female population, including training and orientation programs for STEM studies and the digital economy.

Within the NRRP, Investment 1.2 "Women's Enterprise Creation" (included in Mission 5 "Inclusion and Cohesion", Component 1 "Employment Policies") aims to increase women's participation in the labour market through an integrated strategy of financial investments and support services. The NRRP envisages using the Women's Enterprise Fund and strengthening existing measures not exclusively aimed at female entrepreneurship to support investments in this sector. The overall NRRP resources allocated for the implementation of Investment 1.2 amount to €400 million, distributed as follows: €160 million for incentives to strengthen the allocation of the "Women's Enterprise Fund"; €100 million for New Enterprise - Zero Rate (*Nuove Imprese - Tasso Zero*, NI-TO); €100 million for incentives for the creation and growth of innovative start-ups; and €40 million for accompanying measures, monitoring and communication campaigns. This allocation was revised in October 2023, with €90 million being reallocated from the start-ups measure to the Women's Enterprise Fund, increasing the NRRP funding to 250 million.

### **Unpaid care and domestic work/work-family conciliation (e.g. paid maternity, paternity or parental leave, care services)**

See also "Right to work and rights at work"

Our societies and economies have always relied on care work, especially in recent years, as the Covid-19 pandemic has shown us. This includes professional care services such as medical and social assistance and household and family management tasks like caring for children, family members with disabilities or illnesses, and the elderly. For a long time, care work has been (and still remains) underpaid or unpaid; more importantly, this is still the prerogative of women.

According to World Bank data, in Italy women spend 2.4 times as much time on unpaid domestic and care work than men.

Unpaid care work and domestic work, often undervalued and overlooked, are critical to societal functioning and economic stability. Recognizing and valuing unpaid care work is essential for achieving gender equality and fostering a more balanced and inclusive society.

The importance of unpaid care work cannot be overstated. It supports the well-being of families and communities. Work-life balance-related measures have proven to be decisive in removing obstacles to women's employment. The Department for Family Policies' actions at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers address this multidimensional dynamic. It coherently reflects an organic strategy that provides for an integrated system of interventions: this includes, among other things, a strengthened business involvement towards full female participation in the labour market besides supporting women and parental empowerment. Law No.32/2022 (the so-called "Family Act") introduces multiple objectives to strengthen measures aimed at supporting parenthood and combating low birth rates, reconciling family life and the work of both parents, supporting women's work, as well as facilitating the achievement of financial autonomy for young people. Of relevance is the Dependent Child Universal Single Allowance (*Assegno Unico e Universale per i Figli a carico*- acronym in Italian, AUU), as introduced by Legislative Decree No. 230/2021. This measure is intended to rationalize, simplify, and strengthen the previously existing family support system.

Maternity, paternity and parental leaves are fundamental tools to promote the balance between the desire for a family and the opportunity to remain in the world of work. Especially paternity leave is a crucial milestone in encouraging men to take an equal share of caregiving responsibilities. In Italy, the Family Act has updated the statutory paternity leave in line with the EU Directive 2019/1158 (the so-called

"Work-life balance" EU Directive). When a child is born, adopted, or placed in the father's custody, the father-employee is entitled to 10 working days of paid leave (or 20 working days for multiple births). This leave must be taken between two months before the expected due date and five months after the actual date of birth.

Regarding agile work, which was widely used during the COVID-19 Pandemic, Legislative Decree n. 105/2022 envisages the right to priority for requests to work in an agile modality for parents of children up to twelve years of age without any age limit in the case of a disabled child. The provision is coordinated with that on parental leave, being also available up to the child's 12th birthday. The same priority for requests for agile work has been provided for workers who are caregivers under the 2018 Budget Law.

### **3. Over the past five years, what specific actions have you taken to prevent discrimination and promote the rights of marginalized groups of women and girls?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples, including aims and scope of measures taken, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses (2 pages max.).*

The national system dedicated to preventing and countering gender-based violence also focuses on the most vulnerable women and girls, often at risk of marginalization. The philosophy behind the National Strategic Plan on Male Violence against Women Plan 2021-2023, characterizing its implementation, is also inspired by the principle of inclusion, taking into account victims' vulnerabilities and discrimination. Among the actions outlined could be mentioned: the setting out of general and specific objectives to be achieved through systemic prevention activities which identify the most vulnerable groups, such as disabled women, older women, and migrant women; the definition of codes or guidelines to be drawn up and adopted by institutions for preventing and combating harassment, abuse and sexual exploitation, safeguarding the beneficiaries of the interventions executed, with a particular focus on the most vulnerable women, such as disabled women, older women and migrant women; the creation of structured and formalized tools to help foreign women gain access to criminal and civil justice processes and meet – based on their projects – the additional costs incurred in criminal and civil proceedings if court-appointed/party-appointed experts are needed, to facilitate the protection and integration of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women with particular vulnerabilities.

In line with the provisions of the National Strategic Plan on Male Violence against Women Plan 2021-2023, the Department for Equal Opportunity is currently working on the draft document setting out the guidelines for professionals involved in exit processes from situations of violence, which includes a dedicated section on women belonging to the most vulnerable groups and at risk of marginalization. Considering the issue of disability, it is worth noting that in 2024, a specific working group dedicated to violence against women with disabilities was established within the National Observatory on the Status of Persons with Disabilities, chaired by the Minister for Disabilities.

Italy has been fighting human trafficking for years on several fronts, with multiple tools and with assistance and social integration measures aimed at the emergence and subsequent exit of victims from exploitation circuits. The Italian system for the protection of trafficking victims, operational since 2000, coordinated and co-financed by the Department for Equal Opportunity, has provided a composite structure to address the complex phenomenon of human trafficking. The Department for Equal Opportunity currently provides funding for a total of 21 anti-trafficking projects distributed throughout the national territory; according to 2023 data from the SIRIT System (Computerized System for the collection of information on trafficking in human beings) in Italy, the number of people assisted in 2023 was 1815, of which 62.7% were migrant women.

On 19 October 2022, the Council of Ministers, at the proposal of the President, the Minister for Equal Opportunities and Family and the Minister of the Interior, approved the adoption of the National Plan of Action (NAP) against Trafficking and Serious Exploitation of Human Beings covering the period 2022-2025, implementing EU Directive 2011/36 establishing minimum rules concerning the definition of criminal offences and sanctions in the area of trafficking in human beings and standard provisions for EU member states. The strategic objective of the new NAP is to improve the national response to the phenomenon of human trafficking, ensuring respect for human rights and the principle of non-discrimination, with particular regard to gender mainstreaming and the protection of the rights of minors, women, and vulnerable categories in general.

Among the priorities of the the National Plan of Action (NAP) against Trafficking and Serious Exploitation is the update of the National Referral Mechanism (NRM), a set of recommendations and practical measures designed to guide various stakeholders through all operational phases of combating trafficking and assisting victims, with a focus on early identification and protection.

Within this framework, a call for funding projects was published on December 21, 2023. These projects, implemented at the local level, aim to ensure adequate housing, food, and healthcare for the beneficiaries, followed by ongoing assistance and social integration as part of the Single Program for the Emergence, Assistance, and Social Integration. In Italy the majority of human trafficking victims are women.

The National Office Against Racial Discrimination (UNAR) is the National Focal Point for the implementation of the National Strategy for Equality, Inclusion and Participation of Roma and Sinti 2021-2030, approved on 23 May 2022, under the Recommendation of the Council of the European Union of 12 March 2021 (2021/C 93/01) on equality, inclusion and participation of Roma and Sinti. In the new Strategy 2021-2030, gender equality issues are included in the introduction, in the section on anti-Gypsyism, and in the section on intervention processes, where it is specified that the needs of vulnerable groups and targets (e.g., women, minors, the LGBTI+, people with disabilities, people at risk of statelessness) should be considered, strengthening victim support measures.

**4. Over the past five years, how has the confluence of different crises affected the implementation of the BPfA in your country, and what measures have you taken to prevent their negative impact on progress for women and girls?**

*In the narrative report, please give concrete examples of the effects of different crises on specific critical areas of concern and of measures your country has taken to prevent a reversal of progress and respond in a gender-responsive manner (1 page max.).*

Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated gender inequalities from a socio-economic standpoint. During the pandemic, ISTAT data showed that the decrease in female employment was approximately 2.5 times higher than men, also due to the high number of women in sectors most affected by Covid-19, such as family services, hotellerie, catering, and trade. In December 2020 alone, an alarming 98% of approximately 100,000 people losing jobs were women. The lockdown measures implemented to limit the diffusion of the virus have also increased cases of violence against women, leading to the spread of the "Shadow Pandemic" in Italy as well. According to data collected by ISTAT, calls to 1522 - the public utility number against violence and stalking - increased by 79.5% in 2020 compared to 2019, both by phone and chat (+71%). The growth in the number of calls has occurred since the end of March 2020, with peaks in April (+176.9% compared to the same month in 2019) and May (+182.2% compared to May 2019), but especially on 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, also due to the media campaign. In 2020, this peak, which has always been present over the

years, was significantly more important since, in the week of November 23-29, 2020, the number of calls more than doubled (+114.1% compared to 2019). In April 2020, the Ministry for Equal Opportunities and Family established a female team, "Women for a New Renaissance", consisting of twelve distinguished women who provided practical, feasible and targeted proposals. This team focused on, among other things, opportunities for social, cultural, and economic recovery in Italy, given the aftermath of the health-related emergency. Regarding measures for the better functioning of Anti-Violence Centres (in Italian, CAVs) and shelters during COVID-19, the Government's activities included: an awareness-raising campaign launched in March 2020 on CAVs; social campaign to support women victims of violence during this emergency launched in March 2020; a € 5.5 million-Call to "financing urgent interventions to support measures adopted by Shelters and CAVs in relation to Covid-19".

Since 2020, the use of smartworking has been facilitated both in private and public sectors, being provided as an ordinary work modality (Law-Decree n. 19/2020; Law-Decree n. 30/2021); specific leaves were introduced for parents of children under the age of 12 (with no age limit for children with disabilities), covered by an allowance equalling to 50% of pay (Law-Decree n. 18/2020), to manage educational activities' closure. This measure was subsequently extended, thus widening the range of workers (most recently, by Law-Decree 146/2021). As an alternative to the above-mentioned special leave, bonuses for purchasing babysitting services were also provided – only for specific categories of workers, including healthcare workers. All measures examined have been envisaged for both parents to promote sharing family responsibilities and overcome gender stereotypes. In the post-pandemic dimension, the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP) addressed gender inequalities in a transversal way. It places, alongside the three strategic axes shared at the European level (digitalization and innovation; ecological transition; social inclusion), three cross-cutting priorities, including gender equality promotion, to invest at least €7 billion by 2026 to ensure equal conditions in labour market, besides closing gender pay gap and increasing women in a leadership position, including women in politics. Women's empowerment and combating gender discrimination, increasing skills, youth employment prospects, and territorial rebalancing and development of Southern Italy are not uniquely entrusted to individual interventions but pursued as cross-cutting objectives in all NRRP's components. In addition, the first National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021–2026 helped guide policies to promote gender equality in the post-pandemic recovery phase. With its five priorities, this Strategy defined interventions for each priority and specific indicators to measure gender inequality's main aspects.

5. Over the next five years, what are the priorities for accelerating progress for women and girls in your country through laws, policies and/or programmes?

*In the narrative report, please provide brief reflections on how you plan to address these priorities. In doing so, countries are encouraged to reflect on how their future actions will build on lessons learned from past successes and setbacks (3 – 5 pages).*

Please also refer to Question n. 2.

### **Quality education, training and life-long learning for women and girls**

Education is undoubtedly the most powerful enabler for women to make their voices heard; it is a vital tool to promote women's empowerment in all fields. Education should remain a top priority on the national political agenda and always be perceived as a long-term investment in women's human capital, never just a simple cost.

We are aware that the underrepresentation of women in science and research, especially in decision-making positions, limits the potential for research and development—especially in the most innovative sectors of technology and Artificial Intelligence—and impedes country economies. Bridging the gender gap in STEM is essential for innovation. Diverse teams bring different perspectives and problem-solving approaches, which are crucial in fields that drive technological progress. Women's participation in STEM can lead to more comprehensive research outcomes and technological solutions considering diverse user needs.

Furthermore, promoting education and career paths in STEM fields also enables women and girls to contribute to the governance and technical management of climate change risks.

For this reason, we intend to continue and broaden our efforts to raise awareness among new generations, encourage women's access to STEM disciplines and research, promote gender equality in these areas, advance women's careers, and spread scientific culture among students.

Promoting STEM education for women also involves addressing societal stereotypes and providing role models and mentorship programs. Schools and universities play a critical role by fostering an inclusive environment that encourages girls to pursue their interests in STEM subjects from an early age. Therefore, it would be crucial to strengthen the implementation of all activities included in the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021- 2026, the Guidelines for STEM disciplines and the National Week of Scientific, Technological, Engineering and Mathematical (STEM) Disciplines.

### **Eliminating violence against women and girls**

The objective set by the "National Strategic Plan on Male Violence against Women 2021-2023" - which has been transformed into a structural strategic framework - is to continue redoubling Government efforts to address very specific needs relating to multiple aspects tied to conditions of violence: prevention; protection of victims; punishment of men who inflict violence; training and education of operators and population; information and awareness raising; action taken on abusive men; protection of migrant women and victims of various types of discrimination; employment, economic and housing autonomy; and the creation of more places dedicated to women. Through the Plan's strategic and operational actions, the Department for Equal Opportunities intends to continue providing positive and concrete responses to the priority strategic objectives and identifying adequate structures, interventions and resources to tackle gender-based violence by implementing effective and efficient initiatives. The pursuit of these objectives will be renewed and further strengthened, thanks to the new legislation adopted and implemented within the framework of the new Strategic Plan 2024-2026, which is currently being finalized.

National guidelines on the training of professionals who come into contact with victims of violence in different capacities will soon be published, addressed to all professionals who deal with women victims of violence so that they have the proper communication and intervention tools to support those who have experienced violence adequately.

It will also be crucial to reinforce the implementation of existing legislation on preventing and combating violence, especially the more recently adopted legislation.

We will continue to strengthen the recognition of economic violence and the implementation of measures such as the Freedom Income, which represents an example of a first guarantee of economic independence. Promoting economic independence is critical for two reasons: first, to help women leave violent situations and avoid being manipulated or pressured, and second, to help men become more aware and respectful towards women. Economic independence could grant women greater bargaining power and a recognized social role, changing men's perceptions and modifying the cultural environment. Such a process is undoubtedly helpful in rebalancing gender roles to reduce gender gaps in society.

### **Right to work and rights at work (e.g. gender pay gap, occupational segregation, career progression)**

Promoting gender equality in the workplace is essential for creating a fair and inclusive environment where everyone can thrive. Gender equality policies ensure that women receive equal opportunities for career advancement, equitable pay, and representation in leadership roles.

However, it is not just about promoting growth in professional terms; it is also about enabling women to realize all their aspirations without sacrificing anything. It also means supporting women in their personal choices and, thus, in their desire to become mothers. For a long time, career and motherhood were two opposing options, implying an exclusive choice for women. Although much progress has been made today, we should promote a political vision in which motherhood (and parenthood in general) is not an obstacle to women's careers. Employers can help mothers balance their professional and personal lives by incorporating paid maternity leave, flexible working hours, and parental support programs. These provisions foster families' well-being and enhance overall workplace productivity and morale, fostering a culture where all employees, especially women, can achieve their full potential.

We will, therefore, continue to pursue the reinforcement of all measures to build a working environment where women feel comfortable.

The National Gender Equality Certification System for Businesses and the Code for Businesses in Favour of Motherhood are essential initiatives. These measures have already proven to be effective, so their implementation and adoption should be further encouraged. This will help transform the country's business environment, making it more supportive of women's talents and attentive to female professional and personal needs and ambitions.

### **Unpaid care and domestic work / work-family conciliation**

Unpaid care and domestic work, often undervalued and overlooked, are critical to social functioning and economic stability. These tasks, which include child and elder care, household maintenance, and other forms of caregiving, are predominantly performed by women. Recognizing and valuing unpaid care work is essential for achieving gender equality and fostering a more balanced and inclusive society.

The importance of unpaid care work should not be overstated because it supports the well-being of families and communities. In economic terms, if this work were compensated, it would contribute significantly to any country's GDP.

Despite its immense value, unpaid care work remains largely invisible in traditional economic metrics and undervalued in policymaking. This invisibility perpetuates gender inequalities, as women disproportionately bear the burden of unpaid labour, limiting their opportunities for paid employment, education, and personal development. Addressing this issue requires a multifaceted approach, including policy changes, cultural shifts, and support systems.

We should acknowledge and appreciate women's unpaid care work and caregiving responsibilities. This includes recognizing the valuable soft skills they acquire and finding ways to apply them in the workplace for career advancement. Women have traditionally played a significant role in caregiving, often at the expense of their professional and personal aspirations. It is crucial to shift the perception that family and domestic care are solely women's responsibilities and no longer hinder women's career prospects. To achieve this, there must be a more equitable distribution of domestic and caregiving duties between men and women. Additionally, we should explore new methods to recognize and utilize the skills gained from unpaid care work, particularly interpersonal and organizational abilities that are highly beneficial in a professional context.

Work-life balance is another crucial factor in achieving gender equality. Flexible working hours, remote work options, and supportive workplace cultures—considering the needs of motherhood and

parenthood—are vital in facilitating this balance. Employers can play a significant role by promoting gender-neutral policies that encourage men and women to share caregiving responsibilities equally.

We will also continue to strengthen the provisions related to the use of parental leave (in addition to maternity and paternity leave).

Cultural positions towards caregiving also need to evolve. Social norms that view caregiving as primarily a woman's responsibility must be challenged. Encouraging men to take on more caregiving duties and promoting the idea that caregiving is a shared responsibility can help reduce the gender disparity in unpaid care work.

By recognizing caregiving's economic and social importance, implementing supportive policies, and promoting cultural shifts, societies can create an environment where women and men can seize equal opportunities and realize their family and professional ambitions. This benefits individuals and families and contributes to a more equitable, productive, and inclusive society.

### Section Three: Progress across the 12 critical areas of concern

This section covers progress across the 12 critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action. To facilitate the analysis, the 12 critical areas of concern have been clustered into six overarching dimensions that highlight the alignment of the BPfA with the 2030 Agenda. This approach is aimed at facilitating reflections about the implementation of both frameworks in a mutually reinforcing manner to accelerate progress for all women and girls.

### Inclusive development, shared prosperity and decent work

#### **Critical areas of concern:**

- A. Women and poverty
- F. Women and the economy
- I. Human rights of women
- L. The girl child

#### **6. Over the past five years, what actions has your country taken to advance gender equality in the world of work (including informal and non-standard employment as well as entrepreneurship)?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples of measures taken, including aims and scope of measures, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. Where appropriate, please also report on your engagement or intention to engage in the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection. (2 pages max.).*

The data released by the National Institute of Statistics (Istat) for January 2024 marks a record for female employment in our country. The number of employed women has reached 10.095 million, and the employment rate has made a significant leap, reaching 53%, while the unemployment rate has dropped to 8.2%. The employment growth primarily involved older age groups, particularly those aged 55-64. However, positive dynamics are also observed among younger women. Among those aged 25-34, employment increased by 2.4% between 2019 and 2023, while among those under 25, the growth was 6.6%. For the 25-34 age group, the employment rate rose from 54.3% to 57.8%. In contrast, there has been a significant



decrease in employment levels among middle-aged women. For those aged 35-44, employment dropped by 7.9%, resulting in approximately 200,000 fewer employed individuals between 2019 and 2023. Among those aged 45-54, the decline was smaller but still notable (-1.1%). These trends are attributable to demographic dynamics that are profoundly impacting the labor market and particularly affecting female employment, leading to a rapid increase in the average age of working women, despite rising employment levels across all age groups. In the past 5 years, the Italian government strongly supported the implementation of concrete measures to promote women's employment. Among the main measures adopted to directly or indirectly promote women's work are the adoption of the National Gender Equality Strategy 2021-2026; contribution reductions for hiring women and working mothers; the increase of the Guarantee Fund for small and medium-sized enterprises dedicated to female enterprises; the establishment of a Gender Equality Certification System and a Code for businesses supporting maternity; the strengthening of parental leave; and a significant increase in specific funding for initiatives to encourage girls to pursue education in STEM field. The law no. 197 of 2022 (2023 Budget Law), provided incentives for the hiring of women and young people. The incentive is intended for permanent hires and the conversion of fixed-term contracts into permanent contracts, between January 1 and December 31, 2023, for female and young personnel. Law no. 213 of December 30 2023 (2024 Budget Law), provided contribution reductions for working mothers with children. For the period 2024-2026, female employees on permanent contracts with three or more children are entitled to a 100% reduction in contributions until the youngest child reaches the age of 18 (within an annual limit of 3,000 euros, prorated monthly). For 2024, this benefit is extended experimentally to working mothers with two children, until the youngest child reaches the age of 10. Alongside the efforts of institutions, the government has also deemed it essential to involve the business sector, which can play a crucial role in actively creating an inclusive work environment and removing barriers that limit women's access and advancement in employment. In this context, Italy has introduced for the first time a Gender Equality Certification System for companies and a Code for business supporting maternity. This Code complements and integrates the Gender Equality Certification System, an important systemic action carried out by the Department for Equal Opportunities under the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP).

The Gender Equality Certification System and the Code for business supporting maternity share some fundamental assumptions and objectives:

- Promote a profound cultural change in the world of work, particularly in the private sector, where the most significant challenges to achieving full gender equality are often found.
- Acknowledge that this cultural change requires the active role of businesses, which must be involved in addressing gender equality and the issues women face at work

Ministry of Economic Development (acronym in Italian, MISE) manages several measures:

- Women's Enterprise Committee established inter alia to formulate relevant legislative-related recommendations and to develop the involvement of women in business and economy;
- Women's Enterprise Fund, to develop women's entrepreneurship;
- The 2021 Budget Law (allocating 40 million Euros to MISE, to provide support to women's investment in business start-up and finance the capital structure of women enterprises, specifically in the high technology sectors);
- Training and orientation programs towards individuals and professions in which the presence of women must be adapted to the indications provided at the European and national levels, with initiatives to promote the value of women enterprises in schools and universities;
- Entrepreneurial culture among women;
- Guidance and training on STEM studies and towards professions typical of the digital economy;
- Communications to spread women business culture and promote funded programs.

As mentioned earlier on, NRRP provides 400 million Euros to be dedicated to women entrepreneurship. Moreover, women entrepreneurship benefits from 2 dedicated measures from the Guarantee Fund for small-sized enterprises (SMEs): ON (Oltre Nuove financing women companies at 0 rate) dedicated to young entrepreneurs and women (of all ages); SMART and START (major financing for startup established by

women). Information about these measures is available at Invitalia website. Approximately 70% of Italian population lives in rural areas: we are talking about 41.3 million inhabitants. Women represent 51% of the population living in Italian rural areas (Annex 14). The special section "Presidency of the Council of Ministers – Department for Equal Opportunities" of the Central Guarantee Fund for SMEs, established within the Central Guarantee Fund for SMEs through an agreement signed in 2013 between the Presidency of the Council of Ministers – Department for Equal Opportunities, the Ministry of Economic Development (now Ministry of Enterprises and Made in Italy), and the Ministry of Economy and Finance, is a tool designed to promote female entrepreneurship by facilitating women's access to credit through the provision of a public guarantee. It should be noted that the female-led enterprise approaching the special section does not receive a cash contribution but has the possibility to obtain financing without additional guarantees on the amounts guaranteed by the Fund. Therefore, a woman who wants to start a business can rely on this potential resource when seeking financial support. This fund was refinanced in 2022 with 6.5 million euros, bringing the total capacity of the Fund to 56 million euros in final endowment. Furthermore, in 2023, the agreement between the Department for Equal Opportunities and the Ministry of Enterprises and Made in Italy for the regulation of the Fund was updated. On October 29, 2021, Italy ratified the 2019 ILO Convention No. 190. By recalling previous reporting cycle, National Equality Councillor has promoted, by an MoU with National Bar Council, nation-wide anti-discrimination courses being still ongoing, for lawyers, also to establish a short-list of relevant competences to help local Equality Councillors in judicial cases. On October 26, 2021, Italy's Senate approved Bill 2418. By amending Legislative Decree 198/2006, it provides for National Equality Councillor to report biennially to Parliament on implementation of equal opportunity at workplace-related legislation. Moreover, of relevance are: The strengthening of the mechanism for monitoring gender situation of staff, through a revision of Art.46 of the above Legislative Decree, thus expanding subjects required to submit biennial report (companies with up to 50 employees – and no longer up to 100); Inclusion of gender equality Councillors in Technical Committee for gender certification to be established at DEO.-cutting objectives in all NRRP's components. Law 162/2021 on Amendments to Equal Opportunities Code between Men and Women at Workplace aims at ending gender pay gap or wage discrimination between men and women. This Text was unanimously approved by the Parliament. The reform envisages important innovations as for widening the scope of gender discrimination cases; greater transparency for companies required to adopt the report on staff remuneration, besides introducing a bonus system that provides incentives for employers to prevent potential pay gaps and promote equal opportunities culture. By Budget Law 2022, the Fund to support gender pay equality is increased by 50 million Euros, thus expanding women's participation in labour market also through the definition of incentive procedures for companies that ensure gender equality. This Fund will make it possible to finance bonus mechanisms for companies, including those with fewer than 50 employees, in accordance with Equal Pay Act (Law 162/2021), which introduced the gender equality certification. Moreover, relevant Fund is established at MoL for training activities, being preparatory to obtaining the certification of gender equality (three million Euros, for 2022). National Gender Equality Strategy, 2021–2026, illustrates Work-related Priorities and related implementation measures to which to add: Supporting vulnerabilities. Mainstreaming of a gender perspective associated with vulnerabilities (disability, social and economic hardship, violence, labour exploitation and gangmastering) in designing Measures of the Strategy and adoption of specific Measures for vulnerable targets. NRRP also presents programmatic measures aimed at encouraging female participation in labour market and career's advancement, in line with European Union's pillar on social rights, besides correcting imbalances that hinder equal opportunities since school age.

