

BREAK GENDER STEREOTYPES, GIVE TALENT A CHANCE

Review of the national situation
for the purpose of the workshop in ITALY

2008



Document produced in the framework of the Contract "Raising the awareness of companies about combating gender stereotypes", commissioned by the European Commission to the International Training Centre of the ILO in partnership with EUROCHAMBRES.

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The seven-year Programme targets all stakeholders who can help shape the development of appropriate and effective employment and social legislation and policies, across the EU-27, EFTA and EU candidate and pre-candidate countries.

The programme has six general objectives:

- (1) to improve the knowledge and understanding of the situation prevailing in the Member States (and in other participating countries) through the analysis, evaluation and close monitoring of policies;*
- (2) to support the development of statistical tools and methods and common indicators, where appropriate broken down by gender and age group, in the areas covered by the programme;*
- (3) to support and monitor the implementation of Community law, where applicable, and policy objectives in the Member States, and assess their effectiveness and impact;*
- (4) to promote networking, mutual learning, identification and dissemination of good practices and innovative approaches at EU level;*
- (5) to enhance the awareness of the stakeholders and the general public about the EU's policies and objectives pursued under each of the policy sections;*
- (6) to boost the capacity of key EU networks to promote, support and further develop EU policies and objectives, where applicable.*

For further information, see: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/progress/index_fr.html.

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FOREWORD

Does the European economy manage to make full use of its human capital?

This document intends to contribute to this discussion, from the perspective of gender equality.

This document has been prepared in the framework of “Raising the awareness of companies about combating gender stereotypes”, an EC initiative commissioned by the European Commission, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, under a contract managed by the International Training Centre of the ILO in partnership with the Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry (EUROCHAMBERS).

The initiative, which involves Chambers of Commerce and SME organizations in 15 EU Countries¹, aims at helping SMEs discover how overcoming gender stereotypes can have a positive impact on productivity and competitiveness.

The country reviews do not have the ambition to give an exhaustive picture of gender issues in the labour markets of the 15 countries. They rather aim to enrich with country-specific information the tools that the initiative offers to all those engaged in improving SME competitiveness and productivity. They collect up-to-date statistical data and qualitative information on the different ways in which women and men enter and progress into employment and occupations in the various countries. They contain information on existing legislative provisions, public and private initiatives and good practices. Suggestions on the impact of gender stereotypes are also provided, to initiate dialogue and action at enterprise level.

The final aim is to offer concrete suggestions on how SMEs in the selected countries can overcome gender stereotypes and tap the business potential of gender equality.

¹ Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain

1. STATISTICS

Table 1: Statistical data

Demography and Employment	Italy			EU27		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
1. Total population 2007 (figure in '000)	28.718	30 413	59.131	241,671	253,457	495,128
(Figure in %)	48.6	51.4	100.0	48.8	51.2	100.0
2. Life expectancy 2005 (%)	77.6	83.2	77.7	75.4	81.5	:
3. Fertility rates 2005 (%)	1,34			1.51 ^b		
4. Employment rate 2007 (%)	70.7	46.6	58.7	72.5	58.3	65.4
5. Unemployment Rate 2007 (%)	4.9	7.9	6.1	6.5	7.8	7.1
6. Activity rate 2007 (%)	74.4	50.7	62.5	77.6	63.3	70.5
7. Youth unemployment rate 2007 (%)	18.2	23.3	20.3	15.2	15.8	15.5
8. Long term unemployment rate 2007 (%)	2.2	3.9	2.9	5.6	6.6	6.0
9. Part-time work 2006 (%)	2.7	21.6	10.7	4.4	25.8	14.4
10. Employees 2007q04 ('000)	9.885	7.464	17.349	97,388	86,042	183,430
11. Self-employment 2007q04 ('000)	2.809	1.217	4.026	15,491	7,417	22,908
12. Entrepreneurs 2007q04 ('000)	1.215	338	1.553	7,574	2,375	9,949
13. Average hourly pay 2002 (in euro)	11.06	8.97	5.26	13.79 ^c	10.40 ^c	12.56 ^c
14. Gender Pay gap in unadjusted form 2006 ^e	9			15		
15. Participation in decision-making 2007						
National Parliaments (%)	79	21	100	76	24	100
President in largest publicly quoted companies (%)	95	5	100	97	3	100
Member of highest decision-making body in largest publicly quoted companies (%)	97	3	100	90	10	100
GEM Value 2007	0.693			:		
GEM Rank 2007	21			:		
16. Graduations of women and men in tertiary education 2004						
ISCED 5 (%)	41.8	58.2	100	40.8 ^c	59.2 ^c	100 ^c
(Ratio Women/Men)	1.4			1.4 ^c		
ISCED 6 (%)	49.1	50.9	100	56.8 ^c	43.2 ^c	100 ^c
(Ratio Women/Men)	1.0			0.8 ^c		
17. Single-headed households, 25-29 years, 2005 (%)	10	9	:	14 ^c	14 ^c	:
18. Children in childcare aged 0-2 years, 1-29hrs/30+hrs 2006 (%)	10/16			14/12		
19. Children in childcare aged 3 to mandatory school ages, 1-29hrs/30+hrs 2006 (%)	24/66			44/40		