**7. In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to recognize, reduce and/or redistribute unpaid care and domestic work, promote work-life and family balance and strengthen the rights of paid care workers?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples of measures taken, including aims and scope of measures, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as*

*those listed in question 3. Specific examples of how the increase in unpaid care and domestic work during COVID-19 pandemic was addressed are encouraged. Where appropriate, please also report on your engagement or intention to engage in the Global Alliance for Care. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

During the Pandemic time, extraordinary measures to support households and women, through specific work-life reconciliation tools, are to be mentioned:

(a) Since 2020, use of smart working has been facilitated both in private and public sectors, being provided as an ordinary work modality (Law-Decree 19/2020; Law-Decree 30/2021);

(b) Specific leaves were introduced for parents of children under the age of 12 (with no age limit for children with disabilities), covered by an allowance equalling to 50% of pay (Law-Decree 18/2020), to manage educational activities' closure. This measure was subsequently extended, thus widening range of workers (most recently, by Law-Decree 146/2021). Parents of children up to the age of 16 have been granted right to take time off work without payment of remuneration or indemnity, nor recognition of figurative contributions, with a ban on dismissal and the right to keep their jobs;

(c) As an alternative to above-mentioned special leave, bonuses for purchase of baby-sitting services were also provided – only for certain categories of workers, including healthcare workers. All measures examined have been envisaged for both parents, with a view to promoting sharing of family responsibilities and overcoming gender stereotypes.

Social funds' resources have been increased, including within Family Policies Fund, to strengthen the system of territorial interventions and services dedicated to family and children. Moreover, Decree on Accessible Tourism provides for activation of internships and finances municipal projects to encourage play activities and playgrounds for children. These are measures that also benefit women and families and, therefore, are actions capable of reducing disadvantages faced by female population with disabilities besides combating discrimination against women in social and work's inclusion. Also important is Fund for inclusion of persons with disabilities (PwDs), at PCM with an endowment of 100 million Euros. By Act 234/2021, this Fund was fed with 50 million Euros for 2022 and 2023. Among intervention's areas, there are initiatives for people with autism spectrum disorder. However, closure of schools with use of distance learning (acronym in Italian, DAD) has penalized about 70% of pupils with disabilities.

Work-life balance-related measures have proven to be decisive in removing obstacles to women's employment. The action of the Family Policies Department to address this multidimensional dynamic coherently reflects an organic strategy that provides for an integrated system of interventions. This includes, inter alia, a strengthened involvement of the business towards full female participation in the labour market besides supporting women and parental empowerment. Law No.32/2022 (the so-called "Family Act") introduces multiple objectives to strengthen measures aimed at supporting parenthood and combating low birth rates, reconciling family life and the work of both parents, supporting women's work, as well as facilitating the achievement of financial autonomy for young people.

With "#RiParto - Corporate Welfare Paths to Facilitate Mothers' Return to Work, Promote Birth Rates, and Work-Life Balance" (the most recently published public notice from June 2022, with a financial allocation of 50 million euros), the aim is to incentivize companies that want to promote an integrated system of tools within their work organization to support the return to work of working mothers after childbirth and maternity. Specifically, the intervention aims to positively impact the professional life of women after childbirth or adoption by offering tools to harmonize work demands with the care needs of their new

children, also with a view to a more equitable sharing of caregiving time between parents and the conscious assumption of the new parental role. In December 2023, the ranking of submitted project proposals was approved, and the related financial resources were allocated.

To support families and facilitate the reconciliation between private life and work, a fund was established with Decree-Law No. 48 of May 4, 2023, amounting to 60 million euros for the year 2023. This fund is intended for socio-educational activities for minors and finances initiatives by municipalities, to be implemented in collaboration with public and private entities, aimed at strengthening summer centers, territorial socio-educational services, and centers with educational and recreational functions that carry out activities in favor of minors. The fund is managed by the Department for Family Policies.

Moreover, it is worth mentioning the Universal Single Allowance (AUU), introduced into the Italian legal system by Legislative Decree No. 230 of December 21, 2021, aimed at encouraging birth rates, supporting parenthood, and promoting employment, especially female employment. This measure serves as a tool for rationalizing, simplifying, and enhancing the previous family support system. The AUU is a financial benefit granted monthly to households based on their ISEE (Equivalent Economic Situation Indicator) at the time of the application, taking into account the number of children, their age, and any disabilities. All households are eligible for this benefit for each dependent child, in a varying amount according to the family composition. Eligible families must possess Italian or EU citizenship, be residents or domiciled in Italy, subject to income tax payment in Italy, or be non-EU citizens residing in Italy for at least two years or holding an employment contract of at least six months. The allowance, paid monthly by INPS, is granted for each dependent child until the age of 21 (under certain conditions) and without age limits for children with disabilities. For newborns, the entitlement to the allowance starts from the seventh month of pregnancy. The amount varies from a minimum of €54.1 to a maximum of €189.2 per month for each minor dependent child. For dependent children aged 18 to 21, the amounts range from a minimum of €27 to a maximum of €91.9 per month. Additional allowances are provided in specific cases, such as for households with at least four children, households with three or more dependent children aged one to three years, households with children under one year of age, children with disabilities, orphan households, or mothers aged 18 to 21. The AUU is monitored by the National Observatory for the Single Allowance for Dependent Children, appointed by ministerial decree on July 19, 2022, and chaired by the Minister for Family, Birth Rates, and Equal Opportunities. This observatory provides technical-scientific support for analyzing, monitoring, and evaluating the economic and social impact of the AUU. The observatory prepares a semi-annual report for the Minister on the implementation status of the allowance to identify possible actions to improve the intervention's effectiveness.

## **8. In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to reduce the gender digital divide?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples of measures taken, including aims and scope of measures, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

In collaboration with Department for Equal Opportunities, every year in March, this Ministry kicks off, “The Month of STEM” initiative to promote relevant disciplines in schools of all levels. The STEM competition: Feminine Plural is issued yearly, to encourage students to develop critical reading of prejudices and gender stereotypes regarding these subjects, as well as to encourage female students to study these subjects. This Competition proposes the realization of a project to be chosen between two thematic areas which for the school years 2017/2019 and 2018/2019 were: 1. Female scientists of yesterday and today; 2. The right to count. For the 2019/2020 year, the two planned topics – suspended due to Covid-19 – were: 1. A Girl’s Game;

2. STEM Open Access. In 2020–2021, Ministry of Education also supported expansion of educational offerings of educational institutions that proposed relevant projects.

Within National Gender Equality Strategy, 2021–2026, specific attention is paid to education and women pursuant to final report by ‘Women for a New Renaissance’-TF. Regarding ‘Skills’ area it indicates: to ensure equal access and equal development of mathematical and scientific skills as a means of reducing gender gap in education. To this end, the following are measured: Percentage of female seniors in high school who do not yet have minimum skills level in mathematics (around 50% compared to 36% of male seniors); Percentage of female students enrolling in STEM degree programmes (this, compared to the total enrolled students, is currently 27%); To increase female participation in academic world: Percentage of female full professors in relation to the total (currently at 25%). Likewise, measurement cover digital, information and communication technology (“ICT”) skills of women with a view to enhancement: Percentage of women with “above-average” digital skills out of the total female population (today only 19% are “above-average”, being below male counterparts and European female average).

The talent of women is often hindered by gender discrimination that affects not only their access to top positions (vertical discrimination) but also their participation in entire productive sectors traditionally occupied by men (horizontal discrimination). These sectors are now more strategic and highly remunerative than ever, such as STEM fields, the digital transition, and the green transition. STEM skills, in particular, can be considered a strong accelerator for women's empowerment, facilitating the removal of barriers to access to both basic and advanced educational paths, decent work, and digital services. Nationally, this goal is outlined in both the National Recovery and Resilience Plan and the National Gender Equality Strategy 2021-2026.

Numerous initiatives have already been implemented to promote equal opportunities and combat gender stereotypes in educational paths, contributing to the removal of cultural barriers, raising awareness among teachers and students, and valuing the talents of female and male students in STEM fields. In 2023, with Law No. 187 of November 24, 2023, Italy established the National STEM Week, aimed at promoting orientation, learning, training, and the acquisition of skills in these disciplines. STEM Week will be held annually from February 4 to 11.

A fundamental aspect is the orientation of girls towards these sectors, which should be carefully managed and aimed at promoting STEM subjects starting from middle school. Specifically, the resources provided by Law 187/2023 (2 million euros) can be used, in close coordination with the Ministry of University and the Ministry of Education, for a systemic action aimed at promoting and disseminating models of virtuous cooperation between universities and the school system.

**9. In the past five years, how has the macroeconomic and fiscal policy environment affected the implementation of the BPfA in your country, and what macroeconomic policies has your country implemented in support of a more gender-equal economy?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details on the evolution of public and private finance mobilized to advance gender equality, monetary and trade policies, as appropriate, as well as any effects of fiscal consolidation / austerity measures, such as cuts in public expenditure or public sector downsizing, on women and men, boys and girls. (2 pages max.)*

In post-pandemic dimension, National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP) addresses gender inequalities in a transversal way. It places, alongside the three strategic axes shared at European level (digitalization and innovation; ecological transition; social inclusion), three cross-cutting priorities, including gender equality promotion, to invest at least 7 billion Euros by 2026, which will be used to ensure equal conditions in labour

market, besides closing gender pay gap and increasing women in leading position, including women in politics.

Italy ranks first among EUMSs, in absolute values, of the two main instruments of Next Generation EU (NGEU): Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF); Cohesion programme REACT-EU. The RRF alone will guarantee 191.5 billion Euros, to be used between 2021–2026, of which 68.9 billion Euros as non-reimbursable grants. Italy also intends to make full use of its financing capacity, through RRF loans, which for our country is estimated at 122.6 billion Euros.

As mentioned, NRRP also focuses on gender equality promotion, to be pursued in all six Plan's missions: digitalization, innovation, competitiveness, culture and tourism; green revolution and ecological transition; infrastructures for sustainable mobility; education and research; inclusion and cohesion; health. The combination of reforms and investments underlying this Plan – the result of intense coordination among central Government, regional and local Authorities, and CSOs, in providing a firm response to the pandemic crisis – is to be seen also as a tool to solve the most important causes of Italian economy and society's fragility: from low productivity of last twenty years to persistent gaps in opportunities at geographical, sectoral, generational and gender levels, nationwide.

As for gender balance and women's empowerment, one of NRRP's key objectives is to markedly improve gender inclusion indicators and reduce youth unemployment: Women's empowerment, combating gender discrimination and increasing employment prospects for young people are therefore horizontal objectives across NRRP.

Especially the third strategic axis, "Social inclusion", is a key theme, which, not coincidentally, gives title to Mission 5 (Annex 2). Ensuring full social inclusion is fundamental for improving territorial cohesion, helping economic growth, and overcoming inequalities, often accentuated by Covid-19. This Mission envisages a total allocation of 22.6 billion Euros to facilitate participation in labor market, including through training, strengthening active labor policies and social inclusion's promotion. The three priorities characterizing this Mission are: gender equality; protection and valorization of the youth; and overcoming territorial divides. Therefore, women's empowerment and combating gender discrimination, increasing skills, employment prospects of the youth, territorial rebalancing and development of Southern Italy are not uniquely entrusted to individual interventions, but pursued as cross The Italian Strategy for Gender Equality 2021–2026, elaborated by DEO in line with relevant European Strategy, was presented, in August 2021, to Ministers' Council by Minister on Equal Opportunity and Family, Ms. Bonetti. An implementation period is now beginning: an inter institutional Steering Committee chaired by Ministers' Council President and a National Observatory at Ministry of Equal Opportunities and Family with monitoring functions are planned. In drafting this document – serving as a strategic framework for NRRP's implementation and the Family Act reform –, DEO started a wide-ranging and inclusive consultation process.

Italy's vision for gender equality is: Making Italy a country where people of all genders, ages and backgrounds have same opportunities for personal and professional development and growth, for access to education and employment, with no inequality in terms of income or dignity, and can realise their potential, knowing that equality is guaranteed with no compromises in a modern country being ready to face challenges ahead, in accordance with Art.3 of Italian Constitution. To pursue this ambition, 5 strategic priorities are also defined, one for each gender equality pillar, to outline and guide governmental action:

- Employment: Create a fairer labor market in terms of equal career opportunities, competitiveness, and flexibility, by supporting women's participation, also after the dramatic impact of the pandemic, in particular by helping parents to achieve a work-life balance, and by stimulating female entrepreneurship, especially in innovation. Supporting increase in female employment, in particular by

enhancing collective bargaining, emphasising quality of work, and removing sectoral segregation – promoting presence of women in typically male sectors and presence of men in typically female sectors;

- **Income:** Reduce gender pay gaps by facilitating women’s participation and retention in labor market through support for care responsibilities, enhancing skills, ensuring fair remuneration for jobs and occupations with equivalent socio-economic value and promoting economic independence;
- **Skills:** Ensure equal opportunities in skills development and in the expression of individual talents in all fields of knowledge, in particular mathematics and science and technology, by removing cultural barriers and gender stereotypes, as well as ensuring equal gender representation in academia; in addition, promote an approach towards desegregating women’s and men’s skills in all gender-sensitive fields;
- **Time:** Promote equal sharing of unpaid care and assistance tasks (childcare, parenting and elderly care) between men and women and ensure quality, affordable and comprehensive primary care throughout the country;
- **Power:** Support equitable gender distribution in top management and economic, political, social and cultural leadership roles, in terms of both representation and accountability, and encourage training and development of a large talent pool of equal gender representation.

A set of indicators is defined to measure key factors of gender inequality. The selection of indicators will take place after due involvement not only of experts but also of institutional representatives. In light of the impact on the socio-economic context caused by Covid-19, the monitoring activity may also concern medium- and long-term effects of the crisis, to assess effectiveness of the measures envisaged by NRRP vis-à-vis the relevant goals.

#### **10. In the last five years, what actions has your country taken to reduce/eradicate poverty among women and girls?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples of measures taken, including aims and scope of measures, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

The Single and Universal Allowance, being an economic support to families, allocated for each dependent child until the age of 21 (if certain conditions are met) and without age limits for children with disabilities (Q.17);

Single-income or unemployed single-parent bonus. Law 178/2020 establishes a Fund for unemployed single parents or single-income earners. The allowance, up to 500 Euros, is a monthly contribution acknowledged in presence of children with disabilities;

Fund for non-self-sufficiency – Strengthening assistance, services and independent-living projects for persons with serious disabilities and non-self-sufficiency and for the support of those who take care of them. By Law 234/2021, this Fund is supplemented by 100 million Euros, for 2022; 200 million Euros, for 2023; 250 million Euros, for 2024; 300 million Euros, starting from 2025;

Fund for assistance to persons with serious disabilities without family support (“Dopo di noi” Fund) – Strengthening accompanying paths for leaving family unit of origin and for deinstitutionalisation of persons with very serious disabilities. This Fund also finances interventions in support of home care and programs to increase awareness, empowerment and development of skills for the management of daily life and for the achievement of the highest possible level of autonomy. By Law 178/2020, for each of the years 2021, 2022

and 2023 this Fund is increased by 20 million Euros, for a total of 76 million for each of the years 2021, 2022, 2023;

Fund for family caregivers – This Fund finances legislative interventions aimed at recognizing social and economic value of non-professional care by family caregivers. By Law 178/2020, “Fund for family caregivers” is established for a total of 90 million Euros, from 2021 to 2023;

In terms of inclusion policies, mention should be made of Fund for policies for PwDs for implementation of legislative interventions that will reorganize disability support policies. By Law 234/2021, this Fund is increased by 50 million Euros annually, from 2023 until 2026;

Fund against discrimination – will be used to finance activities to promote women’s and gender freedom and activities to prevent and combat forms of violence and discrimination against PwDs. By Law 178/2020, “Fund against discrimination and GBV” is established, with endowment of 6 million Euros in total from 2021 through 2023;

By Law-Decree “Supports”, dated March 19, 2021, a Fund for inclusion of PwDs is established with an endowment of 100 million Euros. By Law 234/2021, this Fund is financed by 50 million Euros for 2022 and 2023; and initiatives dedicated to people with autism spectrum disorder are included among intervention’s areas.

A look at the main activity that characterizes rural territories, that is, the agricultural sector, shows how the incidence of work has been progressively reduced over the years and how this reduction has mainly affected women, whose rate has gone from 30.8% in 2008 to 25.9% in 2019 (ISTAT data).

The reduction in agricultural businesses run by women in the period 2014–20 was recorded, above all, in the North (-11.9%) and in the Centre (-7.1%), while in the South of the country, where 51.5% of businesses are present, the drop was very limited (-0.7%).

It should be noted that the drop in female labour in agriculture has not affected those areas in which women have invested the most in recent years. On the contrary, we are talking about diversification of activities in farms, such as:

- Agritourism, in which the growth rate of the female quota that manages them has risen, from 2010 to 2019 – 3 points higher than those conducted by males (+25.1% against 22%);
- Educational activities. More than 40% is exercised in female farms;
- Social agriculture, of which the leadership of the farms in which it is practiced is 54% in the hands of women.

Although the growing share of women in the diversification of farms is mainly due to the strong desire of women to carve out an active role within farming, it is also the result of support from women’s agricultural Associations, supporting their members in the paths towards professional growth, as well as public policies, which, within Rural Development Programs, have strengthened the interventions in support of business diversification, by also increasing the relevant financial resources.

As for female entrepreneurship in agriculture, by Budget Law 2020 (with initial 15 million Euros), the Government introduced the measure entitled “Women in the field”, to encourage the development and consolidation of farms run and managed by women. This measure was refinanced in 2021 with an additional 15 million Euros. As for relevant employment, in 2018 in Italy the number of fixed-term contracts in agriculture was more than 986 thousand and a little more than 1/3 of these concerned women (INPS data, 2018).



ISTAT statistics on the numbers of labourers indicate how non-EU immigrant female workers in agriculture in the last 10 years have grown by more than 20%, while there has been a gradual decrease in EU foreign workers (-14.5%). Non-EU labourers are mostly employed on seasonal contracts of less than 51 working days. This contributes to an increase in the level of vulnerability in terms of less protection for these workers (Annex B).

Since September 2015, the Quality Agricultural Work Network (established by Law-Decree 91/2014) has been active, to include a rewarding element, consisting inter alia in giving visibility to companies standing out for compliance with labour standards. As of July 2019, there were about 3,800 participating farms, about 2% of Italian farms. Most likely, this percentage will face a significant increase over the next five years thanks to the introduction, in the future Common Agricultural Policy, of the social dimension in cross-compliance, which makes EU support conditional on full compliance with standards to safeguard and protect workers. Italy has strongly supported this dimension, which provides for the reduction of support for companies that do not comply with relevant rules.

The low participation of women in the labor market can significantly relate to economic violence, creating a vicious cycle that reinforces exclusion and economic dependence. The government has thus placed particular emphasis on economic violence, often underestimated but with profound consequences on women's lives and autonomy. Economic violence limits women's ability to make independent decisions, escape abusive situations, build an autonomous future, and perpetuates the cycle of domestic violence by making women economically dependent on their abusers. In this context, for the first time in Italy, the Freedom Income for women victims of violence has been established. This consists of a financial contribution, initially set at a maximum of 400 euros per month per person, granted as a lump sum for up to twelve months. The 2024 Budget Law refinances this measure with 10 million euros for the period 2024-2026 and makes it permanent from 2027 with an annual amount of 6 million euros. Additionally, in 2020, a Protocol was signed with the Italian Banking Association (ABI), Federcasse, the National Microcredit Agency (ENM), and Caritas to activate business microcredit to support microenterprise or self-employment initiatives and social microcredit to promote social and financial inclusion for particularly vulnerable situations.

#### **11. In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to improve access to social protection for women and girls?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples of measures taken, including aims and scope of measures, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. In answering this question, countries are encouraged to reflect on any lasting, gender-responsive social protection innovations adopted in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

The 2023 Budget Law provides for :

Changes to the "Opzione Donna" Pension Scheme: The eligibility for the pension scheme "Opzione Donna" has been extended to 2023. Women who have accrued at least 35 years of contributions and are at least 60 years old by December 31, 2022, can access it. The age requirement is reduced by one year for each child, up to a maximum of two years. This applies to caregivers, women with disabilities (74% or higher), and women who have been laid off or work for companies with active crisis tables.

Increase in the Universal Single Allowance for Dependent Children: From January 1, 2023, the allowance has been increased by 50% for families with children under one year old and for families with three or more children aged one to three years, with an ISEE up to 40,000 euros. Additionally, a 50% increase in the allowance is provided for families with four or more children. The increments for children with disabilities are confirmed and made permanent.

Parental Leave: An additional month of optional maternity or paternity leave is provided, paid at 80%, up to the child's sixth year.

The 2024 Budget Law includes:

New Nursery Bonus: The nursery bonus is increased to 3,600 euros for children born from January 1, 2024, for families with an ISEE up to 40,000 euros, and with at least one child under 10 years old, to help cover nursery fees.

Increased Protections for Maternity and Paternity: The allowance for the second month of parental leave is increased to 60% of the salary (up from the current 30%) up to the child's sixth year. For 2024, the allowance for the second month will be paid at 80% of the salary, the same as currently provided for the first month.

**12. In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to improve health outcomes for women and girls in your country?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples of measures taken, including aims and scope of measures, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

At the national level, the issue of gender health has been addressed since 2018 with the enactment of Law No. 3 of January 11, 2018. This law introduced the gender dimension in the medical field for the first time, covering clinical drug trials, the definition of diagnostic and therapeutic pathways, professional training for healthcare workers, and public information. In implementation of this law, a Plan for the Application and Dissemination of Gender Medicine has been operational since 2019. This plan aims to ensure the awareness and application of gender differences to guarantee the quality and appropriateness of services provided by the National Health Service uniformly across the country. Monitoring and results on the application of the law are conducted annually through a report sent by the Minister of Health to Parliament.

This report details the promotion and support actions for gender medicine implemented across the country, including through the establishment of a dedicated Observatory set up at entities overseen by the Ministry of Health. The same level of accountability is also required for voluntary termination of pregnancy (Law No. 194 of May 22, 1978). Under Article 16, the Minister of Health is required to present an annual report to Parliament on the implementation of the law for the social protection of motherhood and voluntary termination of pregnancy. This is a detailed report based on certified data collected from individual Local Health Authorities. Attention to the gender dimension has led to tangible results in Italy, highlighted by the EIGE in the development of the 2023 Gender Equality Index (GEI), in which Italy achieved its best performance in the health domain, ranking 9th among Member States. Moreover, the gender-specific aspect must also be considered concerning the aging population. On this issue, the Italian government has recently approved a law introducing specific measures to prevent frailty among older adults, promote their health, and support active aging

Violence against women is a human rights violation and a crime and it is also a major public health problem. The effects of gender-based violence affect the well-being of the entire community. The introduction of the Law No. 53/2022 will make it possible to rationalize and make permanent the collection of data and information on gender-based violence against women, to monitor the phenomenon and develop policies to prevent and counter it. In this respect, the information flow concerning Emergency Rooms has recently undergone important changes, aimed at detecting emergency room's accesses attributable to gender-based violence.