NOTES: a - 2004, b - 2005, c – EU25, d - 2007, e - Estimation, g – The Pay Gap is the difference between men's and women's average gross hourly earnings as percentage of men's average gross hourly earnings (for paid employees), p - Provisional, : - No data

Source: European Commission, *Indicators for monitoring the Employment Guidelines including indicators for additional employment analysis, 2008 compendium*. Except:

1, 10, 11, 12: Eurostat Database

2, 3: Eurostat News Release, "A statistical illustration of the situation of women and men in the EU27", 32/2007, March 2007

and UNDP, Human Development Report 2007/08, Table 1

13: Eurostat, «Salaires bruts en Europe, Principaux résultats de l'enquête sur la structure des salaires 2002», *Statistiques en bref, population et conditions sociales*, 12/2005, Communautés européennes, 2005

15: European Commission, DG EMPL, Database on women and men in decision-making

and the Human Development Report 2007/2008 (for the GEM rank and value)

16, 17: European Commission, *The life of women and men in Europe – A statistical portrait*, Luxembourg, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2008

18, 19 (EU27 data): Commission of the European Communities, *Commission staff working document accompanying document to the Report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - Implementation of the Barcelona objectives concerning childcare facilities for pre-school-age children*, Brussels, 2008. {COM (2008) 598}

2. SITUATION AND STEREOTYPES

2.1. WOMEN IN THE LABOUR MARKET

Over the last five years, the Italian economy has been gradually slowing down, and the downturn in activity rates still continues – many people of working age are not working, or even not looking for a work. This has been recently remarked in the *Quadro Strategico Nazionale (National Strategic Plan)* - prepared by the *Ministry of Economic Development* - establishing priorities for regional development policy initiatives until 2013.

The *National Strategic Plan (QSN)* has identified 3 priority areas for intervention, to achieve economic recovery, and to improve the life of the Italian people:

- reducing regional disparities (North, Centre, South);
- equal opportunities (with gender as a priority);
- sustainable growth and environmental services

In particular, the development of human capital is obstructed by persistent signs of difficulties in the female labour market; including the low female employment rate (46.3%), its lower stability, and its vertical and horizontal segregation. There is also more poverty among women (women make up 83.8% of poor single old people, and 83.2% of poor single parents); insufficient care services, and a low birth-rate. These data clash with women's rising educational levels, the recent dynamism of women employers, and the existence of legislative instruments to guarantee equal opportunities.

Only 46.3% of Italian women are employed, with fewer and fewer inclined to seek jobs. Almost 10 million Italian women of working age are neither working, nor seeking a job: about twice the number of men in this situation. The main reasons for this are:

- 63% of Italian women with jobs have an “untypical” contract (it was 60% in 2005);
- 67% of women find their hours of work “ too long” to be compatible with their family commitments;
- over 80% of workers with part-time contracts are women, who have mostly been “obliged” to make this choice, because of family commitments; to the detriment of their salaries and career prospects;
- women workers' salaries are 25% lower on average than those of male workers; this figure is reduced to 15.8% for those with equal contracts, at the same skill level;
- only 22% of women cover managerial positions at various levels, compared to 38.5% of men, although on average they achieve this level more quickly than men;
- in the south, an almost record level of 34.7% of women are unemployed

Despite the fact that over recent years, girls' educational attainments have tended to outperform boys', 51% of women are working in an untypical job after graduating, compared to 43% of male graduates. Job stability, five years after qualifying, is more consistently found among men (78%) than among their women colleagues (64%). Moreover, one year after graduating, men already occupy higher positions.

A major barrier that women have to face to advance their career is maternity. According to a research undertaken by Federmanager in 2005,² only 13.9% of male managers do not have children, while 43% of women

² Federmanager *Donne e carriera: binomio possibile* [Woman and careers: a possible match], 2005

managers consider themselves “obliged” not to have them. In the same survey, women describe maternity as “a luxury we can’t afford.” Indeed, women with families are more penalised in companies compared to male colleagues: 90% of male managers are married or cohabitating, against 73% of women managers.

According to the research working women want:

- a radical change in company mentalities;
- to be able to reconcile their company commitments with their social commitments;
- greater commitment from their management to train women managers

2.2. OCCUPATIONAL SEGREGATION

Occupational gender segregation refers to differences between the genders in the labour market. Despite the reduction of the gender employment gap in most EU countries in recent years, employment in the EU remains highly segregated. Women are over-represented in some occupations and economic sectors, such as services and care professions, and under-represented in others, such as scientists and engineers. As a consequence of segregated labour markets, there is an under-representation of women in sectors crucial for economic development.

The Italian labour market remains highly segregated and there are important gender differences in occupations and economic sectors. The rates of gender segregation in Italy are close to the EU averages, standing at 17.9 in economic sectors and 23.9 in occupations, as indicated in Table 2 below. These indexes measure gender segregation in the labour market; the higher the value of both indexes, the higher the segregation biased against women. However, as with all indicators, the index should be interpreted within a specific context as well as its individual components and care should be taken in cross-country comparisons and EU averages.

Table 2: Country Segregation Index 2005³

	Gender segregation in occupations	Gender segregation in economic sectors
Italy	23.9	17.9
EU27	24.9	17.8

Source: European Commission, DG employment, social affairs and equal opportunities, *Indicators for monitoring the Employment Guidelines including indicators for additional employment analysis*, 2008 compendium, pp. 52-53.

The distribution of women’s employment in Italy is more concentrated than that of men among the top six sectors of activity. Moreover, the concentration of women and men in sectors of activity in Italia is higher than in the EU25, for both genders. In 2005 men were mainly employed in construction, retail trade, public administration, business activities, wholesale trade and agriculture. Men’s employment is less concentrated in a small range of sectors of activity than that of women. Women are mainly found in education, health and social work, retail trade, business activities, and hotels/restaurants. It is worth noting the low proportion of women working in typical male sectors such as construction, industry and agriculture.

³ The concentration of men and women in different occupations and economic sectors is measured with an occupational segregation index. Gender segregation in occupations is calculated as the average national share of employment for women and men applied to each occupation; differences are added up to produce the total amount of gender imbalance expressed as a proportion of total employment. Gender segregation in economic sectors is calculated as the average national share of employment for women and men applied to each sector; differences are added up to produce the total amount of gender imbalance expressed as a proportion of total employment.