Against this background, the National Guidelines for Health Authorities and Hospital Authorities on rescue and socio-health care for women victims of violence, annexed to the Decree of the President of the Council of Ministers of 24 November 2017 provides guidance on adequate and integrated intervention in the treatment of the physical and psychological consequences that male violence causes to women's health. The Pathway for women who survive violence, outlined therein, aims at guaranteeing a "timely and adequate taking into charge of women starting from triage and up to their accompaniment/guidance, if they consent, to the dedicated public and private services present on the territory of reference in order to elaborate, with them, a customized project of support and listening for the escape from the experience of violence suffered".

A relevant survey was carried out by involving the General Directorates of the Health Department of the Regions and Autonomous Provinces. The results of this Survey collected answers from 80% of the Emergency Rooms, besides Level 1 and Level 2 of the Hospitals' Departments of Emergency and Admission (in Italian, DEA) and pediatrics Emergency Rooms.

Measures: -

- Every year in October, Breast Cancer Awareness Month, a prevention and health promotion campaign is conducted, sponsored by the Ministry of Health. The campaign aims to promote healthy lifestyles and raise public awareness about the importance of cancer prevention through regular check-ups
- Adoption on August 6, 2020 of the "National Prevention Plan 2020-2025 that, represents the fundamental central planning tool for implementing health prevention and promotion interventions across the territory for all citizens. It aims to ensure both individual and collective health, as well as the sustainability of the national health service, through a multidisciplinary, intersectoral, and coordinated approach. The plan emphasizes the centrality of individuals and communities, recognizing that health is determined not only by biological factors or individual behaviors but also by social and economic factors, which must be addressed to ensure an equitable approach. Actions aimed at improving health literacy, increasing individuals' capacity to act for their own health and that of the community (empowerment), and enhancing interaction with the health system (engagement) are therefore important elements of the planning.

The plan reiterates a One Health approach, considering the necessity of an organic and harmonious vision of the relationships between the environment, animals, and human ecosystems to effectively address potential or existing health risks. From this perspective, the PNP 2020-2025 also serves as a tool for achieving the objectives of the 2030 Agenda adopted by the UN for the sustainable development of the planet, which defines a combined approach to the economic, social, and environmental aspects impacting people's well-being and societal development. The plan considers the dramatic experience of the COVID-19 pandemic, emphasizing the indispensability of programming based increasingly on integration, coordination, and networking among the various institutions, structures, and activities present in the territory. This approach ensures flexibility, effectiveness, and timely responses to both emergencies and the population's health needs.

- The Ministry of Health launched the 2022 information campaign "Protect Their Future," aimed at promoting vaccination against the human papillomavirus (HPV), whose consequences affect mainly women and girls. In fact this campaign targets girls and boys starting at the age of 11, for whom the vaccination is recommended and free.
- For 2023 Budget Law package, a reduction in VAT on sanitary pads and diapers was included. The VAT rate for feminine hygiene products was reduced from 10 percent to 5 percent, effective January 1, 2023.

### **13. In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to improve education outcomes and skills for women and girls, including in sectors where they are underrepresented?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples of measures taken, including aims and scope of measures, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

Among the most important tools for promoting women's empowerment, ensuring their rights, and achieving gender equality, education plays a leading role. In particular, educational poverty can be a significant obstacle to the process of women's emancipation.

The Ministry of University and Research is committed to encouraging women's participation in scientific and technological degrees through support programs and promoting gender balance in study classes, ensuring equal opportunities for access and academic success. For instance, the Scientific Degrees Plans (PLS) and Orientation and Tutoring Plans (POT) aim to increase enrollments and reduce dropout rates in universities, promote gender balance in study courses, and mitigate obstacles to university enrollment and attendance due to students' socio-economic conditions or disabilities.

#### **Support for Female Students and Graduates from Disadvantaged Socio-Economic Backgrounds**

Adequate resources are provided to financially support female students and graduates from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, ensuring they have access to psychological well-being support services and internship and placement opportunities. For the year 2023, the distribution of the Ordinary Financing Fund (FFO) allocated €37 million to support university programs aimed at enhancing services and interventions for students. The Ministerial Decree of July 7, 2023, no. 809, art. 9, letter f), communicated the allocation of resources to universities for interventions promoting student inclusion. The resources are intended for: A. Inclusion of students, particularly through the activation or enhancement of psychological well-being support services; B. Curricular internships and placement of graduates within one year of graduation; C. Support for off-campus students with disadvantaged socio-economic conditions.

#### **Promoting Education and Professional Guidance for Women**

The Ministry promotes access for women to educational and professional guidance programs that enable them to acquire relevant skills for the labor market, including those related to technology and digitalization. To address structural issues in the Italian education system, the Ministry advocates for orientation programs as a systemic action involving active university participation. Universities' role is not self-promotion but coordinating systemic actions to help students become aware of their aptitudes and capabilities.

The systemic action required from universities should be based on collaboration and cooperation rather than competition among higher education institutions. The orientation project is envisioned as a "pact" among all higher education institutions, aimed at forming national networks between various universities and AFAM institutions, signing specific agreements with schools beyond territorial limits. It is designed as a large-scale action, involving territories beyond each institution's proximity and based on a collaborative philosophy, making university orientation an essential tool for Italian students and their first contact with adult life.

#### **Strengthening University Networks to Support Female Students and Promote Active Orientation**

The Ministry of University and Research plans to systematize initiatives undertaken in recent years to accelerate the country's technological transition, focusing on promoting STEM subjects and gender balance in related courses. A Working Group is being formed to promote interest in STEM subjects, empower women, and combat the stereotype of women's alleged lack of aptitude for these disciplines, which creates a significant gender gap in both professional and academic fields.

#### **Women's Participation in Research**

The Ministry is committed to the full involvement of women in research programs and projects aimed at combating educational and digital poverty. Promoting active participation of women in the design, implementation, and evaluation phases of initiatives is crucial.

#### **Integrating Gender Perspectives in Research and Orientation Projects**

Gender perspectives should be integrated into research projects on educational and digital poverty, considering the specific needs and challenges faced by women and girls in different social and cultural contexts.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation of Results**

Mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of initiatives adopted to combat educational and digital poverty and promote active orientation for female students need to be implemented. This ensures that the outcomes are inclusive and meet the needs of women and girls.

## **14. What actions has your country taken to ensure that economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic closes gender gaps in poverty, employment, social protection, education, and/or health that the pandemic has exacerbated?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete innovations, including aims and scope of measures taken, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information, with a focus on measures that have outlasted the emergency response. In doing so, countries are encouraged to reflect on lessons learned from the pandemic for ongoing and future crises. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the Italian government implemented numerous initiatives to manage the health emergency. This summary outlines the measures adopted, specifying their areas of intervention.

### *Economic Support Measures*

The containment measures stipulated by various emergency decrees from the early stages of the Covid-19 health emergency aimed to curb the spread of the virus, resulting in economic consequences for all affected productive activities. To address these economic and social impacts, the government adopted support measures funded through numerous requests for parliamentary authorization for increased borrowing between 2020 and 2022 to cope with the extraordinary events related to the pandemic emergency.

### *Work and Welfare*

Particular measures were also enacted in the areas of work and welfare, as well as education. Key measures in work and welfare aimed to contain infections in workplaces (e.g., promoting remote work, adhering to safety protocols signed by the government and social partners, and requiring green passes), protect employment (e.g., providing specific wage supplementation benefits and a temporary ban on layoffs), and support workers' income most affected by the crisis through economic compensation for reduced earnings.

### *Education*

The education sector was directly affected by the interruption of in-person teaching for various periods, replaced by distance learning (DAD). When returning to the classroom was possible, detailed preventive health measures were adopted, such as wearing masks in school premises and observing quarantine periods in classes affected by infections, with students allowed to return only after a negative test result.

### **Support for Territorial Entities**

State interventions included support measures for territorial entities to ensure the exercise of fundamental functions and compensate for revenue losses from exemptions and suspensions provided by emergency decrees due to the health emergency.

### *Gender Equality Initiatives*

Numerous initiatives were undertaken by the Department for Equal Opportunities to promote gender equality, including:

- Establishing the “Women for the New Renaissance” Task Force, which developed ideas and concrete proposals for recovery contained in the document “Women for a New Renaissance” (May 25, 2020).
- Increasing the special section dedicated to female entrepreneurship in the SME Guarantee Fund by €5 million during the initial lockdown phase.

- Publishing the STEM 2020 Notice (initially €2 million, later increased to €4 million due to its success) to fund projects aimed at educational activities in STEM subjects during summer camps and the school year, receiving 994 applications and funding 279 projects.
- Creating a partnership with Google Digital Training to offer training opportunities for new digital skills during the Covid-19 emergency through free courses on the Department for Equal Opportunities platform.
- Allocating €3 million starting from 2020 for the personal training of housewives and househusbands, particularly in acquiring digital skills, with criteria and distribution methods defined by the December 16, 2020 decree from the Minister for Equal Opportunities and the Family.
- Increasing resources for anti-violence centers and shelters through several provisions, including:
  - Distributing €30 million in 2019 among regions for anti-violence centers and shelters with accelerated procedures (December 4, 2019 DPCM).
  - Allocating €28 million for 2020 resources among regions (November 13, 2020 DPCM).
  - Providing an additional €5.5 million for urgent interventions determined by the pandemic for shelters and anti-violence centers to ensure the health protection of women, their families, and operators (April 29, 2020 Notice).

### *Support for Women Victims of Violence*

A series of interventions aimed at supporting the economic emancipation of women victims of violence included:

- Ensuring shelters and anti-violence centers were included among recipients of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) from the Department of Civil Protection during the early lockdown days.
- Ensuring prompt accommodation and protection for women with circulars from the Minister of the Interior in agreement with the Minister for Equal Opportunities, recommending prefetturas support anti-violence centers and shelters by identifying temporary housing solutions for quarantine before entry into the structures.
- Signing the May 21, 2020 Protocol between the Minister for Equal Opportunities and the Minister of Public Administration with the Network of "Guarantee Committees for Equal Opportunities, Employee Well-being, and Against Discrimination" (CUG) to serve as "antennas" for detecting gender violence phenomena within public administrations.
- Signing the "Microcredit of Freedom - Microcredit for the Economic Emancipation of Women Victims of Violence" Protocol on December 3, 2020, promoted in collaboration with ABI, Federcasse, the National Microcredit Authority (ENM), and Caritas, to activate:
  - Business microcredit for entrepreneurial initiatives or self-employment.
  - Social microcredit for social and financial inclusion in particularly fragile situations.
- Adopting the DPCM of December 18, 2020, to allocate €3 million for 2020 for the "Freedom Income Fund for Women Victims of Violence," providing resource distribution among regions for INPS to issue the Freedom Income.
- Allocating €900,000 to the International House of Women for debt repayment with Rome Capital (Article 24 bis, Decree-Law No. 104/2020).
- Allocating €1 million from 2020 for programs to rehabilitate male perpetrators of violence, with projects to be submitted by April 20, 2021 (December 18, 2020 Notice).

### *Communication Initiatives*

To inform women about available support, several communication initiatives were undertaken:

- Communicating through FAQs on institutional websites that anti-violence centers and shelters had not suspended activities due to emergency provisions.
- Promoting the use of the public utility number 1522, a 24/7 helpline for victims of violence and stalking, with awareness campaigns, an updated app, and use of the YouPol app to report domestic violence crimes and send real-time messages, including videos, to State Police operators.

- Signing an April 1, 2020 Protocol between the Minister for Equal Opportunities and FOFI, Federfarma, and Assofarm to disseminate the 1522 number and make informational guidelines available in pharmacies.
- Advertising the 1522 number and app on Postamat ATM monitors and screens in post offices.
- Enforcing the DPCM of October 30, 2020, implementing Law No. 160 of 2019, mandating the display of the 1522 number in public administration offices providing services, public establishments, general medical and pediatric care facilities, and pharmacies, translated into several languages.
- Broadcasting "positive" messages to women on RAI, replaying the "Libera puoi" spot to remind that the 1522 helpline is always active 24/7.
- Launching a campaign against male violence against women, promoted by the Department for Equal Opportunities and realized with the collaboration of the Italian Football Federation and the National Football Team, leveraging the universal language and values of sports to promote cultural change in the national community.

## Freedom from violence, stigma and stereotypes

### Critical areas of concern:

- D. Violence against women
- I. Human rights of women
- J. Women and the media
- L. The girl child

### **15. Over the past five years, which forms of gender-based violence, and in which specific contexts or settings, has your country prioritized for action?**

*In the narrative report, please explain why your country considers these priority areas or contexts and how it has addressed them. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses (3-5 pages).*

Ending gender-based violence and strengthening support for victims is one of the main priorities of the Italian government's action and one of the domestic priorities on gender equality in the framework of the Italian G7 Presidency in 2024.

#### **X Intimate partner violence/domestic violence, including sexual violence and marital rape**

The coherence and effectiveness of policies to prevent and combat male violence against women is ensured by the definition of the Strategic Plan on Male Violence against Women 2021-2023, presented in the Council of Ministers on November 18, 2021. In order to achieve an effective coordination of the various institutional and non-institutional actors involved in the implementation of these policies, the governance system outlined in the Plan was activated, which specifically consists of an inter-institutional Steering Committee (policy-making body) and an Observatory on the phenomenon of violence against women and domestic violence. This governance system was made structural by Article 1, paragraph 149, of Law No. 234 of December 30, 2021 (Budget Law 2022). Both bodies were established by decree of the Minister for Equal Opportunities and Family Affairs pro tempore: the Steering Committee, a body with policy-making functions, was established by decree March 29, 2022, and the Observatory by decree April 12, 2022.

With specific reference to the Observatory, it is chaired by the Prime Minister or the Delegated Political Authority for Equal Opportunities and consists of three bodies: the President, the Assembly, and the Technical and Scientific Committee. The Observatory carries out monitoring, analysis, study and proposal

functions, including for the purpose of developing and implementing the National Strategic Plan against Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence. The Assembly of the Observatory met on two occasions in 2023 and one in 2024, and the Technical and Scientific Committee on six occasions in 2023, and twice in 2024.

It should be noted that the Strategic Plan on Male Violence Against Women 2021-2023 remains in force until the adoption of the new Strategic Plan 2024-2026, without a break in continuity, as was the case with the previous Strategic Plans on male violence against women. Nowadays the Department for Equal Opportunities is engaged in the drafting of the new National Strategic Plan against violence against women and domestic violence, which will be finalized in the coming months with contributions from relevant Administrations, women's associations involved in preventing and combating gender-based violence, employers' and trade union organizations, territorial bodies and institutions. The new Strategic Plan will be adopted after obtaining the opinion at the Unified Conference, as provided for in Article 5, paragraph 1, of the Decree-Law No. 93 of August 14, 2013.

The National Strategic Plan against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence constitutes the regulatory framework on preventing and combating male violence against women and domestic violence. The structure of the National Strategic Plan that is adopted follows the four P: Prevention, Protection, Punishment/Prosecution of Crimes, Coordinated Policies. The National Strategic Plan represents the programmatic framework containing the guidelines and development stages for achieving the goals set for preventing and combating male violence against women and supporting victims. Within the framework of Italy's international commitments, the implementation of the Plan contributes to the fulfillment of its obligations under the Council of Europe's Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence of 2011 (so-called Istanbul Convention) as well as to the achievement of Goal 5 of the United Nations' Agenda 2030, bearing the goal of "achieving gender equality and self-determination for all women and girls." In addition, to make it structural and concretely operational, the Plan, as mentioned following recent legislative changes, is accompanied by appropriate resources starting in 2022.

### **X Violence against women and girls facilitated by technology (e.g. online sexual harassment, online stalking, non- consensual sharing of intimate images)**

#### *Inter-institutional Group on technological tools*

During the unanimous approval of Law No. 168 of November 24, 2023, on "Provisions for combating violence against women and domestic violence," and entered into force on December 9, 2023, the Government made a commitment to establish at the Department for Equal Opportunities an Inter-institutional Working Group for the identification of technological and information technology tools functional to strengthening measures to prevent the phenomenon of violence against women. For this reason, on March 25, 2024, the first meeting of the aforementioned Group was held. The Group is composed of representatives of the Department for Equal Opportunities and the Department for Digital Transformation of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, the Communications Guarantee Authority, the Personal Data Protection Authority, the Ministries of the Interior, Defence and Business/Made in Italy.

*The Safer Internet Center (SIC) - Connected Generations* is the national center for promoting the safe and positive use of the web. The SIC is aimed at the younger generations, pupils and students, also actively involving teachers, parents, bodies, associations and companies to make the Internet a better environment with activities that offer (in)formative tools useful for promoting a positive and critical use of network and to prevent possible uncomfortable situations.

The reference portal for the project is <https://www.generazioniconnesse.it/> Support materials for teachers and teachers responsible for combating bullying and cyberbullying identified at individual educational institutions are also published on the site.



The Safer Internet Center- Connected Generations project is co-financed by the European Commission and has been coordinated by the Ministry of Education and Merit since 2012, furthermore it is carried out in partnership with some of the main Italian companies dealing with online security: Guarantor Authority for Childhood and Adolescence, State Police, the Universities of Florence and 'La Sapienza' of Rome, Save the Children Italia, Telefono Azzurro, the EDI non-profit cooperative, Skuola.net, the Giffoni Experience Autonomous Body.

The Project includes listening and reporting lines for problems related to online activities. The Hotlines are directly connected to the Postal Police and it is also possible to make reports anonymously. Online risks represent all those dangerous situations resulting from non-conscious and responsible use of digital technologies by users. The Safer Internet Center includes 7 macro-actions, including awareness campaigns, online training for teachers, in-depth thematic meetings and seminars; it also provides support and help, online and by telephone, to students, parents and teachers who encounter difficulties in using digital technologies.

Among the most significant actions of the SIC it is worth mentioning the e-learning path aimed at teachers of all educational institutions for the creation of an internal institute ePolicy. This is a fundamental document for planning and/or updating digital citizenship activities (art.5 Law n. 92-2019), aimed at promoting online risk prevention skills, recognising, managing, reporting and monitoring episodes linked to incorrect use of digital technologies, as well as useful for identifying prevention actions for bullying and cyberbullying phenomena to be included in the PTOF (Three-Year Plan for Educational Offer) of schools.

Among the most common risks besides cyberbullying, we can mention hate speech, sexting, violation of privacy, gambling, internet addiction and the dangers associated with online video games (e.g. : improper contact with adults, violent and/or inappropriate content; uncontrolled purchases, etc.).

The SIC - Generazioni Connesse project is also projected at the level of European cooperation in synergy with the other European Safer Internet Centers for the exchange of good practices, materials, educational and communication resources. The Italian Safer Internet Center was actively represented at all the meetings planned by the European Commission: Safer Internet Forum and Insafe training meeting, aimed at encouraging the exchange of good practices. The Safer Internet Center has biennial editions.

*NOISIAMOPARI.IT PORTAL ( [www.noisiamopari.it](http://www.noisiamopari.it) )*

The portal was created to collect contributions, teaching materials and proposals for new training courses designed for male and female teachers, for students and for families, with the aim of starting activities to combat stereotypes and discrimination. The portal is also a useful tool for sharing good practices proposed by educational institutions and associations participating in the Forums and institutional observatories established at the Ministry of Education and Merit.

### **X Femicide**

The Department of Public Security of the Ministry of Interior publishes a weekly monitoring of gender-related violence crimes. The report analyses crimes potentially attributable to family and domestic violence. It provides an overview of the voluntary homicides committed, specifically those with female victims, comparing them with the same reporting period of the previous year.

### **X Gender based violence in conflict-affected settings**

In 2022, the Department for Equal Opportunity signed two conventions, one with the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and one with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). These conventions consolidated integrated mechanisms for protecting vulnerable Ukrainian women in Italy. Still, in 2022, on the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, the

Minister for the Family, Natality and Equal Opportunities organised an advocacy event dedicated to the war rapes in Ukraine.

The Department for Equal Opportunities in collaboration with the Department of Civil Protection and the International Organization for Migration signed a MoU operational from 1 October 2022 to 31 December 2022. In this context they have implemented a project dedicated to consolidating integrated mechanisms of protection and enforcement of the rights of Ukrainian women welcomed in Italy. Moreover, the project aims to promote social inclusion for the progressive integration into the Italian socio-economic structure and provide professional resources in preparation for women's future return to Ukraine at the end of the conflict.

### **X Female Genital mutilation**

Female genital mutilation is a core matter for which Italy was one of the supporting countries for the United Nations General Assembly resolution for the worldwide ban on female genital mutilation of 2012. Since 2006, our country has introduced a specific penal provision for FGM by Act No. 7/2006, which includes the principle of extraterritoriality, meaning that FGM is punishable even if committed overseas by an Italian citizen or by a foreign citizen resident in Italy. The law addresses both the ban and the prevention of FGM, in relation to monitoring the incidence, victim services, awarenessraising, training and guidance for healthcare professionals. In other terms the legislation aims at: - strengthening the preventive approach aimed at eradicating the practice both through information interventions aimed at the migrant communities and through training of professionals who come into contact with them; - improving knowledge and monitoring of the phenomenon through a data collection system on the prevalence and estimation of risk for young girls and female adolescents. Furthermore the Italian legislation provides for the request of asylum for "acts of physical or psychological violence including sexual violence" by Legislative Decree No. 251/2007. In the framework of Extraordinary National Action Plan against Sexual and Gender-Based Violence, there is a specific focus on "taking care of victims of female genital mutilation".

The Department for Equal Opportunities in order to implement the provisions of Law no. 7 of 9 January 2006, on 'Provisions concerning the prevention and prohibition of female genital mutilation practices', carried out an exploratory survey, through a Public Notice published on the institutional website in December 2023. The purpose of this public notice was to identify a subject with specific expertise in the field of FGM to be involved in order to carry out a reconnaissance and analysis of the FGM phenomenon in Italy and thus to prepare an integrated communication plan based on a differentiation of content, modalities and means used for the communication campaigns based on the targets (general population, communities directly affected by the phenomenon, social and health workers who come into contact with victims or potential victims of FGM), the contents, the dissemination channels, including the DPO website and Facebook page, and the messages to be conveyed.

The purpose of the communication initiatives included in the Plan shall be to provide information and raise awareness aimed at the target audience and to generate added value in the national and territorial governance of the prevention of and fight against female genital mutilation, in order to ensure, inter alia, compliance with the obligations set forth in the Istanbul Convention and the priorities of the 'National Strategic Plan on Male Violence against Women 2021-2023'. The Integrated Communication Plan shall also include the budget for the individual initiatives planned. The Plan will be implemented during 2024.

### **X Trafficking in women and girls**

On 19 October 2022, the National Plan of Action against Trafficking and Serious Exploitation of Human Beings for the period 2022-2025 was adopted following a continuous and fruitful discussion with the members of the Technical Committee (administrations, law enforcement agencies, social and employer partners and associations active in the fight against human trafficking). This plan, developed by the Department for Equal Opportunities, represents Italy's commitment at national, European and international level in preventing and combating trafficking. The document, which follows the previous 2016-2018 plan, integrates the contributions of central administrations, territorial and local authorities, social partners and main

associations active in the field as well as the recommendations received from the main international actors, including GRETA and its second evaluation report on Italy in 2019.

In December 2023 the new 'National Referral Mechanism for Victims of Trafficking and Serious Exploitation' has been made available. This document, updated from the 2016 version, reflects the new vulnerabilities and specificities of the phenomenon and integrates contributions from various actors involved in the fight against trafficking. The document is the result of a process in which the members of the Technical Committee against Trafficking in Human Beings participated and also incorporates the comments and/or additions suggested by the latter, in coherence with the National Strategy outlined in the National Anti-Trafficking Plan 2022-2025.

In December 2023 has been published a call for proposal for funding territorial projects aimed at ensuring adequate accommodation, food and health care for victims of trafficking and exploitation. The projects, financed by the Department for Equal Opportunities for an amount of almost 29 million, will last 17 months, and they started in March 2024 in continuity with the project activities previously financed and related to the call 5/2022.

In May 2024 the Department for Equal Opportunities renewed the agreement with the Veneto Region for the management of the service connected to the anti-trafficking toll-free number, constantly active 24 hours a day for the benefit of trafficking victims, and for the development and implementation of a database (SIRIT), thus enabling Italy to fully fulfil the function of data collection and analysis required by the EU Directive 2011/36. Among the activities included in the agreement there is the collaboration with the University of Padua through the Observatory Project aimed at fostering an effective analysis of trafficking and response interventions.