Table 3: Concentration of men and women in sectors of activities 2005 (NACE 2 digit)⁴

% of Women Employed	IT	EU25	% of Men Employed	IT	EU25
Education	13.2	11.4	Construction	13.3	13.0
Health & Social work	11.3	17.2	Retail trade	7.1	6.3
Retail trade	11.3	12.5	Public administration	7.0	7.2
Business activities	10.3	7.3	Business activities	6.8	6.1
Hotels & restaurants	6.2	5.1	Wholesale trade	4.6	4.1
Public administration	5.5	7.3	Agriculture	4.3	5.2
Other service activities	4.2	2.6	Land transport	4.0	4.2
Wholesale trade	3.1	2.6	Hotels & restaurants	4.0	3.4
Private households	3.1	2.3	Health & Social work	3.8	4.0
Agriculture	2.9	3.8	Machinery	3.7	2.7
Financial intermediation	1.7	2.2	Metal products	3.4	3.1
Manufacture food & beverages	1.6	2.2	Vehicle sale & repair	3.3	3.2
Cultural & sporting activities	1.6	2.1	Education	2.9	3.8
Construction	1.2	1.5	Manufacture food & beverages	1.9	2.5
<i>Top 6 sectors</i>	<i>57.8</i>	<i>51.8</i>	<i>Top 6 sectors</i>	<i>43.2</i>	<i>41.9</i>

Notes: Persons aged 15 years and over. No distinction is made between private and public sectors. The top six are according to the EU average which may not coincide with the top six in each country. In the adaptation the sectors are ordered according to the importance to the country, but some important sectors might not appear.

Source: Adapted from *Statistics in Focus publication (Population and Social Conditions 53/2007) (NACE 2 digit – see Eurostat Statistics in Focus, Population and Social Conditions 53/2007 and for a comparison with EU aggregated data see “European Business: Facts and figures 2008 (European Business: Facts and figures ISBN 978-92-79-07024-2 available from the Eurostat web page)*

The occupational patterns of employment, as observed in Table 4 below, are considerably different for women and men. In 2005 women were more concentrated in fewer occupations than men, not only in Italy but in most countries of EU25. Most women work as administrative workers and secretaries, salespersons, cleaners and launderers, in housekeeping and restaurants, but also as managers of small enterprises. Many of these professions are traditionally considered to be feminine (secretary, cleaner) and are often undervalued in society and thus less well paid. As far as men are concerned, they are less concentrated in few occupations, and their main occupations are: managers of small enterprises, building frame and related trades, physical and engineering science technicians, motor vehicle drivers, or occupations related to construction and mechanics. Therefore, men work in traditionally “male” occupations, which are generally better paid and have more social recognition than the occupations in which women are concentrated. The occupational segregation observed corresponds to traditional gender stereotypes, such as men being providers and women carers.

⁴ NACE is an international classification of economic activities. The digits indicate the level of disaggregation: the higher the value the more level of disaggregation.

Table 4: Occupational patterns of women's and men's employment 2005 (ISCO 3 digit)⁵

% of women employed	IT	EU25	% of men employed	IT	EU25
Administrative associate professionals	7.1	4.4	Managers of small enterprises	7.5	4.4
Managers of small enterprises	6.5	2.9	Building frame & related trades workers	5.3	4.7
Shop salespersons & demonstrators	5.7	8.0	Physical & engineering science technicians	4.7	3.6
Domestic & related helpers, cleaners & launderers	5.2	7.6	Motor vehicle drivers	4.3	5.2
Secretaries & keyboard-operating clerks	4.3	3.7	Building finishers & related trades workers	3.9	4.0
Housekeeping & restaurant services workers	4.2	3.9	Machinery mechanics & fitters professionals	3.5	3.5
Other office clerks	3.7	5.2	Finance & sales associate professionals	2.9	3.3
Personal care & related workers	3.1	6.6	Shop salespersons & demonstrators	2.0	2.6
Finance & sales associate professionals	2.1	2.9	Architects, engineers & related professionals	1.4	3.1
Nursing & midwifery associate professionals	0.1	2.6	Production & operations department managers	0.8	2.6
Top 6 in the country	32.9	35.6	Top 6 in the country	29.2	25.5

Note: The top six are according to the EU average which may not coincide with the top six in each country. In the adaptation the occupations are ordered according to the country importance, but some important occupations might not appear.

Source: Adapted from Statistics in Focus publication (Population and Social Conditions 53/2007)

As displayed in Table 5 below, there are more men than women working as managers. With some regional variations, 95% of managers in the Italian private sector are men, with thus very few women managers⁶.

Only 5% out of 82,000 managers in industry are women, and 40.8% of them are working in industrial companies in Lombardy. Only 3.1% of industrial managers in the Centre & South (excluding Lazio) are women⁷ and 63% of companies quoted on the Italian Stock Exchange have no women on their board of directors.

72.2% of Italian banks have no women members on their boards (out of a sample of 133 credit institutions). While 40% of these bank employees are women, only a 0.36% has managerial roles, against 3.11% of their male colleagues.

With respect to the average salary of male managers (95,000 euros gross per year), their women colleagues earn on average 16% less (around 83,000 euros). Among them, single (including separated or divorced) women managers earn more (with 92,000 euros) than married or cohabiting women managers (81,000 euros). Women managers in companies in the south are paid least (about 71,000 euros). Women fare better at managing the public services, especially in the health sector, where 20% of local health authority (ASL) managers are women; as well as 9% of administrative managers, and 20% of general managers⁸.

⁵ ISCO is an international classification of occupations. The digits also indicate the level of disaggregation: the higher the value the more level of disaggregation.

⁶ Federmanager, *op. cit.*, 2005

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ These data are confirmed by the European Commission enquiry: "Women and Men in Decision Making: 2007 - Analysis of Situations and Trends", which evaluates the current female and male presence in the decision-making processes in politics, in the economy, in the public administration and in the judiciary. Women workers in the EU are 44%, of which 32% occupy management positions. 90% of the board members in the bigger enterprises are male.

Table 5: Distribution of managers by sex in EU Member States – 2001 and 2006 (%)

	Women	Men	Women	Men
	2001		2006	
Italy	17.8	82.2	32.9	67.1
EU27	30.1	69.9	32.6	67.4

Note: EU aggregate for 2001 is the value for EU-25 and not EU-27.

Source: Adapted from Report on equality between women and men 2008, p.32. (Eurostat ISCO 12 and 13)

2.3. THE ROLE OF SMEs

On average, 3.8 people are employed per company in Italy. It decreased from 4.4 in 1995-2000, which is part of a persistent and growing trend:

- A relative decline in manufacturing industry (especially in textiles and clothing); fewer employees in commerce; employment growth in construction, hotel, public goods and service sectors.
- A fall in the average number of employed in **large companies**: The number of companies with over 250 employees has risen from 2,890 to 3,272, but with practically the same number of employees (3.15 m. to 3.17 m.). So average numbers of workers per large company fell from 1,088 in 1991, to 970 in 2001.
- A growth in the absolute number of craft enterprises (and of employees in the segment), which represent almost a third (30.7%) of all Italian enterprises
- **A growth in the number of one-person companies** (freelance professionals, consultants, self-employed, etc.). This has caused a rise in the number of enterprises, including one-woman companies; which find it difficult to stabilise, grow or develop.
- A growth in the number of employed in **medium sized enterprises** (see *UnionCamere* research). **The average size of SMEs** (Small and Medium sized enterprises **with 20 to 249 employees**), **has increased** (from 46.3 to 48.0 employees per enterprise)⁹.

Medium-sized enterprises are concentrated in the North East, Central Italy and Lombardy. They are few, but increasing, in the South. They produce 14% of Italian manufacturing production by value (and a large proportion of *Made in Italy*) - rising to 22% if networks of interconnected suppliers are considered.

Medium-sized industries are concentrated in the following sectors:

- iron and steel, metallurgy, mechanical and electronic engineering companies,
- personal and domestic goods (textiles, clothing, furs, leather, wood, furniture, ceramics, building products, watchmakers, goldsmiths, other personal or home products);
- foodstuffs, paper, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, editorial.

Their numbers tend to increase during economic upturns. This favourable dynamic has led to their gradually increasing importance in manufacturing nationally; with 16% of fixed annual investment, and 20% of Italian

⁹ The research by Unioncamere – Mediobanca shows that larger companies in this group are most likely to be expanding, generating the increase in the average number of people employed.

exports (most recent data from *Istat*). A Report from Unioncamere and Mediobanca (Milan, 15 February 2008) on enterprises with 50 to 499 employees and a turnover comprised between 13-290M€ confirms this trend .