## **16. In the past five years, what actions has your country prioritized to address gender-based violence?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples of measures taken, including aims and scope of measures, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

### **X Introduced or strengthened violence against women laws, and their enforcement and implementation**

An important government bill was adopted by the Parliament on 22 November 2023. Law No. 168/2023 establishes new measures to combat violence against women and domestic violence. The new law is aimed, inter alia, at strengthening the protection of victims while increasing the focus on preventive actions, and provides for the specialized training of judges and a form of compensation for victims. The Italian Government significantly increased the number of resources dedicated to combating violence against women while also introducing specific measures against economic violence. The so-called "freedom income" was therefore re-financed and finally adopted as a structural measure for the economic support to victims. Various forms of microcredit are also being promoted to help victims start their own business by valuing on their talents.

Law No. 168 of November 2023, entitled 'Provisions for combating violence against women and domestic violence', has been in force since 9 December 2023, to inter alia:

- Strengthen measures concerning the warning and information made available to victims;
- Reinforce preventive measures;

- 'Expeditious handling in the pre-trial phase' (which provides that, in relation to the offences mentioned therein, priority is also given to the request for personal pre-trial measures and the related decision);
- Training initiatives on combating violence against women and domestic violence;
- Provisions on time limits for the assessment of pre-trial requirements;
- Amendments regarding the effects in the event of violation of the protection order as issued due to family abuse;
- Deferred arrest in flagrante delicto;
- Strengthening of the precautionary measures and the use of the electronic tag;
- Further provisions on coercive precautionary measures;
- Provisions on information to the victim/offended person and communication obligations;
- Amendments to the rules on compensation for victims of violent intentional crimes;
- Regulation concerning the bodies and Associations organizing rehabilitation programs for offenders.

**X Introduced, updated or expanded national action plans on ending violence against women and girls**

The coherence and effectiveness of policies to prevent and combat male violence against women is ensured by the definition of the Strategic Plan on Male Violence against Women 2021-2023, presented in the Council of Ministers on November 18, 2021. In order to achieve an effective coordination of the various institutional and non-institutional actors involved in the implementation of these policies, the governance system outlined in the Plan was activated, which specifically consists of an inter-institutional Steering Committee (policy-making body) and an Observatory on the phenomenon of violence against women and domestic violence. Both bodies were established by decree of the Minister for Equal Opportunities and Family Affairs pro tempore: the Steering Committee, a body with policy-making functions, was established by decree March 29, 2022, and the Observatory by decree April 12, 2022.

It should be noted that the Strategic Plan on Male Violence Against Women 2021-2023 remains in force until the adoption of the new Strategic Plan 2024-2026, without a break in continuity, as was the case with the previous Strategic Plans on male violence against women. It should be noted that the Department of Equal Opportunities is engaged in the drafting of the new National Strategic Plan against violence against women and domestic violence, which will be finalized in the coming months with contributions from relevant Administrations, women's associations involved in preventing and combating gender-based violence, employers' and trade union organizations, territorial bodies and institutions. The new Strategic Plan will be adopted after obtaining the opinion at the Unified Conference.

**X Introduced or strengthened measures to increase women's access to justice (e.g. establishment of specialist courts, training for the judiciary and police, protection orders, redress and reparations, including for femicide cases)**

During 2024 the School for the Judiciary has organised training courses on domestic and gender-based violence with a clear focus on the awareness and professional updating of magistrates. Here below the titles of the courses:

- Femicide, sexual offences, stalking and family abuse;
- The protection of minors between civil and criminal justice;
- The reform of the civil process for individuals, minors and families: focus on mediation and assisted negotiation;
- Preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence.

Several courses are in continuity with similar educational activities held in previous years, precisely to reflect the continuing objective of dissemination and awareness-raising on the subject for the practitioners of the judiciary, pursued by the School: in particular, the course to Preventing and combating of violence against

women and domestic violence organised in relation with the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.

Regarding the training for the police forces and in particular the judicial police, it is considered fundamental, since the operators are often the first person in contact with the victim of violence and they have to establish the climate of trust and welcome necessary in the delicate phase of listening prior to the verification of the facts reported. At this regard, it is worth noting that Article 5 of Law No. 69/2019 provides for mandatory of specific training courses. In particular, the activation of dedicated training courses is aimed at personnel of the State Police, Carabinieri and Prison Police who carry out public security and judicial police functions in public security and judicial police in relation to the prevention and prosecution of crimes of domestic and gender-based violence and intervenes in the prison treatment of persons convicted for crimes of domestic and gender-based violence. Three cycles of in-depth seminars have been organised in 2021, dealing with legal psychology and investigation topics, according to a module realised in collaboration with the Central Directorate of the Health Psychology Service, the State Police Schools Inspectorate and the Central Directorate for the Fight against Crime, where attended 700 operators from the crime divisions and the mobile police and police headquarters. In March 2023, the first “course for operators in the field of prevention and combating of gender-based violence” was held at the Police Officer Training School in Caserta.

#### **X Introduced or strengthened services for survivors of violence (e.g. shelters, help lines, dedicated health services, legal, justice service, counselling, housing)**

In Italy the specialized support services for women survivors of violence welcome women and girls victim of all forms of violence, including rape. Such services count for 385 Anti-violence centres and 450 Shelter homes in 2022, accounting for 0.13 Centers and 0.15 Shelters for every 10 thousand women. Over the years, the number of both services has grown: compared to 2017, the first year of the survey, there is a 37% increase for Centers and a 97% increase for Shelters. However, the territorial distribution of services to combat gender-based violence is uneven. There are 121 Centers in the South, with an above-average rate of 0.18 per 10 thousand women. The rates are lower in the North, 0.11 for the Northwest and 0.10 in the Northeast, respectively. Shelters are more in the Northwest where they are 0.21 per 10 thousand women, followed by the Northeast and Islands with 0.18. South and Center are at a lower level of 0.10 and 0.09 per 10 thousand women, respectively. There were 60,751 women who contacted Centers at least once in 2022, up 7.8% from 2021. Women hosted by Shelters were 2,698, about 11.3% more than the previous year (2,423); in more than half of the cases (64.1%, or 1,730 women) they are foreigners.

From the Anti-Violence Center (AVC) User Survey, there are 26,131 women in 2022 who have started a pathway out of violence with the help of the centers. They are increased over the years. Women who started their pathways out of violence together with an Anti-violence centre during the year: 15,837 (2020); 19,592 (2021); 26,131 (2022). For these women, the decision to embark on a pathway out of violence seems to come years after the beginning of the violence itself: for 41.3% of the women, more than five years have passed since the first episodes of violence suffered, for 33.5% from one to five years, for 13.5 % from six months to one year, and only for 7.1% of the women the time elapsed between the violence suffered and the beginning of the pathway at the Centers is less than six months. Before starting the pathway with Centers, 43.5% of women turned to relatives for help, 31.9% to the Police and 28.4 % went to the PS or hospital. 17.7% of women started the path out of violence in emergency situations, that is, a situation of danger or risk to their safety. Of these, 75% had been experiencing violence for more than one year and 38.3% for more than five years.

#### *Data from the 1522 helpline*

An important source of information about trends are data from the 1522, the Anti Violence and Anti Stalking Helpline. The national helpline 1522 against violence and stalking, made available by the Department for

Equal Opportunities of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, represents a great support tool for victims of violence. In 2023, there were 51,713 valid calls, a significant increase compared to previous years (+59.5% compared to 2022). In 2020 there was a strong increase in valid calls (an increase of 48.8% compared to 2019) and in the following years the number of calls continued to rise compared to the same months of 2020, except for the lockdown period. The growth in calls in 2020 cannot unequivocally be attributed to the increase in violence due to the restrictive social and mobility measures imposed during the pandemic, given that at the same time extensive awareness campaigns against violence and stalking were carried out by the Department for Equal Opportunities of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers. The increase in contacts in 2023 compared to 2022 characterizes all quarters and is particularly accentuated, as every year, in correspondence with the last one, probably due to the great resonance of the International Day against Violence against Women on 25 November, when, under the push of the mass media and social media, citizens are more encouraged to turn to the service. In the fourth quarter of 2023, the increase was particularly evident, probably also due to the effects of the news events of the period on public opinion. People contact 1522 for requests for help as victims of violence or stalking (31.3% of requests), but also to ask for information on the service provided by the public utility number (33.5%) and to obtain information on the Centers Anti-violence (11.6%). Among 1522 users, the percentage of female callers is 79.7%. The violence reported to the 1522 operators is mainly violence within the couple: 52.6% from current partners (cohabiting or not), 22.1% from ex-partners and 0.6% from occasional partners.

#### *DATA from Emergency room and Hospitalization*

In 2022, women's accesses to the emergency room (ED) with an indication of violence totalled 14,448, up from the accesses recorded in 2021 (12,780, +13%). In 2020, while there was a sharp decline in emergency department (ED) accesses due to medical emergency (-39.8%), those with an indication of violence decreased with less intensity (-25.2%). In 2022, accesses with an indication of violence are 4.9 accesses per 10,000 women, a figure that peaks among young women aged 18-34 (9.7 per 10,000), followed by adult women aged 35-49 (8.0 per 10,000).

In 2021, 60.3% of women with access to the Emergency Room for violence received a green code and 27.7% received a yellow code (indicating urgency and deferrable urgency). Compared to previous years, the share of yellow codes has increased significantly: in 2017 it was 12.8% and in 2020 25.1%. This is a result that is consistent with the provisions of the "National Guidelines for Health and Hospital Companies on Relief and Socio-Health Care for Women Subjected to Violence," according to which, in cases of violence to women, at least a relative urgency coding (yellow code or equivalent) must be recognized so as to ensure a timely medical examination (usually within a maximum waiting time of 20 minutes) and minimize the risk of second thoughts or voluntary departure. In fact, not a few women leave the emergency room: in 4% of cases this happens before the medical examination or during the examination, while 3% leave the emergency room after the examination refusing admission to the hospital. Regarding hospitalizations, data compiled from the analysis of hospital discharge records (SDOs) show an improvement in the ability to identify cases of violence by physicians and health care workers, as well as better quality in the data. This can be seen by the increased presence of violence-related information on primary and secondary diagnoses and "external cause" that allow the origin of hospitalization to be identified. In 2022, there were 1,196 routine hospitalizations of women with an indication of violence, 19.6% less than in 2019, referred to 1,093 women (0.4 per 10 thousand women): over a 12-month period, these women had more than one hospitalization attributable to the violence they experienced (on average 1.1). Female hospitalization attributable to violence is highest for minors and 18-34 year olds (0.59 and 0.65 routine hospitalizations per 10 thousand residents, respectively, compared with 0.40 for the total), is close to the average for adult women aged 35-49 years and is lowest after age 50.

The average stay in the hospital for hospitalizations, again with an indication of violence, is more prolonged for Italian women (6.9 days in the three-year period) than for foreign women (5.5 days), particularly from age 50 onward.

Analysis of the types of diagnoses of violence reported in the SDOs shows that, among female minors, the most frequent diagnoses of violence correspond to mistreatment (battered child syndrome, 36.6% in the three-year period 2020-2022), injuries inflicted by others (assault, rape, etc. ) and parent-child problems (reported in 26.7% and 16.7% of the forms, respectively); among adults women, injuries inflicted by other people emerge (66.1% in the 2020-2022 three-year period), followed by maltreatment (physical, mental, sexual abuse and neglect).

### **X Introduced or strengthened strategies to prevent violence against women and girls (e.g. in the education sector, in the media, community mobilization, work with men and boys)**

The Ministry of Education and Merit has promoted multiple initiatives aimed at schools, in compliance with the National Guidelines adopted with note 5515 of 10.27.2017. Educate to respect: for equality between the sexes, the prevention of gender violence and all forms of discrimination.

Each of them is aimed at affirming the Culture of Respect. In this broad sector, gender discrimination has particular importance as a separate issue or as part of a broader framework of combating all forms of oppression (e.g. bullying, racial or religious discrimination, etc.).

Below, we give an account of the most significant actions:

Memorandum of understanding signed on November 2023 between the Minister for the Family, birth rate and equal opportunities , the Minister of Education and Merit and the Minister of Culture having as its object " Prevention and combating male violence against women and domestic violence – initiatives aimed at the world of schools " .

With this agreement a series of actions will be implemented joint initiatives, aimed at students of first and second cycle schools on the topic of preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence with the aim of spreading the values of mutual respect and gender equality, thus contributing to reducing discriminatory and violent attitudes and acquiring the necessary tools to recognize discrimination and violence against women and girls. A first initiative connected with the protocol is the competition notice " From a glance: films by students on violence against women" DD n. 26 of 02/26/2024 , currently in progress.

November 25 – International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

With resolution no. 54/134 of 17 December 1999, the United Nations General Assembly established 25 November as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in Objective 5, recommends "Achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls", in fact gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but the necessary condition for a fair and sustainable world. In order for equality and the fight against all forms of violence to be primary elements for the creation of an inclusive school, the Ministry of Education and Merit is constantly committed to the promotion and implementation of activities aimed at fighting all forms of violence and discrimination with the aim of stimulating new generations to a culture of mutual respect by valuing individual personalities. In this regard, every year the Ministry, in view of November 25th, promotes initiatives in order to raise awareness, prevent and combat all forms of violence and discrimination.

For November 25, 2023, the MIM lit up red, to represent adherence to the anniversary. Furthermore, on that day, at the MIM headquarters, the Minister celebrated the anniversary with a video message

In this regard, greater information may be provided by the General Directorate for organizational planning, innovation of administrative processes, communication and contracts.

MARCH 8 - International Women's Day

The day, commonly referred to as Women's Day , occurs on 8th March each year to remember both the social, political and economic achievements of women, and the discrimination and violence to which they have been subjected and still are, in all parts of the world.

In addition to the initiative organized on "STEM Month", in view of March 8, schools of all levels, within their didactic and organizational autonomy, are invited to carry out an in-depth study of the issues related to gender equality and the fight against discrimination referred to in Article 3 of the Italian Constitution.

On the occasion of 8 March 2024, the Minister celebrated the anniversary with a video message.

The Department for Equal Opportunities, during 2020-2021, funded 279 projects aimed at promoting STEM culture among girls and young women for a total amount of 4 million euros. Moreover, in order to encourage the acquisition of digital skills, which are also functional for job placement, the Department for Equal Opportunities promoted a Public Notice reserved for housewives and household men (so called Training of housewives and household men). The Notice for the selection of projects aimed at the personal training of housewives and homemakers was dedicated to the promotion of digital training activities, carried out by public and private entities. Participants carry out activities in the domestic sphere, with priority given to women, without subordination and free of charge, aimed at caring for people and the domestic environment, registered and enrolled in compulsory insurance. Both public and private training institutions in individual or associated form, as well as associations and organizations and social cooperatives operating in the field of training, with particular reference to training aimed at housewives, participated in the selection. The Notice collected a total of 162 eligible projects throughout Italy with a good response from public and private training institutions, associations and organizations and social cooperatives operating in the training sector. A total of 14 projects were funded for a total amount of about 3 million euros. It should be noted that this line of activity is an intervention falling within the scope of gender equality policies, but the strengthening of these skills is also useful for the purpose of acquiring greater awareness in the use of the new tools of the digital world and social, even from the perspective of potential "victim" of abuse by others. For this reason, it is believed that it can be considered a concurrent measure to the implementation of the National Strategic Plan Against Violence.

#### **X Monitoring and evaluation of impact, including evidence generation and data collection, including regarding particular groups of women and girls**

In cooperation with the National Office of Statistics (in Italian, ISTAT) and Differenza Donna NGO, the Equal Opportunities Department finalized a mapping exercise aimed at updating the information on Anti-Violence Centers and Shelter Houses present nationwide. On 10 March 2023, the "1522 Mapping" of the Anti-Violence Centers accredited by the respective Regions was published. On the other hand, information on Shelter Houses, which are facilities with a confidential or secret address, cannot be made public.

The Italian Government is firmly convinced that an adequate knowledge of the violence against women is crucial and knowledge can be enhanced first and foremost through the collection and statistical elaboration of data. Therefore, in 2022, Italy has adopted a specific law (Law No. 53/2022) aimed at ensuring a structured and steady information flow on violence against women allowing decision-makers to devise adequate policies for the prevention and fight against violence and guarantee the concrete monitoring on their efficacy. In particular, the law establishes an integrated information system for the collection of data on crimes linked to violence against women, especially data allowing to discover the relationship between victims and perpetrators, as well as their age and sex, and the circumstances in which the crime was committed. Data collection is implemented through a systematic approach, involving the Department for equal opportunities and the Ministries of the Interior, of Justice and of Health, and represents a significant step forward in the fight against this phenomenon for several reasons. Indeed, on the one hand, the law's primary objective is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the prevalence, nature, and patterns of violence, enabling policymakers and researchers to develop targeted interventions and policies. On the other hand, the systematic approach to data collection outlined by the law ensures consistency, comparability, and reliability of information, making it easier to identify trends over time and shed light on the extent and specific forms of violence faced by women. Moreover, the law introduces the obligation for the public healthcare structures to provide data and information on violence against women.

In the framework of the collaboration agreement with the National Department of Equal Opportunity, since 2018 ISTAT has been building a system of data collections to gather information on the Protection System of



survivors of violence, intended as the system of specialized support services mostly managed by specialized NGO's. In this framework in 2020 it was carried out the first edition of an annual data collection on women seeking for help in Anti-violence centers. For each woman who started a personalised pathway out of violence in the Anti-violence Center during the year is filled a form with relevant information. Among the information collected some are related to the perpetrator of violence.

Information on restraining order and perpetrator convictions on the basis of survey of women seeking for help in Antiviolence Centers The worker of the Centers in charge of filling the questionnaire report whether the supported woman asked authorities for any barring/ restraining orders (to protect her / children) or a warning (by the police commissioner), whether such order was issued, the time to be issued, authority of issuance, whether the issued order was breached.

Moreover it is reported if the perpetrator was charged and if was sentenced, if he had previous criminal records. In the most recent edition of the data collection, are also gathered information about possible proceeding related to the children of the woman followed by the center: whether there is such proceeding, whether there are issued related provisions and if they take into account the violence disclosed by the woman and the eventual provisions issued against the perpetrator.

Moreover it is reported if the judicial authority provided for an evaluation of the parental ability (of the woman, of the perpetrator of violence, of both).

In 2022, this survey shows that the support of the Centers stimulates greater awareness on the part of the woman, which is expressed, among other things, in reporting the violent person to the authorities - although this information is not always available (7.3% of cases) . In fact, it is found that 41.8% of women women who have started the path of leaving violence with Centers have been reported to the police, at least once, the perpetrators (among them 9.7% reported more than once).

The proportion of reports is higher if the perpetrator is an ex-partner (49.4%): specifically, 33.9% were reported once and 15.5% more than once. In contrast, if the perpetrator is another family member or relative, the percentage of reports is lower (29.5% of cases, including 5.2% more than once). Among perpetrators of violence, current partners are reported in about 41% of cases, as are friends/acquaintances/colleagues. The propensity to report is also affected by the number of violent incidents and rises from 24.9% in the case of a single violence experienced to 56.9% in the case of more than five, while no major differences are observed as the type of violence varies (ranging from 48.9% in the case of physical violence, 46.7% in the case of sexual violence, and 41.9% for other types of violence).

About one in four (27.5%) perpetrators, a removal order or a ban on approaching and/or a warning , requests were met in 69.7% of cases. The time passed to obtain the measure was "within seven days" for 15.4% of cases and "between eight and 14 days" for 17.4%. In 23.5% of cases, however, the woman had to wait 15 to 30 days for the requested measure; longer times occurred in 28.3% of cases (the measure was obtained between one and two months for 16.7% of perpetrators and in more than two months for 11.6 percent ).

Among reported perpetrators, 12% had no charges over time, 21.3% had charges in the past, and 32.7% are still under investigation, while for 29.5% of cases this information is missing. In 4.5% of cases, however, the complaint was withdrawn. 31% of the defendants have been convicted; for 64.2% the trial is still ongoing while 1.3% have been acquitted. Even after indictment, cases of withdrawal of the complaint continue to occur (1.5 percent).

#### *Data on warning from questore*

The warning from the Questore is part of the multiple tools to protect the victim of gender-based violence outside the criminal process, which is monitored by the Ministry of the Interior. This preventive measure - created for the purpose of securing the victim of persecutory acts, domestic violence, cyberbullying - was applied, according to ministerial data for the year 2022, on more than 3,600 occasions, thus far more frequently (+138%) than the approximately 1,500 in the year 2014, the year following the entry into force of the Law that introduced the extension of this institute to cases of domestic violence as well. Fifty-six percent (about 2,000) of these warnings in 2022 related precisely to facts deemed to be attributable to the offenses

of battery or minor bodily injury in the context of domestic violence, a figure that shows a very strong increase (+46%) over the previous year. However, this significant increase was not reflected in the measure of emergency removal from the family home, which is applicable in cases of flagrante delicto where there are reasonable grounds to believe that the criminal conduct may be repeated, placing the life or physical or psychological integrity of the offended person in serious and present danger: removal from the family home was in fact ordered in 380 cases in the year 2022, a figure almost identical to the 377 in the previous year.

### **17. In the past five years, what strategies has your country used to prevent gender-based violence?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples, including aims and scope of measures taken, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

The Italian legislative framework has been reinforcing after Italy's ratification of the Council of Europe Istanbul Convention. The local anti-violence networks are fully operational and supported by the State. Notwithstanding this, the yearly number of women victims of violence is still high.

An important government bill was adopted by the Parliament on 22 November 2023. Law No. 168/2023 establishes new measures to combat violence against women and domestic violence. The new law is aimed, inter alia, at strengthening the protection of victims while increasing the focus on preventive actions, and provides for the specialized training of judges and a form of compensation for victims. The Italian Government significantly increased the number of resources dedicated to combating violence against women while also introducing specific measures against economic violence. The so-called "freedom income" was therefore re-financed and finally adopted as a structural measure for the economic support to victims. Various forms of microcredit have been also promoted to help victims start their own business by valuing on their talents.

The definition of the criteria for the distribution of the resources from the Freedom Income, amounting to 3 million euros, with a monthly contribution, disbursed by INPS, in the maximum amount of 400 euros per capita for a maximum period of twelve months in favor of women victims of violence who have embarked on a path out of violence. The resources allocated to the "Freedom Income Fund for Women Victims of Violence" for the two-year period 2021-2022, amounted to a total of 9 million euros, allocated according to the criteria established by the Prime Minister's Decree of June 2022, confirming the measure as already determined by the Prime Minister's Decree of December 2020. In addition in the Budget Law 2023, the measure of Freedom Income has been refinanced with the amount of 1,850,000 euros for the year 2023. Budget Law 2024 provides for the Fund to be increased by 10 million euros for each of the years 2024, 2025 and 2026 and by 6 million euros annually from the year 2027.

*The Freedom Microcredit project* - In 2020, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Presidency of the Council of Ministers - Minister for Equal Opportunities and Family, the Italian Banking Association (ABI), the Italian Federation of Cooperative Credit Banks and Rural Banks (Federcasse) the Ente nazionale per il microcredito (ENM) and Caritas italiana, to launch the "Microcredito di libertà" project, a measure to support women victims of violence who intend to embark on a path of emancipation, including economic emancipation, by accessing business microcredit or social microcredit. For the intervention, the aforementioned Protocol provided for the creation of an ad hoc Fund of the consistency of 3 million euros from the budget of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers - Department for Equal Opportunities. The project is still ongoing.

### *Measures for the empowerment of women victims of violence entrusted to the regions*

The Fund for policies related to rights and equal opportunities” provided, in line with the objectives of the PNRR, the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021-2026, as well as the National Strategic Plan on Male Violence Against Women 2021-2023, the allocation of resources from the “Fund for policies related to rights and equal opportunities” - in the amount of 9. 000,000.00 - to initiatives aimed at supporting women's empowerment, reintegration into employment, economic and social recovery of women in particular in their path out of violence and to sustain housing expenses.

### **X Promoting positive gender-equitable attitudes, beliefs, values and norms, especially among men and boys**

The treatment of male perpetrators of violence is explicitly provided by the Article 16 of the Istanbul Convention, with Law No. 69 of July 19, 2019 (so-called “Red Code”), which extended the scope of psychological treatment having the purpose of recovery and support, including for the purpose of granting prison benefits, to those convicted of the crimes of mistreatment against family members and cohabitants. However, Law No. 69/2019 did not provide regulations for the recognition and accreditation of institutions and associations that can provide such recovery paths. To this end, the minimum requirements of Centres for Men Perpetrators of Violence (CUAV) were defined by State-Regions Agreement of September 2022, taking as a parameter the Agreement on Minimum Requirements for Anti-Violence Centres and Shelter Homes. Article 18 of Law No. 168/2023, states that the Minister of Justice and the Delegated Political Authority for Equal Opportunity shall establish, by their own decree, the criteria and procedures for the recognition and accreditation of agencies and associations qualified to organize recovery paths for perpetrators of violence against women and domestic violence and adopt guidelines for the conduct of the activities of such agencies and associations.