Some of their **most important competitive factors** are their intrinsic quality (27.4%); their customisation/flexibility (16.4%) and customer assistance (14.2%).

Consequently, the demand for **highly skilled professionals** is concentrated on:

	Recruited 2005 (% of highly skilled)	Recruited 2007 (% of highly skilled)	Variation % yearly average
Sales & Marketing, Communications	33.3	36.3	21.1
Management of production, research	44.3	45.5	17.6
ICTs	2.7	8.0	98.1
Business administration, purchase, finance, legal, personnel	19.7	10.1	- 16.7
Total recruitments of highly skilled personnel	100.0	100.0	16.0

Women-led enterprises

In 2006 there were over 18,000 more women-led enterprises than in 2005. The highest concentration, and highest rate of growth, was in Southern Italy. 2006 findings show that Italian women are increasingly visible in traditionally male economic environments, including Construction and Transport. Women-led companies are mostly found in Manufacturing (10.2%), Property (11.1%), Agriculture (21.9%), and Commerce (31.5%).

The highest feminisation rates (i.e. the sectors showing the highest percentage shares of women-led companies), are in Education (32.2%), Tourism (33.68%), Health (41.8%), and Personal, Social and Public Services (49.28%),

Only 2 years after the First Italian National Report on Women-led Companies (*Ministry of Productive Activity – Unioncamere*), 12.06% more women-led companies were operating in the electrical energy production and distribution sector, and 7.8% more in construction.

However, these enterprises present structural problems. Not only are they very small (70% of them are legally registered as one-person companies, particularly in southern and central Italy). In addition, the difficulty in accessing credit, and the strongly felt need to reconcile working and family life can make these companies especially fragile.

2.4. GENDER STEREOTYPES

The research undertaken by Federmanager¹⁰ gives good examples in relation to the persistence of gender stereotypes in the Italian labour market. “You’re too good to be a woman, what a shame you’re not a man!” Many women, particularly when reaching top managerial levels, have heard statements of this kind. Or they have been given the “good advice” that in order to progress in their careers they should start to “*behave like men*”. Indeed, it is very difficult for women managers to see their “authority” truly recognised and rewarded. It appears that they feel they need to work twice as hard as men to reach similar economic and professional level. Moreover, having children is reported as considered a handicap by company management.

Two “meta-stereotypes” can be at the root of these behaviours:

- 1) The belief that women are not made to hold power.
- 2) The belief that there are careers which are more suitable for men, and careers which are more suitable for women;

These two meta-stereotypes give ground to a number of other prejudices on the supposed roles of women and men in the labour market. The transnational project **STER-E/O** undertook a broad survey of cultural beliefs and social behaviours in a number of EU countries including in Italy. In relation to psychological characteristics, women are perceived as weaker, and less ambitious than men, which gives some explanation on why women tend to be under represented at high managerial levels. Another common belief detected by the STERE/O project is that workers and employees, especially men, tend not to accept the legitimacy of a woman as their boss, and therefore this may create problems in the workplace. Men are still perceived as the family breadwinner, and this implies that HR managers should give them priority when hiring a new employee. As to the division of labour, men are clearly perceived as more suited for technical jobs, while women are believed to be more suitable for jobs in the social sphere, like education or health-care or social work.

To conclude, it may be worth quoting sociologist Francesca Zajczyk, who in her extensive essay on the impact of gender stereotypes in Italian society, writes¹¹:

“Change is taking place in Italy. There is an increase in the number of women with a high level of education, who manage to hold on to management positions in the labour market, and who are more and more certain of their own ambitions, and their own life projects.

*These are women who believe in their profession, who want adequate recognition in terms of their careers, their prestige and income; but who are unwilling to give up being wives and mothers. **This is a silent transformation which is taking place in the solitude of their private lives**, while in their day to day existence, they must put up with stereotypes that only die out with difficulty.*

Their social context, despite the rhetoric of equal opportunities, reveals a pig-headed inadequacy to gather the fruits of innovation. And the fact that some change does happen only goes to show that more effort must be made.