The Second national survey of programs for perpetrators, carried out by the CNR in 2023, shows that, five years after the first survey, the number of centres has increased from 54 to 94. This development has been accompanied by an increase in the capacity to intercept and receive perpetrators: 1.214 men attended a centre in 2017, while this number more than tripled to 4.174 in 2022. On average, this represents an increase from 26.4 to 45.9 men per centre. The data testify to a gradual improvement in the capacity of the perpetrators programs to intercept ale perpetrators or potential perpetrators of violence over all the years between the first and second national surveys. In this respect, the Table distinguishes between the total number of men attending the centres and those who entered them during the year.

Total number of men in programs and new entrants during the years 2017 - 2022

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total men attending the Program during the year</i>	<i>Men who entered the centre during the year (new entries)</i>
2017	1.214	573
2018	1.217	709
2019	1.848	907
2020	2.157	1.126
2021	2.874	1.748
2022	4.174	2.802

## **X Promoting gender-egalitarian values in primary and secondary education, including through comprehensive sexuality education**

*Relationship education – Project paths for schools*, financed with 15 million euros from the POC funds for schools – skills and learning environments, i.e. of the PN “Schools and skills” 2021-2027. The project offers secondary schools the opportunity, within their autonomy, to activate 30 hours of student discussion groups in extracurricular hours with the advice of psychologists belonging to the Order of Psychologists and with a referring teacher. The National Parents' Association Forum has the role of harmonizing the project with improving comments from parents. The project, which was born in the wake of the 2017 "Respect Education Guidelines", has an experimental nature and is dedicated to upper secondary schools. At other school levels, education on respect in relationships is part of civic education which is transversal and compulsory teaching (law n. 92 of 20 August 2019), of which one of the objectives of the curriculum is: the student is aware that the principles of solidarity, equality and respect for diversity are the pillars that they support civil coexistence and favour the construction of a fair and sustainable future.

### **18. In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to prevent and respond to technology-facilitated gender-based violence (e.g. online sexual harassment, online stalking, non-consensual sharing of intimate images)?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples, including aims and scope of measures taken, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

## **X Introduced or strengthened legislation and regulatory provisions**

### *Guidelines for preventing and combating bullying and cyberbullying*

The Ministry of Education and Merit has been committed for years to the prevention of the phenomenon of bullying and cyberbullying (as provided for by law no. 71 of 29 May 2017 containing "Provisions for the protection of minors for the prevention and combating of the phenomenon of cyberbullying") and more generally, of any form of violence, activating various intervention strategies useful for curbing risky behavior determined, in many cases, by conditions of social hardship not attributable only to the school context.

In implementation of the law, the Ministry has adopted the "Guidelines for the prevention and combating of cyberbullying". The document aims to give continuity to the Guidelines already issued in April 2015, making the necessary additions and changes in line with recent regulatory interventions. With the issuing of the aforementioned guidelines and the "National Plan for the prevention of bullying and cyberbullying at school" presented in October 2016, the Ministry wanted to give a strong signal of resumption of activities for the prevention of the phenomenon of bullying and cyberbullying, making specific financial resources available to schools to implement national initiatives, with the aim of involving as many educational institutions as possible and creating a national network aimed at combating youth hardship.

The Guidelines were further updated on 18 February 2021 for the following three years, incorporating the necessary additions and changes provided for by the regulatory interventions, with particular reference to the innovations introduced by the aforementioned law of 29 May 2017, n.17.

The legislative provisions attribute very specific tasks and responsibilities to a plurality of subjects, reiterating the central role of the School which is called upon to carry out preventive actions which include: the training of school staff, the appointment and training of at least one contact person for the combating the phenomena of bullying and cyberbullying for any school autonomy, the promotion of an active role for students, as well as former students who have already operated within the school in peer education activities, the provision of support and re-education of the minors involved.

**X Implemented awareness raising initiatives targeting the general public and education settings to sensitize young people, caregivers and educators to ethical and responsible online behaviour**

*Elisa Platform – Teacher training and monitoring of bullying and cyberbullying phenomena*

Following the entry into force of Law no. 71 of 29 May 2017 and the issuing of the aforementioned guidelines for the prevention and combating of cyberbullying, the Ministry of Education and Merit (MIM) has undertaken to implement a plan national training center for teachers responsible for combating bullying and cyberbullying. The MIM, in collaboration with the Department of Educational Sciences and Psychology of the University of Florence, has prepared, to starting from October 2018, the ELISA platform [www.piattaformaelisa.it](http://www.piattaformaelisa.it) (E-learning training for teachers on anti-bullying strategies), to equip schools with tools to intervene effectively on the issues of cyberbullying and bullying with two specific actions: an area dedicated to schools for online monitoring of bullying and cyberbullying and a section dedicated to teachers for training through e-learning modules aimed at teachers and school managers.

In addition to Action 1 - E-Learning training aimed at teachers and school managers, Action 2 - Monitoring of bullying and cyberbullying phenomena in Italian schools is implemented. The Ministry, through the scientific support of the University of Florence, has in fact prepared periodic national surveys to analyze the prevalence of bullying and cyberbullying phenomena in Italian schools. Online monitoring was launched for the first time in May 2021 and has also been proposed again for the 2021/20 22 and 2022/20 23 school years. The monitoring, in addition to providing the Ministry of Education and Merit with a snapshot of the phenomena at a national level, for the first time under an internally coordinated action, offers the individual participating schools a personalized summary report that allows them to delve deeper into the situation with respect to the phenomena of bullying and cyberbullying.

Another crucial area concerns the recognition of violence, which is sometimes underestimated or attributed to conflict dynamics within emotional relationships. With this in mind, the Italian Government is working on the educational level, with appropriate training for all operators who come into contact with women victims of violence, and in broader terms promoting initiative aimed to secondary schools, to disseminate the values of mutual respect and gender equality among young people, with a particular attention to students.

In November 2023, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Minister for Equal Opportunities, the Minister of Education and Merit, and the Minister of Culture for the prevention and fight against male violence towards women and domestic violence. This initiative targets the educational sector and aims to promote joint initiatives specifically directed at middle and high school students on the theme of preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. The objectives are as follows:

- To instill the values of mutual respect and gender equality among young people, particularly students, thereby contributing to the reduction of discriminatory and violent attitudes.
- To equip students with the tools necessary to recognize, including early signs, discrimination and violence against women and girls.
- To increase awareness among young people, especially students, of the resources available to women victims of violence, such as the public utility phone line 1522, support networks (shelters and anti-violence centers), and general information that can be vital for those in need of help.
- To enhance the understanding among young people, particularly students, of the existing legislation and policies for the prevention and fight against male violence towards women, with the aim of raising awareness and responsibility regarding the consequences, including legal penalties, of violent behavior against women and girls.

Within this framework, on February the 27th, 2024, the Department for Equal Opportunity of the Italian Presidency of the Council of Ministers, published a call for secondary schools, aimed to the production of short movies conveying a positive message on the possibility for all women and girls to escape from the circuit of violence, above all through its recognition. The five winning proposals will be awarded a prize at the Venice International Film Festival, within the total amount of 150.000 euros.

**19. In the past five years, what measures has your country taken to resource women's organizations working to prevent and respond to GBV?**

*In the narrative report, please provide amounts of funding and concrete examples of activities or organizations funded, including aims and scope of measures taken, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. (1 page max.)*

Women victims of violence are taken care by the Anti-Violence Centers and Shelter Houses that form the core of the territorial network. These are specialized services that work on the basis of a methodology of reception, based on a gender approach and the principles of the Istanbul Convention. A special Working Table, composed of representatives from the Department of Equal Opportunity and the regions, was established to define funding requirements. In order to ensure their continuous and regular operation, these services are the recipients of specific funding in a continuous form under Articles 5 and 5a of Decree-Law No. 93/2013. It was provided, therefore, at the legislative level the adoption of a National Strategic Plan against violence against women and domestic violence, subject to the acquisition of the opinion in the Unified Conference, at least every three years, and the allocation of resources, in the amount of 5 million euros per year, starting in 2022. These resources were increased by Budget Law 2023, which raised the annual allocation to 15 million euros. Article 5 (National Strategic Plan against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence), together with Article 5-bis (Actions for Anti-Violence Centers and Shelter Homes) of Decree-Law No. 93, constitutes the regulatory framework on preventing and combating male violence against women and domestic violence, consistent with the objectives of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, adopted in Istanbul on May 11, 2011 (the so-called Istanbul Convention). The structure of the National Strategic Plan that is adopted follows the four P: Prevention, Protection, Punishment/Prosecution of Crimes, Coordinated Policies. An evolution in the approach can be observed: while the original wording of Decree Law No. 93 of 2013 referred to an Extraordinary Action Plan, as it was in response to an emergency of the phenomenon that was particularly compelling in 2013 with 179 femicides (the highest number ever), with the subsequent amendments made to the aforementioned Article 5, the now "national strategic" Plan represents the programmatic framework containing the guidelines and development stages for achieving the goals set for preventing and combating male violence against women and supporting victims. Within the framework of Italy's international commitments, the implementation of the Plan contributes to the fulfillment of its obligations under the Council of Europe's Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence of 2011 (so-called Istanbul Convention) as well as to the achievement of Goal 5 of the United Nations Agenda 2030, bearing the goal of "achieving gender equality and self-determination for all women and girls." In addition, to make it structural and concretely operational, the Plan, as mentioned following recent legislative changes, is accompanied by appropriate resources starting in 2022. With regard to the financing of anti-violence centers and shelters, the allocated resources are transferred, by the Department for Equal Opportunities to the Regions on the basis of annual decrees of allocation signed by the political authority pro tempore delegated to equal opportunities. In 2019 a monitoring system was introduced on the status of resource utilization highlighted in the Report to Parliament.

Over the past five years, it can be confirmed that there has been a significant increase in the resources allocated to anti-violence centers and shelters. In fact, for the period 2019-2023 the total appropriations transferred to the regions amounted to: 183 million.

In detail, the following amounts were transferred through the annual allocation decrees:

- 30,000,000.00 for 2019;
- 28,000,000.00 for 2020;
- 30,000,000.00 for 2021;
- 40,000,000.00 for 2022;

- 55,000,000.00 for 2023.

With the latest distribution decree (Nov. 16, 2023), an amount of 40 million euros (+10 mln compared to 2022) was allocated to regional facilities and initiatives 15 million euros (+5 mln compared to 2022). Thus, an increase of 15 mln over the previous year (+15 mln), registering an increase of 37.5 per cent.

One innovation is noted with respect to previous years, and which is intended to be repeated in 2024: an amount of 9 million euros was allocated, consistent with the objectives of the PNRR, the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021-2026, as well as the National Strategic Plan on Male Violence Against Women 2021-2023, for initiatives, to be undertaken at the regional level, aimed at supporting women's empowerment, reintegration into employment, and economic and social recovery of women in particular in their path out of violence.

Finally, Law No. 213/2023 (Budget Law 2024) increased resources by 5 million for each of the years 2024, 2025 and 2026, allocating them for the implementation of Centers Anti Violence. In addition, 20 million euros were allocated for each of the years 2024 to 2026 for the purchase and construction of Shelter Houses.

## **20. In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to address the portrayal of women and girls, discrimination and/or gender bias in the media, including social media?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples, including aims and scope of measures taken, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

### **X Enacted, strengthened and enforced legal reforms to combat discrimination and/or gender bias in the media, including social media**

*Fund intended for the prevention and fight against the phenomenon of cyberbullying*

Through law 30 December 2021, n. 234 (article 1, paragraph 671) State budget forecast for the financial year 2022 and multi-year budget for the three-year period 2022-2024, a specific fund has been established at the Ministry of Education and Merit for the prevention and combating the phenomenon of cyberbullying. The resources allocated were used through an allocation to the Regional School Offices, using as criteria the number of pupils, the degree of school dropout and the number of total cases of bullying/cyberbullying deduced from the results of the monitoring carried out through the "Elisa Platform" in collaboration with the University of Florence.

The Regional School Offices provided the contributions, aimed at implementing the projects, through the issuing of specific notices to identify the beneficiary educational institutions.

The intent is to support local actions aimed at combating the phenomenon of cyberbullying and raising awareness of the conscious use of the internet, educating students to be aware, across the various curricular disciplines, of the rights and duties connected to cyberbullying. use of technologies

With prot. Decree n. 1176 of 05/18/2022, the Administration has assigned to the Regional School Offices, to combat the phenomena of cyberbullying in schools, the sum of €2,000,000.00 following the provisions of art.1 paragraphs 671 and 672 of Law no. 234 of 30 December 2021.

With the law of 29 December 2022 n.197 refinancing of the aforementioned fund equal to 2 million euros for each of the years 2023 was envisaged State budget forecast for the financial year 2023 and multi-annual budget for the three-year period 2023-2025, the, 2024 and 2025.

We therefore proceeded to prepare a new departmental decree relating to the year 2023, issued with protocol. n. 513 of 26 April 2023 with which the overall financial resource, equal to € 2,000,000.00, was distributed to the Regional School Offices based on the following parameters:

- number of students, for 40% of the total amount;
- degree of dispersion for 20% of the total amount;

- of cyberbullying cases (at least one case in the last 2-3 months ) reported to the Elisa platform for 40% of the total amount.

For the current year 2024, the departmental decree for the distribution of funds to the Regional School Offices was issued on 12.02.2024 prot.n.256. The criteria adopted for the distribution of resources are the same as the previous decrees.

Considering the structural nature of the financial intervention, it was deemed appropriate to prepare tools for collecting data and information at the conclusion of the activities, to allow a systematic reading and analysis of the main results of the actions undertaken.

### **X Supported the media industry to develop voluntary codes of conduct**

In relation to this priority, a number of initiatives were activated during 2022, and on February 1, 2022, a Memorandum was signed with RAI S.p.A and other parties, aimed at promoting equal and balanced representation of the sexes in communication activities. Specifically, the signatories have committed to promoting communication models and messages that:

- uphold the principle of equal representation of the sexes, ensuring equal access in the public space of communication;
- are respectful of the personal, cultural and professional dignity of women and their specificity, competence and identity;
- enhance a real and non-stereotypical representation of the multiplicity of roles assumed by women in society;
- promote the principle of equal representation between the sexes, ensuring equal access in information or communication spaces;
- use non-sexist and non-stereotypical but inclusive language in the development of texts and choice of images.

### **21. In the past five years, what actions has your country taken specifically tailored to address violence against marginalized groups of women and girls?**

*In the narrative report, please refer to the list of marginalized groups under question 3 and provide up to three concrete examples of measures taken, including aims and scope of measures, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

#### **Women with disabilities**

Legislative Decree No. 20/2024 established the "National Authority for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities" to combat the phenomena of direct or indirect discrimination or harassment on the basis of their disability, including through visits to places that welcome, even but not exclusively, people with disabilities.

With regard to the accessibility of Center Anti Violences (CAV) and Shelter Houses, the following should be noted. The criteria for authorisation to operate and accreditation follow the regional regulations, also considering that the Regions have exclusive legislative competence in social matters.

However, with Legislative Decree No. 222/2023 (in force since 13 January 2024) it was established that:

"Public administrations that provide services and concessionaires of public services (such as CAVs and Shelter Houses) are required to indicate in the service charter the levels of quality of the service provided in relation to the effective accessibility of services for people with disabilities, highlighting the provisions of the legislation in force in the specific sector of reference, clearly indicating and in an accessible manner for the various disabilities the rights, including those of a compensatory nature, that users can claim from the managers of the service and the infrastructure and the ways in which to claim them, including through the bodies or supervisory authorities in charge."

Among other things, "accessibility" in this legislative decree means "access to and usability, on an equal basis with others, of the physical environment, public services, including electronic and emergency services,



information and communication, including information systems and information technologies in Braille and in easily readable and comprehensible formats, including through the adoption of disability-specific measures or assistance mechanisms or reasonable accommodations."

This is also in compliance with the provisions of the "Protection and Support" Axis of the National Strategic Plan on male violence against women 2021-2023, Priority 2.4 "Strengthening of the 24-hour national anti-violence hotline 1522, through the implementation of collaboration between 1522, Cav, CR, territorial networks, law enforcement and the judicial system", where "targeted and specific communication campaigns for 1522, e.g. for: regular and irregular migrant women, women with disabilities, older women, young people, men, on economic violence, cyber violence;"

### **X Migrant and Refugee women**

An Integrated Communication Plan was prepared in December 2023 to disseminate, through communication campaigns, the regulatory tools and operational interventions in support of women victims of male violence. Within the Communication Plan, foreign, migrant/asylum-seeking women are also identified as a target audience. In this communication context, strengthening multilingual information campaigns that take into consideration the different cultural backgrounds of migrant and refugee women and girls and that aim to promote awareness of and ways to access gender-based violence response services, including the national anti-violence and anti-stalking number 1522, with a specific focus on the target audience of young foreign and migrant women, is considered a priority. In the Integrated Communication Plan, one line is dedicated to the revision of the 1522 website, including the part translated into other languages, in order to provide complete information on services dedicated to women victims of violence, including foreign women. It is also planned to enrich the content of the Department's institutional website. From 2024 will be implemented a new Integrated Communication Plan. In order to convey a positive message aimed at urging women to embark on a path out of the dimension of violence, especially domestic violence, the Minister thought it appropriate to renew the claim of the sign bearing the number 1522, which will be translated into 11 languages (English, Spanish, French, German, Arabic, Chinese, Russian, Portuguese, Romanian, Bengali, Slovenian).

### **Participation, accountability and gender-responsive institutions**

#### **Critical areas of concern:**

- G. Women in power and decision-making
- H. Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women
- I. Human rights of women
- J. Women and the media
- L. The girl child

### **22. In the past five years, what actions and measures has your country to promote women's participation in public life and decision-making?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples of measures taken, including aims and scope of measures, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as*

*those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

Through a series of legislative provision such as the adoption of legislation to ensure equal participation of women and men in political and public life and employment (Golfo-Mosca Law), the Consolidated Law on publicly owned companies (Legislative Decree No. 175 of 19 August 2016), requiring that at least one third of the appointments of directors of public companies be made by the less represented gender, Italy introduced the obligation for companies to have a fair gender representation in the administrative and control bodies of companies.

The national legislative framework also pushes for gender equality in political, national and regional representation. Specific laws have increased the presence of women in public, political and institutional life, guaranteeing gender quotas in electoral lists and in the expression of the vote.

According to the 2022 Report on the Corporate Governance of Italian Listed Companies prepared by the National Commission for Companies and the Stock Exchange (Consob) and presented in 2023, among the most significant new developments is the growing gender diversity, which by the end of 2022 sees the share of listed company directorships held by a woman stand at 43%, as a result of the application of the two-fifths gender quota of the body provided for by Law No. 160/2019.

In line with previous years, women are in the majority independent directors (73%) and rarely hold the role of CEO or chairman of the administrative body (in 17 and 32 cases, respectively). Moreover, female interlocking, although still more pronounced than male interlocking, continues to decline from the peak reached in 2019, when it concerned 34.9% of women, to 28.6% at the end of 2022.

In particular, the presence of women reached, as already noted, 43% of the positions of administration and 41% of those as members of the supervisory board. The detail of the application of Law No. 160/2019 shows that the majority of companies (180, representing 96.8% of market capitalization) have applied the two-fifths gender quota. In these companies, there are on average four women, representing 43.6 per cent of the board. The one-fifth gender quota of the board, set for the first renewal after listing, was applied by 14 issuers, with an average presence of more than 3 women, or 37.1% of the board. The presence of women is also at similar levels in 13 newly listed companies, which have not yet renewed their boards in accordance with the above-mentioned rules (an average of 3 women, or 36.3% of the board).

On average, 4 women sit on the boards, with a higher female presence among medium-to-high capitalization companies and in the financial sector.

In line with the trends observed in previous years, at the end of 2022, women held the role of chief executive officer in 17 smaller companies (representing 2.1% of market capitalization) and chaired the boards of 32 larger issuers (representing 27.4% of total capitalization); both figures show a slight increase compared to the previous year (+1 chief executive officer, +2 chairmen).

Approximately three out of four women qualify as independent directors and one out of ten women were appointed by minority shareholders in application of list voting (86 women directors, appointed in 68 companies with high capitalization, representing 76% of the total market value). Finally, the data confirm that women hold more than one directorship more frequently than men: this situation concerns 28.6% of women, compared to 21% of the entire population of directors. The female interlocking figure shows, however, a continuous decline in recent years, after the high of 34.9% reached in 2019.

Furthermore, to ensure support for initiatives aimed to a larger female entrepreneurial involvement and to encourage greater employment opportunities, since 2013 the Italian Government launched a specific action issuing a public guarantee in support of Italian SMEs to cover financial transactions aimed at business activities carried out by female-owned companies. The aim of this initiative was to counter

difficulties faced by women in undertaking business activities and self-employment in order to gain access to credit.

The fund was refinanced in 2022 with EUR 6.5 million, bringing total endowment to EUR 56 million for businesses with a predominantly female participation and for self-employed women. The number of women's businesses that have benefited from this guarantee is more than 16,000 and the number of banks involved in this operation represent about 42%.

In April 2020, the Ministry for Equal Opportunities and Family established a female team, "Women for a new Renaissance", consisting of twelve distinguished women selected for their high-level contribution in cultural, scientific, or other professional fields, who provided for effective, feasible and targeted proposals. This Team focused on inter alia opportunities for social, cultural, and economic restart in Italy in view of health-related emergency's aftermath. Their final document, launched in July 2020, by the then President of Ministers' Council, have been integrated in national planning, in view of targeted access and use of financial resources provided for by European Cohesion Funds and Next Generation-EU (NGEU). The Government had already decided to expedite resources' mobilization to Regions by Decree of Ministers' Council President (DPCM), dated 2 April 2020.

In post-pandemic dimension, National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP) addresses gender inequalities in a multisectoral way. Alongside the three strategic axes shared at European level (digitalization and innovation; ecological transition; social inclusion), the Italian NRRP identifies three cross-cutting priorities, including the promotion of gender equality, where to invest at least 7 billion Euros by 2026, to ensuring equal conditions in the labour market, closing the gender pay gap and increasing women in leading position, including women in politics.

In fact, with regards to gender balance and women's empowerment, one of NRRP's key objectives is to markedly improve gender inclusion indicators and reduce youth unemployment: Women's empowerment, combating gender discrimination and increasing employment prospects for young people are therefore horizontal objectives across NRRP.

In the political sphere, the current 19th parliamentary term is the first term applying the overall reduction in the number of MPs: consequently, the representation of women declined slightly in both chambers: women elected to Parliament accounted for approximately 33 per cent of the total (of which 129 (32.3 per cent) in the Chamber and 69 (34.5 per cent) in the Senate. This result places Italy just above the EU-27 average of 32.4 per cent. In the Parliament three out four Senate's Vice-Presidents are women, while only one out of four of the Chamber of Deputies' Vice-Presidents is a woman. In the Senate's Council, there are 7 women (out of 19), while the Chamber of Deputies' Council counts 5 women (out of 16). As for the permanent parliamentary Committees, 2 (out of 10) chairpersons are women, both within the Senate.

As for top positions, for the first time in 2022 in Italy a woman Prime Minister was appointed. In the current Meloni government, there are 6 women (25 per cent) among the 24 ministers (Labour and Social Policies; University and Research; Tourism; Institutional Reforms and Regulatory Simplification; Family, Natality, Equal Opportunities; Disability). The posts of deputy minister and undersecretary held by women number 12 (31.6%) out of a total of 38.

The figure for female presence in Italy is 34 per cent in the assemblies of municipalities with a population of up to 15,000 inhabitants, and around 32 per cent in municipalities with a population of over 15,000 inhabitants. The average figure for female presence in the same assemblies in the EU is 34.5%.

The presence of women in local authority councils is more visible, as the percentage of women councilors is 43% in municipalities with a population of up to 15,000 inhabitants, and 44% in municipalities with a population of over 15,000 inhabitants. The number of female mayors in office in all municipalities in Italy is 1,180 out of 7,773, or 15% (the EU average is 17.7%).

Finally, in 2024 the Minister of Equal Opportunities, Family and Birth-rate launched the 'Italy of Women' project, which aims, through a year-long journey and with the involvement of regional and local institutions and associations, to identify and bring to light stories of women who, in various fields, have contributed to making Italy the nation it is today.

**23. In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to increase women's access to expression and participation in decision-making in the media, including through information and communication technologies (ICT)?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples of measures taken, including aims and scope of measures, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

The Italian Government has adopted the Italian Digital Agenda, in line with the EU 2020 Strategy, which provides inter alia for the development of digital culture and also highlights the synergies and complementarities of national and regional actions and a specific national plan that focuses on "Digital Growth".

As mentioned above in replying to question No 22, the Italian NRRP focuses on gender equality promotion, to be pursued in all six Plan's missions: digitalization, innovation, competitiveness, culture and tourism; green revolution and ecological transition; infrastructures for sustainable mobility; education and research; inclusion and cohesion; health. The combination of reforms and investments underlying this Plan – the result of intense coordination among central Government, regional and local Authorities, and CSOs, in providing a firm response to the pandemic crisis – is to be seen also as a tool to solve the most important causes of Italian economy and society's fragility: from low productivity of last twenty years to persistent gaps in opportunities at geographical, sectoral, generational and gender levels, nationwide.

In this context, Italy attaches great importance to the theme of education as a prerequisite for growth and development. In this regard, it is worth recalling the National Plan for the Digital School - whose Action #20 focuses on female students and the need to fill the so-called "confidence gaps".

In the context of digitization-related training, in 2021 the Department for Equal Opportunities promoted a public notice reserved for housewives and home-workers. The Notice aimed to the selection of projects dedicated to the promotion of training activities -with priority given to women- for those who carry out activities in the domestic sphere, to be delivered by public and private entities, free of charge, with regard to the acquisition of digital skills, functional to job placement and to the enhancement of care activities. Both public and private training bodies in individual or associated form, as well as associations and organizations and social cooperatives operating in the training sector, participated in the selection process. The Notice collected a total of 162 eligible projects throughout Italy, and 14 projects were financed for a total amount of about EUR 3 million.

In accordance with consolidated Law on Audiovisual Media Services, the guidelines on the content of radio, television and multimedia public service obligations must be issued prior to each five-year renewal of the national service contract, by means of resolution. By Resolution 266/22/CONS of July 2022, AGCOM approved the guidelines on further public service obligations, preliminary to the definition of RAI's new service contract for 2023-2028 – the compliance of which AGCOM is also called upon to supervise. In application of the afore mentioned guidelines the service contract shall include amongst the relevant objectives, the enhancement of women's role and the promotion of a gender perspective in all spheres of social, economic, and political life, through dedicated editorial initiatives

In this context, since 2022, the Department for Equal Opportunities participated in the project called "No Women No Panel" promoted by the RAI together with the National Research Council, stemmed from an EU Commission's initiative for the monitoring and impact assessment of the balanced and plural participation of women and men in public communication, with the aim of fostering gender balance and enhancing the talent and skills of women. The monitoring activities is still on-going and is referred to

national and territorial institutions - public administrations, universities, research bodies and academies - signatories of the agreement with RAI.

The main objective of the NWNP project is to strive to make public communication more equal, thus representing a fundamental opportunity to foster the full unfolding of the as yet unexpressed potential of women, as it clearly establishes the principle that the experts invited to every public discussion occasion must be both men and women, in order to fairly represent the interests of society as a whole. Of relevance is also National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021–2026. With its five priorities, this Strategy defines interventions for each priority besides specific indicators to measure gender inequality's main aspects

**24. Please describe your country's current national women's machinery (government entity exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women) and describe the measures that your country taken over the past five years to establish and/or strengthen it.**

*In the narrative report, please provide a summary of the evolution of your country's national machinery for gender equality, its mandate, location within government, current budget (in local currency and as a proportion of total government spending). Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

The Department for Equal Opportunities (DEO) at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers is responsible since 1997 for guidance, proposal and coordination of regulatory and administrative initiatives to support women's human rights; prevent and eliminate all forms of discrimination, combat Violence Against Women (VAW), exploitation and Trafficking of Human Being, as well as all violations of the fundamental rights to the integrity of the person and health of women and girls.

In particular DEO is in charge for the promotion and the coordination of the legislative actions concerning the elaboration and implementation of gender policies, the acquisition and analysis of data and information about gender equality and equal opportunities, the proposal, definition, implementation and coordination jointly with other central Administrations and local authorities of interventions in the field of gender equality, the dialogue and cooperation with EU and international systems and mechanisms on gender issues – i.e. United Nations, Council of Europe.

The Department is divided into the following offices of general management level:

- Office for General and International Affairs.
- Office for Equal Opportunities Policies.
- Office for the Promotion of Equal Treatment and Removal of Discrimination on the grounds of Racial and Ethnic Origin (UNAR).

With Budget Law 2022 the Gender Equality Strategic Plan became a structural measure and it was established a governance system composed by a national Observatory and an inter-institutional Steering Committee "Cabina di regia" aimed to the coordination of the Equal Opportunities policies across government, in order to strengthen the governance of the 2021-2026 Strategy (Article 1, paragraphs 139-148, Law No. 234/2021). The financing of the Plan envisages, starting from the year 2022, an increase of €5 million in the Fund for policies related to rights and equal opportunities.

The Steering Committee was established by the Decree of the Minister for Equal Opportunities and the Family of 27 January 2022, while the national Observatory for the Integration of Gender Equality Policies, was established by the decree of 22 February 2022.

The Cabina di regia (Steering Committee) is aimed to coordinate the different administrations involved and the different levels of government in order to deliver integrated actions at a central and territorial level. Among its tasks, it is up to the Cabina di Regia to carry out periodic assessments on the state of implementation of the measures and interventions provided for in the National Strategic Plan for Gender Equality, as well as to ensure the planning of the resources allocated to financing the Plan.

The national Observatory is a technical support body for the Steering Committee, and its role is to monitor, analyze, study and propose possible instruments to implement the content of the National Strategic Plan for Gender Equality, evaluating its impact in order to improve its effectiveness and integrate its instruments. It also supports the Department for Equal Opportunities in analyzing and studying gender equality issues, through the production of a biennial update report on the main demographic, sociological and economic dynamics in Italy. The Observatory also promotes initiatives and seminar meetings aimed at fostering knowledge regarding the results of research and surveys and the dissemination of good practices through the exchange of experiences; the Observatory also coordinates its research, study and documentation activities with those relating to the National Strategic Plan against violence against women and domestic violence.

The Observatory also reports to the Permanent Working Table on the certification of gender equality, established by the Decree of the Minister for Equal Opportunities and Family Affairs of 5 April 2022.

The Observatory is chaired by the President of the Council of Ministers or by the political authority with delegated powers for equal opportunities and consists of the following bodies: the President, the Assembly and the Technical-Scientific Committee, which remain in office for three years.

The Decree of the Minister for Family, Birth and Equal Opportunities of 6 December 2023 modified the composition of the Observatory, in order to ensure a greater involvement of the institutions concerned, also at a territorial level.

According to the aforementioned regulations, the National Strategic Plan for Gender Equality has the following objectives:

- identifying good practices to combat gender stereotypes;
- closing the gender gap in the labour market;
- achieving equality in participation in different economic sectors;
- addressing the pay and pension gap;
- achieving gender balance in decision-making.

The Department for Equal Opportunities, in order to achieve objectives, such as the integration of the principle of gender equality throughout the policy cycle and the adoption of gender budgeting as a tool to implement gender mainstreaming in the planning of public expenditure and in the implementation procedures, promoted the project called 'Methods and Tools for Gender Mainstreaming' (MeS) under the EU National Operational Programme 'Governance and Institutional Capacity' 2014-2020, Axis 3 (ERDF). This initiative is part of the strategic framework deriving from the cohesion policy aimed at supporting administrative capacity building and, in particular, at strengthening institutional capacity in the area of gender assessment.

The overall objective of the MeS project was, therefore, to strengthen institutional capacity through the development of innovative evaluation methodologies and tools to effectively integrate the gender perspective across the board in the programming and implementation of public interventions supported by the cohesion policy. In other words, the above-mentioned Project aimed to contribute to the translation of gender mainstreaming into every phase of the programming cycles.

The project activities focused on the development of methodological tools to be applied both to sectors with a traditional impact in terms of equal opportunities, such as those of the European Social Fund ESF, and to policies supported by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) with the aim of increasing the effectiveness of policies starting from the assessment of the impact they have on the lives of men and women, making this impact intelligible to decision-makers and policy stakeholders. Among the numerous outputs produced is the realisation of a Toolkit for gender assessment and the modelling of a specific approach to gender budgeting through the 'Toolkit for the realisation and implementation of gender budgeting'. This toolkit is aimed at supporting public administrations that intend to develop their own gender reporting, proposing a methodology inspired by the experience of the State General Accounting Office.

The Italian legislative framework has gradually strengthened since the ratification of the Istanbul Convention and can be considered unquestionably advanced.

Nonetheless, I should mention the recent approval of a new legislative decree, jointly promoted by the Minister for Family, Natality, and Equal Opportunities together with the Minister of Justice and the Minister of the Interior, primarily aimed at improving the protection of victims by increasing the focus on the crimes related to domestic violence and at tightening preventive protection measures. The draft law presented by the Italian Government, I'm pleased to say was then unanimously adopted by the Parliament on the 23rd of November 2023.

The Law n. 168/2023, sets tighter measures restraining men from approaching the victim and continuing to perpetrate violence. More specifically, the law aims at strengthening the protection of victims by introducing or enhancing some judiciary tools, such as the so called "warning" and the restraining order. Another crucial area concerns the recognition of violence, which is sometimes underestimated or attributed to conflict dynamics within emotional relationships. With this in mind, the Italian Government is working on the educational level, with appropriate training for all operators who come into contact with women victims of violence, and in broader terms promoting initiative aimed to secondary schools, to disseminate the values of mutual respect and gender equality among young people, with a particular attention to students.

Within this framework, on February the 27th, 2024, the Department for Equal Opportunity of the Italian Presidency of the Council of Ministers, published a call for secondary schools, aimed to the production of short movies conveying a positive message on the possibility for all women and girls to escape from the circuit of violence, above all through its recognition. The five winning proposals will be awarded a prize at the Venice International Film Festival, within the total amount of 150.000 euros.

In 2021, Italy adopted its third National Strategic Plan on male violence against women (2021-2023), now extended until the entry into force of the fourth National Strategic Plan. The 2022 budget law changed the initial name of the Plan from 'extraordinary' to 'strategic', thus transforming it into a structural measure, pertaining to the multiple aspects related to the conditions of violence, such as: prevention, protection of victims, punishment of the perpetrators, training and education of the operators, and information and awareness-raising.

In the coming months, the new National Strategic Plan on violence against women 2024-2026 will be adopted, following a broad and participatory process involving central and territorial administrations, institutions, sector associations, trade unions and employers' organizations. A privileged place for discussion and in-depth analysis is the Observatory on the phenomenon of violence, established within the Department for Equal Opportunity.

Economic independence plays a fundamental role both in the prevention of gender-based violence and as a tool to escape the circle of violence, which too often continues to feed on relationships of economic dependence on the violent partner.

The Italian Government is strongly committed to fighting against violence, including economic violence, and to supporting victims, and therefore has adopted for the first time the so-called "Freedom Income for women victims of violence", an economic contribution supporting the victims for 12 months. Italy has also established the so-called 'Freedom Microcredit', a financial tool to support the victims of violence assisted by Anti-Violence Centers in their path towards economic empowerment and independence through entrepreneurship.

Financial literacy among women is also a key, as it opens doors to the opportunities offered by economic and financial systems, including those related to digitalization. It equips women to navigate unforeseen economic events such as job loss, to face risks like financial fraud and can even reduce the incidence of economic violence.

Financial education is, therefore, crucial to ensure independence for all people and is undoubtedly a pathway to women's empowerment, that is why the Minister for Family, Natality, and Equal Opportunities recently signed a Memorandum to this purpose with the Italian Banking Association and the Italian Foundation for financial and saving education.

In the field of Employment, Italy has strongly supported the implementation of concrete measures to promote women's participation in the labor market. Such measures are proving successful: women's employment rate has indeed grown by 1.2 percent in one year reaching the highest percentage ever recorded in our country. Some of the measures that are particularly worth mentioning include the extension of parental leaves, the increase and widening of the so-called Single Allowance for Children, the adoption of tax relief for businesses hiring women, and the increase in the budget dedicated to women's businesses within the Guarantee Fund for small and medium enterprises.

The private sector -together with public institutions- can play a key role in supporting women's empowerment. To this end, Italy has adopted a specific Gender Equality Certification System for businesses aiming at encouraging – through tax incentives and award mechanisms set up by law – the implementation of policies for gender equality and women's empowerment at the business level.

After the publication of UNI Practice 125:2022 - which defines the minimum parameters for the achievement of the Gender Equality Certification - adopted by ministerial decree in April 2022, the System became fully operational. The certification system is now a fully functioning tool and to date there are 46 certification bodies accredited by ACCREDIA and over 1,000 certified enterprises.

Along with the Certification, a Code for Businesses in favor of Maternity has been introduced by the Minister for Family, Natality, and Equal Opportunities, a voluntary self-regulation tool aimed at creating a cultural climate of collaboration on parenthood within the business sector.

**25. In the past five years, what other mechanisms and tools has your country used to mainstream gender equality across sectors? (e.g. gender focal points in the Executive, Legislature or Judiciary; inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms; gender audits, consultations with women's organizations)**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples of measures taken, including aims and scope of measures, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

As already mentioned above, the Budget Law 2022 turned the Gender Equality Strategic Plan into a structural measure and defined a governance system composed by a national Observatory and an inter-institutional Steering Committee "Cabina di regia" aimed to the coordination of the Equal Opportunities policies across government, in order to strengthen the governance of the 2021-2026 Strategy (Article 1, paragraphs 139-148, Law No. 234/2021). The financing of the Plan envisages, starting from the year 2022, an increase of €5 million in the Fund for policies related to rights and equal opportunities.

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the exchange of experiences; the Observatory also coordinates its research, study and documentation activities with those relating to the National Strategic Plan against violence against women and domestic violence.

The Observatory also reports to the Permanent Working Table on the certification of gender equality, established by the Decree of the Minister for Equal Opportunities and Family Affairs of 5 April 2022.

The Observatory is chaired by the President of the Council of Ministers or by the political authority with delegated powers for equal opportunities and consists of the following bodies: the President, the Assembly and the Technical-Scientific Committee, which remain in office for three years.

The Decree of the Minister for Family, Birth and Equal Opportunities of 6 December 2023 modified the composition of the Observatory, in order to ensure a greater involvement of the institutions concerned, also at a territorial level.

According to the aforementioned regulations, the National Strategic Plan for Gender Equality has the following objectives:

identifying good practices to combat gender stereotypes;

closing the gender gap in the labour market;

achieving equality in participation in different economic sectors;

addressing the pay and pension gap;

achieving gender balance in decision-making.

## **26. If there is a national human rights institution in your country, what measures has it taken to address violations of women's rights and promote gender equality?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples of measures taken, including aims and scope of measures, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. In doing so, countries are encouraged to report on the institution's role in promoting women's rights in national legislation and policies. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

**NO**

## **Peaceful and inclusive societies**

### **Critical areas of concern:**

E. Women and armed conflict

I. Human rights of women

L. The girl child

## **27. In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to build and sustain peace, promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development and implement the women, peace and security agenda?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples of measures taken, including aims and scope of measures, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information, including specific actions related to National Action Planning on 1325 and the WPS Humanitarian Action Compact. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

Since early 2000, Italy has been at the forefront to adopt UN Security Council Resolution 1325(2000) on Women, Peace and Security.

In more than two decades, the WPS Agenda has been greatly enriched, in light of the three UN Pillars, and many issues from a variety of areas have been considered and developed, including: the disproportionate impact of armed conflict on women and children, especially girls; the need to enhance civil society's role; sexual violence as a tactic of war; and, subsequently, the variety of issues considered in particular by Resolution 2242 (2015), which stresses the key role of this Agenda to tackle "Challenges", such as violent extremism and the global impact of climate change, the importance of strategic communication, and the key role of civil society.

When it comes to this Agenda's implementation, we are aware that attention must be paid to the underpinning role of women's meaningful participation and representation not only in conflict-resolution, prevention, peace negotiations, peace-building, peacekeeping, and post-conflict reconstruction (UNSCR1325)<sup>1</sup>, but in all decision-making processes - with a transformative approach, as agents of change and not only as survivors.

In light of the three UN pillars, the Women, Peace and Security Agenda has a cross-cutting nature. In his reporting, the UN Secretary-General keeps providing strategic measures to accelerate implementation.

Italy specifically advocates for a stronger focus of the Council, as well as of other relevant fora, such as the UN Human Rights Council - when applicable -, on women's leadership and participation, especially in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peace-building.

Drawing from the Coomaraswamy Global Study-2015, entitled "Preventing conflict, transforming justice, securing the peace study-2015"<sup>2</sup>, women must participate in all decision-making processes; and greater support must be ensured for them to access leading positions.

It is crystal-clear that to rebuild justice, respect for human rights, and rule of law in conflict and post-conflict situations, the implementation of relevant UNSCRs, as well as UN Secretary-General recommendations, is a *conditio sine qua non*. To increase the number of women in peace and reconstruction processes, in national and international mechanisms and bodies, including within the judiciary, and to ensure that relevant expertise may forge/inform their decisions, Governments have the primary responsibility of steering these processes, in light of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

We launched, on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2020, the fourth National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, 2020 – 2024 ([www.cidu.esteri.it](http://www.cidu.esteri.it))<sup>3</sup>. This NAP got resources from the Parliament, for initiatives to be annually implemented by relevant CSOs for the years 2021, 2022, 2023.

In light of 2015 Coomaraswamy global study on women, peace and security (UN Doc. S/2015/716)<sup>4</sup> and following an in-depth streamlining exercise carried out with relevant CSOs participating in the *Open-Ended Working Group-1325*, the new Italian NAP pays attention to a variety of issues: existing

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<sup>1</sup> By UNSCR 1888 (2009), attention has been paid to the importance of increasing women's participation in mediation and decision-making processes with regard to conflict resolution and peace-building;

By UNSCR 1889 (2009) the UN Security Council urged further measures to improve women's participation during all stages of peace processes;

By UNSCR 2122 (2013) - which further operationalizes the previous relevant Resolutions - gender equality and women's empowerment have been considered as key to international peace and security, besides strengthening the commitment to involving women in peace talks;

By UNSCR 2242 (2015), adopted on the occasion of UNSCR 1325's 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the cross-cutting nature of WPS Agenda has been further stressed since it is key to addressing the existing "Challenges".

<sup>2</sup> Contained in UN Secretary-General Report S/2015/716.

<sup>3</sup> CIDU is the acronym standing for Inter-ministerial Committee for Human Rights. This is the National Mechanism for Implementation, Reporting and Follow-up (NMIRF) of Italy.

<sup>4</sup> "Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace Study 2015".

international challenges; acknowledgement of women as agents of change – not only as survivors –, and the need for a transformative approach; representation, mediation and meaningful participation, ultimately in all decision-making processes; a strengthened role for civil society organizations, especially women organizations; human rights education and training, as well as strategic communication, including at university level. All these issues have been fully considered under the newly adopted National Action Plan of Italy on Women, Peace and Security, which consists of 4 Objectives and 38 Actions. We have also strengthened qualitative and quantitative indicators in line with relevant EU Plans and Strategies. This Plan was defined and finalised jointly with CSOs participating in the Open-Ended WG-1325.

Among good practices, of relevance are also:

- The strengthening of the Mediterranean Women Mediators Network launched in Rome in 2017.
- The launch of a dedicated Women Peace Humanitarian Fund, financed by Italy (*DGCS - Unita' emergenze internazionali*), under which it is to be mentioned the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund's Window for Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRDs) Safety Net stream. Through its Safety Net stream, the WPHF Window for WHRDs aims to cover urgent costs such as short-term livelihood and protection expenses including (but not limited to): equipment (computers, security cameras), internet, self-care, legal assistance, relocation costs, etc. for individual women human rights defenders (WHRD) from/working in conflict and crisis-affected countries, who, due to their commitments to human rights and peace, currently face, or have faced risks with resulting impacts that continue to threaten their safety and/or ability to sustain their work.
- By recalling Italy's fourth National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, 2020 - 2024, accountability for violations and abuses of international humanitarian and human rights law is one of Italy's cross-cutting priorities. This is why we strongly support existing international mechanisms established by the United Nations that investigate violations and abuses committed and that are tasked with collecting and preserving evidence that could prove useful in view of a possible judicial process, including sexual and gender-based violence against women and children. As a way of examples, we particularly focus on the issue of accountability for violations against girls and adolescent girls in armed conflict, in line with the commitment made by Italy at the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross. On that occasion, we presented a pledge to take all necessary actions to ensure that children can live in safety and enjoy their fundamental rights even in conflict situations, including, inter alia, a specific commitment to encouraging States to adopt, develop and implement the necessary legal and administrative measures to ensure that all violations against children in armed conflicts are criminalised and perpetrators are brought to justice.

**28. In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to increase the leadership, representation and participation of women in conflict prevention, resolution, peacebuilding, humanitarian action and crisis response, at decision-making levels in situations of armed and other conflicts, and in fragile or crisis settings?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples of measures taken, including aims and scope of measures, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

By recalling the above information, Italy has always worked to ensure women's meaningful participation in all decision-making processes.

Along these lines, mention has to be made of the work of Italian Cooperation, the primary objectives of Italy's co-operation - as provided by Act No. 125/2014 - are poverty eradication, reducing inequalities and sustainable development; human rights, including gender equality, democracy and rule of law; and conflict prevention and peace-building. Italy's development co-operation strategic vision is outlined in the *Three-year Programming and Policy Planning Document*, which defines development co-operation policies and provides guidelines by identifying thematic, sectoral and geographic priorities. The Three-year Document is structured according to the new international framework, focused on the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda and on the achievement of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

**Priority sectors** include traditional co-operation sectors such as agriculture and rural development, food security, education, health, governance, gender equality and women's empowerment, protection of cultural and natural heritage, migration and development (with particular reference to promotion of investments, support to SMEs, access to credit, employment creation), as well as innovative sectors, such as strengthening of statistical capacities and technical assistance in the taxation sector. Among various activities, in light of the '*Call to Action on Gender-Based Violence in emergency contexts*', the Italian Cooperation system reviewed the Guidelines on Gender Equality and Empowerment. The new version includes a focus on gender-based violence in emergencies, prevention and early action. By way of example, in 2022, the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (acronym in Italian, **AICS**) launched two measures aimed at enhancing women's leadership and inclusion in *governance*:

- the project '*Bilateral Intervention Humanitarian Aid and Peacebuilding in **Colombia** through the Protection and Promotion of the Role of Women and Youth*' was financed (1,000,000 Euros, Humanitarian Aid Intervention-AID 012684/01/0, Resolution of the Vice-Minister No. 102 of 10.10.2022), which aims to improve the living conditions of the inhabitants of the department of *del Cauca Valley*, affected by the conflict and support peacebuilding. In particular, this objective will be achieved by: supporting the local reception and assistance capacities for displaced persons, particularly women; promoting the participation of local organizations run by women and social leaders in the political dialogue for the construction of peace policy; and improving the socio-economic integration of displaced women and young people and landmine victims.
- Along the same lines, the Italian Cooperation has also financed the United Nations initiative, administered by UNDP in collaboration with UNWOMEN, '*Support to the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund in **Afghanistan** (UNDP\_UNWOMEN)*', (**WPHF**) with two components, of which a 2 million Euros unearmarked (Vice-Ministerial Resolution no. 51 of 26/07/2022, Humanitarian Aid Intervention, AID 012619/01/0) and one for the Afghan crisis in the amount of 4.5 million Euros (Deputy Minister's Resolution No. 69 of 29.09.2022, Humanitarian Aid Intervention, AID 012619/01/1). The WPHF is a global partnership that supports women's participation, leadership and empowerment in humanitarian response and peace and security contexts. Led by a range of civil society, government and UN actors, WPHF is a multi-partner trust fund that mobilizes urgently needed funding for local organizations led by women and working alongside them on the frontline to build lasting peace.

Moreover, Italy's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (acronym in Italian, **MAECI**), with the collaboration of the International Affairs Institute (acronym in Italian, **IAI**) and Women in International Security-Italy (**WIIS**) set up, on 25-26 October 2017, the *Mediterranean Women Mediators Network (MWMN)*, as part of Italy's mandate in the Security Council and our G7 Presidency, and in implementation of the Third National Action Plan on 'Women, Peace and

Security'. Over the years, the network has grown significantly in terms of participation and expertise, also thanks to the training courses organized for women mediators and the numerous networking opportunities offered. Despite the emergency situation due to COVID-19 spread, the MWMN continued to provide training activities for women mediators in a virtual format. These include the training course on '*mediation techniques and dialogue facilitation*' at the Mediation Centre of Saint Joseph's University in Beirut. Together with *Search for Common Ground*, MWMN organized a series of seminars on the Syrian situation, entitled '*The Status of Syrian Women after ten years of conflict*'. The Network was further consolidated at the local level: in addition to the first two antennas, in Cyprus (17 May 2019) and Turkey (29 June 2019), an antenna was established in Kosovo (18 November 2020). The latter initiated significant collaborations with other entities, including the Jahjaga Foundation, which is also active in the promotion of women's rights. Collaboration with the United Nations (in particular, Office of the Secretary-General, DPPA, Mediation Support Unit and UN Women) and especially with other similar regional networks has also been strengthened. The partnership with the latter led to the creation of the *Global Alliance of Regional Networks of Women Mediators* on the sidelines of the opening general debate of the 74th UN General Assembly.

The creation of the *Global Alliance* aims to increase the participation and influence of women in peace processes, at all levels, through shared and concerted actions among networks that, while having their own characteristics, pursue the same goals. The Alliance -that will maintain an informal nature - is thus intended to embody a collective voice and amplify the effectiveness of the action of individual networks, which will retain their identities and characteristics.

**29. In the last five years, what actions has your country taken to enhance judicial and non-judicial accountability for violations of international humanitarian law and violations of the human rights of women and girls in situations of armed and other conflicts or humanitarian action and crisis response?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples of measures taken, including aims and scope of measures, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

By recalling Italy's fourth National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, 2020-2024, accountability for violations and abuses of international humanitarian and human rights law is one of Italy's cross-cutting priorities. This is why we strongly support existing international mechanisms established by the United Nations that investigate violations and abuses committed and that are tasked with collecting and preserving evidence that could prove useful in view of a possible judicial process, including sexual and gender-based violence against women and children.

We particularly focus on the issue of accountability for violations against girls and adolescent girls in armed conflict, in line with the commitment made by Italy at the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross. On that occasion, we presented a pledge to take all necessary actions to ensure that children can live in safety and enjoy their fundamental rights even in conflict situations, including, inter alia, a specific commitment to encouraging States to adopt, develop and implement the necessary legal and administrative measures to ensure that all violations against children in armed conflicts are criminalised and perpetrators are brought to justice.

As a way of examples, in **Colombia**, AICS Bogotá organised the event '*Mujeres y violencias: perspectivas diferentes, una lucha común*' in collaboration with the Italian Embassy and the Italian Cultural Institute in early December 2022. The event, which saw the participation of both representatives of Colombian institutions and local associations for the promotion of women's rights, dealt with the issue of gender-

based violence in Colombia with special attention to women's participation in decision-making spaces in all spheres, particularly in institutional spaces. AICS launched several projects to protect the rights of women and children in conflict situations. More details of these contributions will be published on the [aics.gov.it](http://aics.gov.it) website shortly.

In **Kenya**, the programme '*Let It Not Happen Again. Enhancing prevention and response to violence against women in election*', was financed by the Italian Cooperation for the first time in 2019, with €300,000 and refinanced with the same amount in 2020 and 2021 (overall, €900,000). In 2023, an additional contribution was decided upon, for a total amount of Eur 1,800,000. The implementation of the project focused on preparing for and responding to gender-based violence in Kenya by strengthening prevention and response mechanisms through capacity building of relevant institutional authorities, civil society and women-led human rights organizations, building on lessons learnt from the first two phases of the project. Examples of women's rights organizations involved are Wangu Kanja Foundation and CSO Network, among others.

In **Sudan**, it is worthy of note the project 'Sudan - We-Rise!' (12303 AICS/431 OCSE) Women's Empowerment for Resilience, Inclusion, Sustainability and the Environment, T-05-EUTF-HOA-SD-96-02. This programme is financed by the European Union and implemented jointly by AICS and UN Women; the action, which has a budget of Eur 12,780,000, includes activities to support women's groups in Khartoum, Kassala, Gedaref and the Red Sea States, including through direct financing and microcredit. Interested women's groups will benefit from direct financing and micro-credits (revolving funds, loans, grants) as well as training and tools on financial and non-financial services (basic financial literacy, vocational training).

In **Senegal**, several civil society organizations led by women are involved as implementers in PASNEEG II - *Programme of Support to the National Strategy for Gender Equality* (AID 12065), an initiative that aims to promote and protect the rights of women and girls in Senegal at all levels (institutional, judicial, legislative, economic, social, etc.); civil society organizations are beneficiaries of the project's activities, with a focus on advocacy and services against sexual violence. Among them are: *Associations des Juristes Senegalaises* (AJS), *Associations des Femmes Medecins* (AFEMS); *Association des Femmes sénégalaises en Techniques de l'Information et de la Communication* (FESTIC); *Afri'YAN/RAGAZZE* ; *Le club des jeunes filles de Kolda* and *RADDHO (Rassemblement africain pour la Défense des Droits de l'Homme)*. This bilateral initiative is implemented in cooperation with the Ministry of Women, Family, Gender and Child Protection (MFFGPE) with Eur 1,800,000 (Resolution No. 82/ 2019).

On trafficking, as mentioned earlier on, it is to be recalled the *National Anti-Trafficking Plan* adopted by the Council of Ministers on 19 October 2022 for the three-year period 2022-2025.

**30. In the last five years, what actions has your country taken to eliminate discrimination against and violations of the rights of the girl child, including adolescent girls?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples of measures taken, including aims and scope of measures, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

On a general note, it is to be recalled that in July 2019 the Italian Parliament approved the so-called Red Code (Act No. 69/2019), which envisages a preferential and urgent judicial pathway, including the right to be heard by the public prosecutor, within three days from notitia criminis registration. New crimes include: forced marriage (Article 558bis of the Italian criminal code); disfiguring permanently one's face by acid attack (Article 583quinquies); illicit distribution of sexually-explicit images or videos (Article 612ter).

"Forced marriage" focuses on the union in which the consent of one of the parties, far from being free and full, is extorted through various forms of coercion, which may include threat and violence. Often, the "victims" of forced marriage are children. In this event, the constraint/"forcing" is self-evident. The Red Code introduced Art.558-bis, on "Coercion or induction to marriage" into the Italian criminal code. It punishes a series of conducts related to forced marriage and forced civil union under which the coercion refers also to psychological abuse. This Article (Art.558-bis) also applies when the fact is committed abroad by an Italian citizen or by a foreigner residing in Italy or to the detriment of an Italian citizen or of a foreigner residing in Italy. This crime is punished with imprisonment from one to five years - to be aggravated in the event of a conduct against particularly vulnerable individuals, including children under the age of 18 (and this is to be further aggravated if committed against children under the age of 14).

**Source: Last report of Italy to CEDAW 2022):** To improve access to justice in cases of violence, the following intervention areas are to be considered: Accelerating procedural measures envisaged by “Red Code”; Refining organizational measures of judicial Offices for the treatment of victims while enhancing “time” factor for their listening, including by relevant specialized groups; priority in notitia criminis’ registration; use of investigation protocols; guidelines and questionnaires for listening to victim; preparation of a set of questions to be asked to victim, per crime’s categories; within the Offices, creation of spaces dedicated to reception and listening to victims; an integrated approach among stakeholders institutionally responsible for victim’s care and protection; specific trainings for judiciary and Police (Annex 4); communicating perpetrator’s release to victim; attention to GBV-related sections on relevant sites, including indications about places where listening desks can be found. Another practical measure is the labeling of relevant casefile, visible from the title page, to immediately draw Public Prosecutor’s attention to relevant case. An additional area concerns measures to provide adequate assistance to victims. Ministry of Justice carries out, inter alia: Awareness-raising about relevant EU Directives (Directive 2012/29/EU; Directive 2004/80/EC on crime victims’ compensation), and activities ensuring uniform implementation of measures introduced by Legislative Decree 212/2015, on safeguarding procedural rights of victims, and promoting and improving victim’s assistance services; Preparation of contributions for participation in meetings of Network for Victims’ Rights established at EU level and other meetings, nationally and internationally; Permanent monitoring of measures’ implementation for procedural protection of crime victims besides mapping available assistance services, nationwide. Finally, worthy of mention is allocation of 1 million Euros, for 2020 (and 2 million Euros, for 2021), to strengthen the network assisting victims of crime, besides promoting national coordination of victim assistance services, in line with Directive 2012/29/EU. Of relevance are also the National Strategic Plan on Male Violence against Women and the First Gender Equality Plan. For additional information, please refer to the above report 5.

The Ministry of Interior requested Prefectures to share with reception centres and key bodies and institutions the operational guide on GBV, on ‘How to provide first support to GBV survivors for practitioners working with victims of violence’, as jointly developed by UNHCR, IOM and UNICEF; Online training on vulnerabilities and referral, prepared, through collaboration with UNHCR, UNICEF and IOM, for those working in the asylum reception system. All law-enforcement Forces pay the utmost attention to relevant trainings. Many awareness-raising campaigns have been launched, such as the E.V.A. project (Examination of Violent Acts), and the “This is not Love” campaign (including a brochure), which have led to an increasing number of cases of violence against women reported.

Internationally, as a way of examples, Italy specifically supports resolutions on human rights of women and girls. The Italian Cooperation funds and carries out projects focused on gender equality. Several multisectoral interventions had specific components on gender equality and, specifically, on sexual and gender-based violence. Moreover, the Italian Agency Development Cooperation Guidelines on Gender Equality focuses on CEFM (

[https://www.aics.gov.it/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/LLGG\\_GENDER\\_XWEB.pdf](https://www.aics.gov.it/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/LLGG_GENDER_XWEB.pdf)).

On a more specific note, the Italian Cooperation's programming has promoted the importance of achieving gender equality and guaranteeing the rights of all women, adolescent girls and the girl child through the launching of programmes that address the various obstacles to the full enjoyment of the rights of women, girls and children and aim to intervene on the structural causes of gender inequalities. These range from combating sexual and gender-based violence, domestic and otherwise, which is particularly prevalent in fragile and crisis contexts, to promoting maternal and child health, women's education, creating a socio-political environment conducive to women's economic empowerment, and financial inclusion and access to credit.

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<sup>5</sup> In 2017, the Italian National Statistical Office (ISTAT) and the Department for Equal Opportunities signed an MoU to establish an integrated data system on Violence against Women - also aimed to steer relevant policies. This system has been online since November 25, 2017, and is



As a way of examples, in the past two years several initiatives aimed at achieving gender equality were deliberated for Afghanistan, Albania, Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Colombia, Ethiopia, Kenya, Libya, Sierra Leone, Syria, South Sudan, Sudan, while in several other countries gender components were included in multi-sectoral projects (Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Colombia, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Jordan, Guatemala, Guinea Bissau, Iraq, Kenya, Lebanon, Libya, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Myanmar, Niger, Palestine, Central African Republic, Senegal, Syria, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Tunisia, Ukraine, Uganda). In 2022 alone, 22 new contributions were allocated to gender equality for more than Eur 42 M euros,

These development and humanitarian contributions deliberated by the Italian Cooperation include both support to the institutional activities of organizations traditionally committed to the promotion of gender equality, such as UN WOMEN and UNFPA, and interventions to be implemented in partner countries in collaboration with international organizations, local authorities and local and international civil society organizations. More details of these contributions will be published shortly on the [aics.gov.it](https://www.aics.gov.it) website. Needless to say, the above brief elements are to be considered in conjunction with all existing domestic measures and strategic plans as mentioned earlier on, including on STEMs, fighting gender-based discrimination etc..

## Environmental conservation, protection and rehabilitation

### **Critical areas of concern:**

- I. Human rights of women
- K. Women and the environment
- L. The girl child

### **31. In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to integrate gender perspectives and concerns into environmental policies, including climate change adaptation and mitigation, biodiversity conservation and land degradation?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples of measures taken, including aims and scope of measures, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

*Mutatis, mutandis, mention has to be made of the following:*

As a way of examples, the Italian Development Cooperation Guidelines on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls, 2020-2024, considers, *inter alia*, women and climate change ([https://www.aics.gov.it/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/LG\\_GENDER\\_ENG.pdf](https://www.aics.gov.it/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/LG_GENDER_ENG.pdf)).

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*progressively updated. This results in a huge container fully accessible online, by which to collect the main data and indicators, in addition to the existing legal frameworks, experiences and policies regarding violence against women. Data is organized in a dedicated data warehouse (<https://www.istat.it/it/violenza-sulle-donne>). This system collects official statistics, which are related to the following fields: Prevention and, more specifically, data on gender stereotypes and stereotypes towards violence against women; The size of violence against women in its several forms; The exit strategy, with data about the inbound calls to the national helpline against violence and stalking, 1522; the new census on shelters; and the judicial pathways, based on the reports to the police, the proceedings, the convictions and the prisoners-related data.*

The National Recovery and Resilience Plan (**NRRP**) focuses on gender equality promotion, to be pursued in all six Plan's missions: digitalization, innovation, competitiveness, culture and tourism; green revolution and ecological transition; infrastructures for sustainable mobility; education and research; inclusion and cohesion; health.

Please refer also to question n.2 + STEM

The strong connection between gender equality and the environment, particularly in addressing climate change, is widely recognized. Globally, women and girls are among the most vulnerable to environmental risks and climate-related crises. However, they also play a crucial role as agents of change due to their resilience and expertise. Women can offer diverse perspectives, experiences, and skills that improve decision-making processes and contribute to more effective climate strategies.

Italy strongly advocates for increased involvement of women in managing and responding to the complexities of climate change by promoting education, training, and advancement in STEM fields. This entails encouraging women's participation in decision-making and environmental governance processes, leading to a broader representation of women in decision-making roles. Additionally, it involves supporting the professional growth of women in science and research to ensure that they bring women's perspectives and needs into developing solutions to environmental challenges. Encouraging women to pursue education in these areas also addresses gender disparities in the workforce, creating a more diverse and inclusive scientific community. As a Party to the UNFCCC, Italy participates in the Gender Action Plan and has designated a National Gender Focal Point to ensure that gender considerations are integrated into its climate policies and actions. This commitment aligns with Italy's broader efforts to promote gender equality and sustainable development.

**32. In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to integrate gender perspectives into policies and programmes for disaster risk reduction and building environmental and climate resilience?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples of measures taken, including aims and scope of measures, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

Italy orally presented and was considered by the **UN CEDAW** Committee on February 1, 2024. On that occasion, we discussed our VIII national periodic report, indicating all elements covering civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of women.

Accordingly, we promptly translated UN CEDAW *Concluding Observations*, as published on CIDU's website. The UN Concluding Observations translated into Italian were also shared with the Parliament, relevant Administrations and CSOs.

In November 2021, Italy submitted its mid-term report under **UPR** Third Cycle. We provided an update on relevant UPR related recommendations. We are currently in the process of preparing the national report under UPR Fourth Cycle and we will provide specific information, accordingly.

**Please refer also to question 31**

## Section Four: National institutions and processes

### **33. Please describe your country's national strategy or action plan for gender equality, including its name, the period it covers, its priority, funding and alignment with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the targets under SDG 5.**

*In the narrative report, please provide a summary of goals, targets, and priority actions, including target population, budget, status of implementation, and links to further information. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

The Italian Strategy for Gender Equality 2021–2026, elaborated by DEO in line with relevant European Strategy, was issued in August 2021. In drafting this document – serving as a strategic framework for NRRP's implementation and the Family Act reform – DEO started a wide-ranging and inclusive consultation process, resulting in Italy's vision for gender equality, i.e.: Making Italy a country where people of all genders, ages and backgrounds have same opportunities for personal and professional development and growth, for access to education and employment, with no inequality in terms of income or dignity, and can realise their potential, knowing that equality is guaranteed with no compromises in a modern country being ready to face challenges ahead, in accordance with Art.3 of Italian Constitution.

To pursue this ambition, 5 strategic priorities are also defined, one for each gender equality pillar, to outline and guide governmental action:

- **Employment:** Create a fairer labour market in terms of equal career opportunities, competitiveness, and flexibility, by supporting women's participation, also after the dramatic impact of the pandemic, in particular by helping parents to achieve a work-life balance, and by stimulating female entrepreneurship, especially in innovation. Supporting increase in female employment, in particular by enhancing collective bargaining, emphasising quality of work, and removing sectoral segregation – promoting presence of women in typically male sectors and presence of men in typically female sectors;

- **Income:** Reduce gender pay gaps by facilitating women's participation and retention in labour market through support for care responsibilities, enhancing skills, ensuring fair remuneration for jobs and occupations with equivalent socio-economic value and promoting economic independence;

- **Skills:** Ensure equal opportunities in skills development and in the expression of individual talents in all fields of knowledge, in particular mathematics and science and technology, by removing cultural barriers and gender stereotypes, as well as ensuring equal gender representation in academia; in addition, promote an approach towards desegregating women's and men's skills in all gender-sensitive fields;

- **Time:** Promote equal sharing of unpaid care and assistance tasks (childcare, parenting and elderly care) between men and women and ensure quality, affordable and comprehensive primary care throughout the country;

- **Power:** Support equitable gender distribution in top management and economic, political, social and cultural leadership roles, in terms of both representation and accountability, and encourage training and development of a large talent pool of equal gender representation.

A set of indicators is defined to measure key factors of gender inequality. The selection of indicators will take place after due involvement not only of experts but also of institutional representatives. In light of the impact on the socio-economic context caused by Covid-19, the monitoring activity may also concern medium- and long-term effects of the crisis, to assess effectiveness of the measures envisaged by NRRP vis-à-vis the relevant goals.

On October 29, 2021, Italy ratified the 2019 ILO Convention No. 190.

On October 26, 2021, Italy's Senate approved Bill 2418. By amending Legislative Decree 198/2006, it provides for National Equality Councillor to report biennially to Parliament on implementation of equal opportunity at workplace-related legislation. Moreover, of relevance are: The strengthening of the mechanism for monitoring gender situation of staff, through a revision of Art.46 of the above Legislative Decree, thus expanding subjects required to submit biennial report (companies with up to 50 employees – and no longer up to 100); Inclusion of gender equality councillors in Technical Committee for gender certification. Moreover, the National Equality Councillor promoted through an MoU with National Bar Council, nation-wide anti-discrimination courses still ongoing, for lawyers, also to establish a short-list of relevant competences to help local Equality Councillors in judicial cases.

*In the online survey, you will be asked if your country has a valid national strategy or action plan for gender equality (YES/NO). If YES, you will be asked if the gender equality strategy or action plan been costed and have sufficient resources been allocated to its achievement in the current budget (YES/NO).*

**34. Please describe your country's system for tracking the proportion of the national budget that is invested in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women (gender-responsive budgeting), including the approximate proportion of the national budget that is invested in this area.**

*In the narrative report, where possible, please provide disaggregated information and data on resources allocated to specific critical areas of the BPfA as well as reflections on achievements and challenges encountered in making budgets gender responsive. (2 pages max.)*

Starting in 2017, the Ministry of Economy and Finance adopted a Gender Budgeting methodology based on the Prime Minister's Decree of June 2017, developed in collaboration with the Department for Equal Opportunities. This methodology is applied to the State Budget expenditure reporting and is implemented annually under the coordination of the State General Accounting Department.

The context of the State's gender budgeting, particularly for its integration into a strategic framework aimed at reducing gender disparities, may be influenced by the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021-2026, presented to the Council of Ministers in August 2021.

Furthermore, the transition from the current experimental phase could be supported by achieving one of the milestones of the spending review reform included in the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR). Specifically, Milestone M1C1-110 (PNRR Reform 1.13 Spending Review) calls for the reclassification of the State Budget, starting from the 2024 budget law, with reference to gender-promoting and environmental expenditures. In the first year of this reform's implementation, the required documents were submitted to Parliament on November 30, 2023. These documents include informative annexes and methodological documentation outlining the procedure used for the State Budget reclassification and the related accounting evidence, considering the sustainability goals established by the 2030 Agenda, with respect to both gender and environmental budgeting.

The gender budget for the 2022 State Accounts follows the methodology outlined by the Prime Minister's Decree of June 16, 2017. This methodology is subsequently updated through annual circulars, the latest being RGS Circular No. 22 of May 16, 2023 (Gender Budgeting. Guidelines and commencement of activities related to the 2022 State Accounts). The annual report to Parliament provides a representation of the State Budget's reclassified expenditures from a gender perspective and a series of statistical indicators to monitor actions taken to address gender inequalities and their association with budget structures. It also includes an analysis of the gender impact of key tax policy measures.

This activity is coordinated by the State General Accounting Department, involving central State administrations, the Prime Minister's Office, the Department of Finance, and the Department of General

Affairs of the Ministry of Economy and Finance. Additionally, to ensure monitoring of key gender gaps in the economy and society, the State General Accounting Department collaborates with ISTAT (Italian National Institute of Statistics) and has signed an agreement with INPS (National Institute for Social Security), which also promotes research and evaluation activities related to gender inequality reduction measures.

Among the main innovations related to gender budgeting are:

- The experimental integration, with the 2022 final accounts circular, of a fourth classification mode (expenditures to be examined further) in addition to the usual classification modes used until the 2021 final accounts (gender-neutral expenditures, gender-sensitive expenditures, and expenditures directly aimed at reducing gender inequalities). This aims to identify expenditures that, due to certain characteristics (nature of the expenditure and/or potential beneficiaries), could be classified as sensitive, thereby reducing gender-neutral expenditures.
- The implementation of the reform provided for by Milestone M1C1-110 of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR) through the presentation to Parliament, with the 2024 budget law, of a reclassification report of the forecast items according to the criteria underlying the sustainable development goals and the 2030 Agenda, with respect to both gender and environmental budgeting.
- The gender budget for the 2022 State Accounts utilizes a rich set of indicators, which increased to 180 in 2022 from 39 in the first 2016 budget, to highlight the different characteristics and behaviors of men and women regarding various economic and social phenomena. These indicators are structured according to typical areas of public policy intervention, including BES (Equitable and Sustainable Well-being) indicators adopted in the Economic and Financial Document (DEF).
- The report is divided into several chapters, with themes including in-depth analyses of state expenditure and its gender classification, aiming to define a boundary as close as possible to final expenditure. This involves delineating and applying interventions and rules that can proactively address the reduction of expenditures considered neutral.

More information:

<https://www.rgs.mef.gov.it/Documenti/VERSIONE-I/Attivit--i/Rendiconto/Bilancio-di-genere/2022/Summary-and-main-results-2022.pdf>

### Concerning DEO Activities Related to the Implementation and Promotion of Gender Budgeting

- **Promotion of Gender Budgeting:** The Department promotes the adoption of gender budgeting as a tool to implement gender mainstreaming in public spending planning and execution. Gender budgeting is a practical application of the gender mainstreaming approach as it highlights how policies and measures affect men and women differently.
- **Project "Methods and Evaluation Tools for Gender Mainstreaming" (MES):** To achieve these objectives, the DPO, along with synergistic initiatives coordinated by the Office for Equal Opportunity Policies, promoted the MES project. This project, funded under the National Operational Program "Governance and Institutional Capacity" 2014-2020, Axis 3 (ERDF), aims to support gender impact evaluation of public policies funded by national and European funds.
- **Implementation of Gender-Sensitive Public Policy Evaluation:** Through the MES Project, the DPO contributed to implementing gender-based evaluations of public policies to measure their impacts on the lives of women and men, guiding strategic decisions at various governance levels.
- **Development of Shared Evaluation Methodologies:** The project led to the creation of shared evaluation methodologies and innovative operational tools. It also facilitated systematic interaction between administrations to genuinely integrate the principle of equal opportunities in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of public policies.
- **Toolkit for Gender Budgeting:** A key outcome was the development of the "Toolkit for the Implementation and Execution of Gender Budgeting," a methodological approach to gender

budgeting as per current regulations. This toolkit serves as a study and reference tool for public and private stakeholders dealing with gender reporting and evaluation.

- **Legislative Support:** The importance of gender budgeting was reinforced by Legislative Decree No. 116/2018, which emphasized the need for gender budgeting to promote gender equality in public policies.
- **Collaboration with the State General Accounting Department:** The DPO works closely with the State General Accounting Department to support the implementation of gender budgeting. This includes contributing to the annual Gender Budgeting Report to Parliament through specific focus areas and analyses on topics related to equal opportunities.
- **Interinstitutional Table on Gender Evaluation:** An interinstitutional table called the "National Gender Mainstreaming Network" was established in November 2023. This network aims to better integrate the principle of equal opportunities in all phases of public policy programming, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation, particularly for policies funded by cohesion policy.
- **First Network Meeting:** The first meeting of the National Gender Mainstreaming Network took place on November 28, 2023, involving national administrations and regions. This meeting initiated a collaborative process to share MES Project outcomes and address specific needs of administrations involved in cohesion policy programs.
- **Alignment with International and European Agendas:** The DPO aligns its activities with international and European agendas, the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP), and the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021-2026. These activities are closely linked to NRRP measures and are overseen by the Observatory for the Integration of the Gender Equality Principle and its Scientific Technical Committee.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** The DPO values interaction with institutional representatives and key stakeholders. In the latest meeting of the Observatory for the Integration of Gender Policies, there was significant participation and interest. The meeting highlighted the need to deepen certain topics relevant to territories and leverage existing experiences, such as those from the Puglia

### 35. What formal mechanisms are in place for different stakeholders to participate in the implementation and monitoring of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development?

*In the narrative report, please describe participatory processes and mechanisms, including their impact on the implementation of the BPfA and the 2030 Agenda. Please also describe any mechanisms that are in place to ensure that women and girls from marginalized groups (listed under question 3 above) can participate and that their concerns are reflected in these processes. (1 page max.)*

The overall action of the Italian Government for the promotion of gender equality is oriented to the achievement of the targets set by the SDG5.

Within the framework of the National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS) 2017/2030 a multi-stakeholder platform has been provided: the body was launched in 2018, to be articulated into 5 Working Groups in order to coordinate the national policies for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through a Control Room placed at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, also involving the National Committee for the Sustainable Development and the Interministerial Committee for the Development Cooperation.

Another monitoring tool for NRRP targets are indicators included in SDGs-related monitoring that ISTAT does in collaboration with institutions. In 2023, 372 statistical measures on SDGs related to the 139 indicators by UN-IAEG-SDGs were released.

As already mentioned, in 2022, by Decree of the Minister for Equal Opportunities and the Family, the Steering Committee and the national Observatory for the Integration of Gender Equality Policies were established.

The Cabina di regia (Steering Committee) coordinates the different administrations involved and the different levels of government to deliver integrated actions at a central and territorial level. Among its tasks, it is up to the Cabina di Regia to carry out periodic assessments on the state of implementation of the measures and interventions provided for in the National Strategic Plan for Gender Equality, as well as to ensure the planning of the resources allocated to financing the Plan.

The national Observatory is a technical support body for the Steering Committee, and its role is to monitor, analyse, study and propose possible instruments to implement the content of the National Strategic Plan for Gender Equality, evaluating its impact in order to improve its effectiveness and integrate its instruments. It also supports the Department for Equal Opportunities in analysing and studying gender equality issues, through the production of a biennial update report on the main demographic, sociological and economic dynamics in Italy. The Observatory also promotes initiatives and seminar meetings aimed at fostering knowledge regarding the results of research and surveys and the dissemination of good practices through the exchange of experiences; the Observatory also coordinates its research, study and documentation activities with those relating to the National Strategic Plan against violence against women and domestic violence.

The Observatory also reports to the Permanent Working Table on the certification of gender equality, established by the Decree of the Minister for Equal Opportunities and Family Affairs of 5 April 2022.

The Observatory is chaired by the President of the Council of Ministers or by the political authority with delegated powers for equal opportunities and consists of the following bodies: the President, the Assembly and the Technical-Scientific Committee, which remain in office for three years.

### **36. Please describe how stakeholders have contributed to the preparation of the present national report.**

*In answering this question as part of the narrative report, countries are encouraged to describe participatory process and to reflect on the contributions that different stakeholders have made to the national report. (1 page max.)*

The Department for Equal Opportunities at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers has played a leading role in collecting comprehensive and up-to-date information and engaging all relevant Ministries to describe the positive outcomes and challenges related to the key thematic areas under attention for completing the national review.

Through the national Observatory for the Integration of Gender Equality Policies, established by the decree of 22 February 2022, the Department for Equal Opportunities monitors, analyses and coordinates the research, study and documentation activities related to the National Strategic Plan for Gender Equality as well as those also coordinates those relating to the National Strategic Plan for violence against women and domestic violence. The Observatory also cooperate with the Permanent Working Table on the certification of gender equality, established by the Decree of the Minister for Equal Opportunities and Family Affairs of 5 April 2022.

The Decree of the Minister for Family, Birth and Equal Opportunities of 6 December 2023 modified the composition of the Observatory, in order to ensure a greater involvement of all the institutions concerned, also at a territorial level, as well as CSOs and Labour Unions.

### **37. Please describe your country's action plan and timeline for implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (if a State party), or of the recommendations of the Universal Periodic Review or other United**

## Nations human rights mechanisms that address gender inequality/discrimination against women.

*In answering this question as part of the narrative report, please indicate the year of your last review under CEDAW or the UPR and outline any follow-up actions your country has taken to implement the resulting recommendations. (1 page max.)*

Italy orally presented and was considered by the **UN CEDAW** Committee on February 1, 2024. On that occasion, we discussed our VIII national periodic report, indicating all elements covering civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of women.

Accordingly, we promptly translated UN CEDAW *Concluding Observations*, as published on CIDU's website. The UN Concluding Observations translated into Italian were also shared with the Parliament, relevant Administrations and CSOs.

In November 2021, Italy submitted its mid-term report under **UPR** Third Cycle. We provided an update on relevant UPR related recommendations. We are currently in the process of preparing the national report under UPR Fourth Cycle and we will provide specific information, accordingly.

### Section Five: Data and statistics

#### **38. What are the most important areas in which your country has made most progress over the past five years when it comes to gender statistics at the national level?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples of measures taken, including aims and scope of measures, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

*In the online survey, you will be asked to select specific actions from the list below:*

- X Promulgated laws, regulations, or statistical programme/strategy setting out the development of gender statistics**
- Established an inter-agency coordination mechanism on gender statistics (e.g., technical working group, inter-agency committee)
- X Used more gender-sensitive data in the formulation of policy and implementation of programmes and projects**
- X Re-processed existing data (e.g., censuses and surveys) to produce more disaggregated and/or new gender statistics**
- X Conducted new surveys to produce national baseline information on specialized topics (e.g., time use, gender-based violence, asset ownership, poverty, disability)**

#### **39. Over the next five years, what are your country's priorities for strengthening national gender statistics?**

In Italy, the introduction of a gender perspective in the State Budget took place in a context in which some gender budgeting experiences had already been carried out both at local level and in some performance management practices by public administrations. The Italian experience on the Gender Budget of the State was born in 2016 as part of a broader program of reform of the State Budget that took place with Law 196 of 2009. Article 38-septies of the law introduces the Gender Budget within the General Report of the State with the aim of assessing the different impact that fiscal policy has on women and men. Subsequent



legislative acts have then defined the methodologies and criteria for the preparation of the Financial Statements<sup>6</sup>.

Today, Gender Budgeting, together with gender policy evaluation, are considered, based also on a wide international comparison, essential tools to be able to achieve gender equality, to raise awareness that public policies generate an impact on gender inequalities, to reduce the discriminatory effects of resource allocation, and finally, to ensure greater effectiveness of public finance interventions through the timely identification of the shares of public funds allocated to women and their needs.

The activity of drafting the Gender Report is coordinated by the Department of General State Accounting and involves the central administrations of the State, the Presidency of the Council of Ministers and the Department of Finance.

In order to ensure a monitoring of the main gender gaps in the economy and society, the General Accounting Office of the State collaborates with ISTAT in selecting and updating the data set of indicators aimed at detecting the different characteristics and behaviors of men and women compared to the multiple socio-economic phenomena. The data set also contains indicators referring only to women with the aim of investigating phenomena – often complex and difficult to measure – as they are embedded in cultural attitudes and social structures that penalize women.

Each year a Gender Budget Accompanying Report is submitted to Parliament in which the different aspects of the Gender Budget are analyzed.

A part of the Report is devoted to the di reclassification of state budget expenditures from a gender perspective. The reclassification of expenditures in the state budget includes a breakdown of expenditures into three categories expenditures:

- "directed at reducing gender inequalities" (for those measures aimed at reducing gender inequalities or promoting equal opportunities);
- "sensitive" expenditures (for those measures that have or could have an impact, even indirectly, on gender inequalities);
- "neutral" expenditures (for those measures that have no direct or indirect impact on gender).

Also presented in the Report are: an analysis of the main gender gaps in the economy and society; an analysis of the existing gender gaps in the staffing of central state administrations and the Prime Minister's Office; and an analysis of the gender impact of the tax levy on the main tax revenues and specific tax breaks.

An integral part of the Gender Balance Sheet are the in-depth Appendices including the Statistical Appendix which collects the statistical indicators monitored to measure gender gaps. Data from the Statistical Appendix are analyzed in the Report's section on gender gaps in the economy and society.

The number of indicators contained in the data set for the Budget has grown over the years. In the first year of testing the Gender Balance (2016), 39 indicators had been identified. In 2022, 173 indicators are available. Of these, the share processed by Istat is about 40 % (70 indicators). If indicators from Eurostat sources whose production and dissemination is carried out by Istat are added to this share, the percentage increases by an additional 9% (15 indicators). Many other gender-disaggregated statistics provided by Istat are used for further study and analysis of gender gaps in the economy and society.

The socio-economic areas examined are:

- labor market;
- work-life balance;
- labor protection, welfare and assistance;

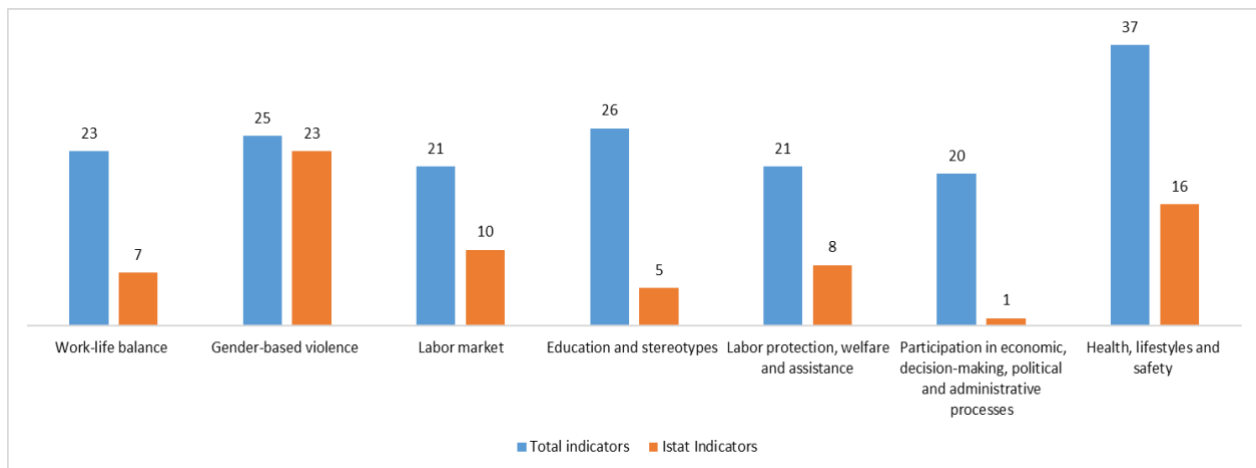
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<sup>6</sup> Decree of June 16, 2017 of the President of the Council of Ministers (Art. 4); Legislative Decree of September 12, 2018, No. 116 (Art.8); Circular of the Ministry of Economy and Finance-Department of General Accounting of the State No. 22 of May 16, 2023.

- education and interventions against gender stereotypes;
- participation in economic, decision-making, political and administrative processes;
- combating gender-based violence;
- health, lifestyle and safety.

Istat source indicators cover all thematic areas. Particularly high is the supply of gender-disaggregated indicators in the areas of "combating gender-based violence" (23 indicators out of 26) and "health lifestyles and safety" (16 indicators out of 37) and "Labor Market" (10 indicators out of 21) and "Labor Protection, Welfare and Assistance" (8 indicators out of 21) (Figure 1).

Figure 1 - Gender Balance Indicators processed by Istat and total indicators by area of analysis. Year 2022



Source: Istat elaboration on data Ministry of Economy and Finance-Department of the General Accounting Office of the State.

Finally, the Gender Balance data set of indicators is also used as the information basis for monitoring the indicators included in the "Gender Strategy 2021-2026" adopted by the Minister of Equal Opportunities in July 2021. This is a policy document prepared in line with the "European Strategy for Gender Equality 2020-2025." The goal of the Italian Strategy is to increase, by 2026, by five points (from 65 to 70) Italy's position in the ranking of the Gender Equality Index prepared by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), where, as of today, Italy ranks 14th among EU-27 countries.

- X Design of laws, regulations, or statistical programme/strategy promoting the development of gender statistics**
- Establishment of an inter-agency coordination mechanism on gender statistics (e.g., technical working group, inter-agency committee)
- Use more gender-sensitive data in the formulation of policy and implementation of programmes and projects
- Re-processing of existing data (e.g., censuses and surveys) to produce more disaggregated and/or new gender statistics
- X Conduct of new surveys to produce national baseline information on specialized topics (e.g., time use, gender-based violence, asset ownership, poverty, disability)**
- Greater utilization and/or improvement of administrative-based or alternative data sources to address gender data gaps
- Production of knowledge products on gender statistics (e.g., user-friendly reports, policy briefs, research papers)
- Development of a centralized web-based database and/or dashboard on gender statistics

- X Institutionalization of users-producers' dialogues mechanisms**
- Statistical capacity building of users to increase statistical appreciation on and use of gender statistics (e.g., trainings, statistical appreciation seminars)
- Other, please specify
- None of the above

#### 40. What gender-specific indicators<sup>7</sup> has your country prioritized for monitoring progress on the SDGs?

*In the narrative report, please also explain any challenges for collecting and compiling data on these indicators.*

##### **SDGs Agenda 2030**

Istat releases indicator data semi-annually. In 2023, 372 statistical measures on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were released, linked to 139 indicators from the set proposed by the Inter Agency and Expert Group on SDGs (UN-IAEG-SDGs) for global monitoring of progress on the 2030 Agenda.

Of this indicator, 124 are disaggregated by gender.

The statistical measures released by Istat for Goal 5 are eighteen and refer to seven UNIAEG-SDGs indicators.

Data increase from one year to the other, thanks to Istat work, but also to a strong inter-institutional cooperation and the cooperation with the civil societies.

Istat deliver annually a book in Italian, the last on 2023 data (<https://www.istat.it/it/archivio/285778>, next publication will be on July 2024) and in English, the last publication was on 2022 data ([https://www.istat.it/it/files//2023/05/2022-SDGS-Report\\_Inglese.pdf](https://www.istat.it/it/files//2023/05/2022-SDGS-Report_Inglese.pdf)).

Moreover, a database query system (dashboard) allows the user to browse SDGs statistical measures, with the option to display and download tables and charts. (<https://www.istat.it/en/archivio/260355>)

The browse system is based on drop-down filters. After the selection of the Goal and the UN indicator, the user can select statistical measure, year and dimension (territory, age class, etc.) and the system displays charts and time series tables.

##### **On the measurement of domestic violence**

Istat's approach to measuring domestic violence is a multi-source approach, alongside the sample survey data measuring the prevalence of the phenomenon, in fact, in agreement with the Department for Equal Opportunity (DPO), since 2017 surveys and data processing have been prepared on requests for help arriving at 1522, the public utility number against violence and stalking, from 2020 on data on survivors turning to the emergency room for violence and hospitalizations, from 2020 the survey on the characteristics of the users of Anti-Violence Centers (AVCs), i.e., women who, with the support of the Centers, have started a pathway out of violence, surveys on the performance and offers of services of AVCs and Shelter Houses; from 2020, Istat responds to the UN statistical framework to measure feminicides.

Surveys on AVCs and Shelter Houses were designed in close collaboration with associations that manage and promote AVCs and networks of associations.

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<sup>7</sup> The term 'gender-specific indicators' is used to refer to indicators that explicitly call for disaggregation by sex and/or refer to gender equality as the underlying objective. For example, SDG indicator 5.c.1 captures the percentage of countries with systems to track public allocations that are directed towards policies and programmes that promote gender equality—the underlying objective is the promotion of gender equality. The term is also used for indicators where women and girls are specified within the indicator as the targeted population (see UN Women. 2018. *Turning Promises into Action: Gender Equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. New York).

Collaboration was also activated with UNHCR to measure violence upon arrival and during the migration journey of refugees and migrants.

All data and analysis reports are published below on the following site:

<https://www.istat.it/it/violenza-sulle-donne>

While in English there are only few data:

<https://istat.it/en/violence-against-women>

### **The law 53/2022 on statistical measurement of violence against women**

The law n.53 of 5th of May 2022 binds the Ministry of Health (art.4), the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Justice (respectively art. 5 and 6) to provide data referred to violence against women with specific information. Moreover it provides the collection of data about the specialized support services for survivors of violence to be carried out by Istat in cooperation with the Regions (art 7) and ask Istat to carry out the survey on violence against women every 3 years (art.2).

While the Article 2, comma 5 asks to all Institution to produce data disaggregated by gender and to produce indicators that are gender sensitive.

The National Statistical Program (PSN- Programma Statistico Nazionale) monitors that all data collections part of Official Statistics Offices (parts of SISTAN – Sistema Statistico Nazionale) are compliant to this request, Article 3.

The article e, in fact, ask Istat to Report to Parliament on the activities implemented by ISTAT. The annual report to Parliament on the activity of ISTAT (referred to in Article 24 of Legislative Decree No. 322 of September 6, 1989) shall be supplemented by a report on the implementation of Article 2.

More in depth about the law:

with reference to the Ministry of Health, the law provides that data about the access to the Emergency Room of hospitals include as compulsory set of variables: the victim-perpetrator relationship; the type of violence suffered by the victim (physical, sexual, psychological or economic); whether the violence is committed in the presence of children of the perpetrators or victims; if the violence is committed together with persecutory acts (stalking); the indicators related to risk of revictimization of the Brief Risk Assessment for the Emergency Department (DA-5).

The Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Justice are bound to record for a list of specific crimes the victim-perpetrator relationship, age and gender of the perpetrators and victims; information on the place where the violence occurred; the type of weapon possibly used; if the violence is committed in the presence of the perpetrators' or victims' children at the scene; if the violence is committed together with persecutory acts (stalking). The Ministry of Interior collects data on victim perpetrator relationship since January 2024, and assured to share data with Istat on September 2024. Data will be about the first semester 2024 and the data sharing to Istat will be twice a year.

Moreover the Ministry of Justice should record if it is designed a Public Defender with regard to the suspects and the accused, as well as the injured party and the civil party.

The law includes the provision of multi-agency database involving the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Justice to record, among others, information, at every level of the judicial proceedings, on complaints, preventive measures applied by the police commissioner or by the judicial authority, precautionary measures, protection orders and security measures, dismissal measures and sentences.

Ministry of Justice collect data on the variable “victim-perpetrator relationship” and other important information since January 2023, but data are not yet available. Perhaps the use of a “FLAG – gender-based violence”, enable the correct data collection.

#### **Other data collection Istat is carrying on are about GBV:**

The second edition of survey on “Stereotypes on Gender Roles and the Social Image of Violence” among the adult population; and the module on gender roles aimed at 11-19 year olds.

Since 2020, Istat is studying the sentiment and emotion analysis to the issues of violence and gender stereotypes in social media, in order to understand how communication diversifies and changes even in the virtual dimension and what reactions (stimulation and propagation of violence, outrage...).

Furthermore, Istat is conducting, always in agreement with the Department of Equal Opportunity a study on territorial networks for the governance of violence against women. These are networks that arise from protocols or agreements between public and private entities entered into in order to prevent and combat violence.

#### **Women in the Italian Labour market**

Data on labour market are constantly updated about:

- Employment by gender and the inclusion of women in the labour market
- Female employment by professional status and occupation
- Labour market and working time: Part time and fixed-term employment
- Inclusion of women in the labour market in relation with education
- Reconciliation of work and family life
- Focus on foreign women and data on generations
- Women and agriculture

The seventh general census of agriculture found its regulatory basis, at European level, in Regulation (EU) 2018/1091 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 relating to integrated statistics on agricultural holdings (European Union Commission, 2018). Therefore, the census 2020 was mandatory in each European Union country and was fully coherent with recommendations by FAO. The census referred to the date of 1 October 2020 and included questions concerned with the degree of modernization, innovation and integration of farms with respect to the market as well. Moreover, even though some threshold were used – according to which some very small agricultural units were excluded from the reference population – the census was exhaustive, because it observed both large and small rural farms.

- Women entrepreneurs (annual data)
- Women and technologies

Istat also carry out analyses with a focus on gender statistics on the following topics:

- Health
- Education
- Decision making
- Top institutional positions
- Time use

#### **Vulnerable target populations**

It should be noted that Istat also collaborates with civil society for surveys on foreigners, Roma and Sinti populations, LGBTQ plus community, discrimination, homelessness, disable persons.

#### 41. Which data disaggregations<sup>8</sup> are routinely provided by major surveys in your country?

*In the narrative report, please describe progress in data disaggregation over the past years, explain why certain disaggregations may have been prioritized and what barriers, if any, stand in the way of more comprehensive, routine disaggregations of data from major surveys in your country.*

*In the online survey, you will be asked to select the disaggregations that are routinely provided from the list below, as relevant in your national context:*

#### Section Six: Conclusion and next steps

*In the narrative report, please provide 1-2 pages of key takeaways from the review, including reflections on:*

- *lessons your country has learned from the review process and how it will apply them in the continuing implementation ongoing and future challenges for the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in your country*
- *priority actions to accelerate the implementation of the BPfA and the 2030 Agenda, notably as part of the Decade of Action for sustainable development*

Promoting gender equality at a systemic level is a complex endeavour that necessitates a comprehensive understanding due to its cross-cutting nature. Italy has made significant strides in recent years by developing and enhancing policies and legislation, adopting a more sophisticated and integrated approach to gender mainstreaming. Italy has moved beyond a fragmented and segmented view of gender equality, previously confined to specific issues or thematic areas. The country has embraced a cross-cutting perspective in alignment with the Beijing Declaration and the operational model promoted by the BPfA and its areas of action.

The review process has provided an invaluable opportunity to reflect on the achievements and, more importantly, identify the gaps requiring greater attention. The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the imperative that gender equality, the protection of women's rights, and women's empowerment must be absolute national and international priorities. The forthcoming review will coincide with the critical deadline of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. Therefore, it is crucial to intensify efforts in all areas marked by significant gender disparities. This entails working towards SDG 5 and striving to achieve all other goals, which are intrinsically linked to the rights of women and girls.

Based on the findings highlighted in this report, Italy will continue to focus its efforts on combating violence against women and girls, gender-based violence, and domestic violence. These issues remain the most significant barriers to achieving full women's empowerment. It is crucial to address all forms of violence, including psychological and economic abuse.

In employment, the Italian government is committed to encouraging greater participation of women in the workforce. Additionally, it aims to foster a cultural shift where work is not perceived as a barrier to women pursuing personal aspirations, such as being mothers. One of the future government's goals will be to ensure that motherhood and career coexist, enriching women's lives without one being at the expense of the other. Education is the cornerstone of women's empowerment, providing them the tools to reach their full potential. It is essential to guarantee high-quality and accessible education for all girls and to promote their participation in advanced STEM fields. This approach will empower women and girls and contribute significantly to Italy's development and progress towards achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

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<sup>8</sup> As specified in A/RES/70/1, with the addition of education, marital status, religion and sexual orientation.

In conclusion, Italy has made notable progress in promoting gender equality and implementing the BPfA. Nevertheless, significant challenges persist, particularly in tackling gender inequalities in different sectors and ensuring women's full participation in all aspects of society. The following - among the others - will be examples of actions to accelerate the implementation of the BPfA and the 2030 Agenda:

- Strengthen existing gender equality policies and develop new legislation to address emerging issues.
  - Ensure the effective implementation and monitoring of gender-responsive laws and policies at all levels of government.
  - Intensify efforts to combat all forms of violence against women and girls, including psychological and economic violence and the support for victims.
  - Promote initiatives that increase women's participation in the workforce, including targeted programs for entrepreneurship and leadership development.
  - Support policies that enable work-life balance, such as flexible working arrangements, paid parental leave, and affordable childcare services.
  - Ensure access to quality education for all girls, focusing on closing the gap in advanced STEM fields.
  - Strengthen the cooperation with the business environment in order to promote a cultural shift towards the voluntary adoption of equality policies such as pay transparency and work-life balance;
  - Improve the collection of gender-disaggregated data to inform policy decisions and track progress.
- These efforts will benefit women and girls and contribute to a more equitable, inclusive, and sustainable society for all.

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