We must break out of “old habits” regarding masculine and feminine roles, by means of comparative pathways between different generations of women, and above all, by means of public and political recognition”.

¹⁰ Federmanager, op.cit.

¹¹ “La resistibile ascesa delle donne in Italia”, (Il Saggiatore, March 2007).

3. SUCCESS STORIES

Since 2000, 4 types of financial instruments have supported a great number of initiatives promoting equality and equal opportunities between women and men in Italy:

- Law 53/2000, article 9 (actions for conciliation aimed at reinserting workers after paternity leave), and/or at measures of organisational flexibility in companies);
- Law 125/91 (Training and empowerment for employees and businesswomen);
- EU-funded initiatives such as Equal and other to promote Equal Opportunities in the regions by means of the European structural funds 2000-2006
- Numerous projects, mostly at local level, centred on empowerment (including organising many training courses), and work-life conciliation.

Many Regions have reported difficulties, in evaluating the results of the actions undertaken over the years 2005 – 2006, both quantitatively and qualitatively. There were sometimes problems both regarding their returns in general, and their failure to maintain new organisational practices after the period financed.

LAW 53/2000

A useful list summarising the name and details of companies running “work-life conciliation projects” financed within the terms of article 9 of Law 53/2000, is contained in the document SPIN No.17 from the *Ministry for Work*, which can be downloaded at:

http://spinn.welfare.gov.it/SPINN/testi/info/infoprिमolivello/info_monografie.asp?sm=4#mon_17

LAW 125/91

A list (titles only) of the projects financed, within the terms of Law 125/91, can be downloaded at:

<http://www.lavoro.gov.it/Lavoro/md/AreeTematiche/tutela/comitatoNazionaleParita/>

EQUAL PROJECTS:

Two projects are particularly interesting¹²:

1. Women human resources managers¹³ aimed to promote Equal Opportunities within the context of the workplace, and to remove the obstacles impeding women from developing a managerial career - led by *Isvor*¹⁴.

By registering at <http://www.equaldonnemanager.isvor.it/sw/>, it is possible to interact in the *FAD Training Course*, which presents professional histories of different types, which evolve on the basis of the responses and choices which can be made while playing various roles. Eventually, the website calculates if and how much the choices made have been discriminatory. It is a very useful instrument to explore practical situations, and to understand the operation of stereotypes.

¹² see <http://www.equalitalia.it>

¹³ See <http://www.equaldonnemanager.isvor.it/ita/home.asp>

¹⁴ For information, contact: learningpoint@isvor.it

2. Stay in Time¹⁵, promoted jointly by the Langhe Monferrato Roero Consortium Company, the Provinces of Asti and Alessandria, and the Susa and Val Cenischia Mountain Communities, which has developed a system for the evaluation of company policies, based on Sa 8000 (Social Accountability standard).

For info, see the summary chart in the *Equal* collection of good practices, its internet site, the organisational leaders' information, and *LAMORO* (Langhe Monferrato Roero).

OTHER EU-FUNDED PROJECTS

The European project "Gendercertification"¹⁶, (**VISION 2000: il genere nella certificazione di qualità**) focuses on helping companies. Financed by means of the Leonardo Da Vinci European community programme (education and culture) proposes a gender analysis of ISO 9000:2000 Quality System standards.

Leader Progetto Donna Via Milazzo 5 – Bologna. A non for profit association set up in 1989, which operates in the sector of research, education, information and consultancy for Equal Opportunities and Gender Mainstreaming in companies, society and schools. More info: www.progettodonna.net E-mail: progdonna@progettodonna.net	Project Partner: AFAQ (I); APID (Italy) BYWEB (Portugal) UIL Women's Coordination (Italy) ENTENTE (UK) European Institute for Managing Diversity (Spain?) GbQ (Germany?) METHA SISEMI (Italy) MYCCI (Bulgaria) UMBRIA REGION (Italy)
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The project **STER-E/O**, financed by the *European Commission DG Employment*, is focussed on identifying and analysing stereotypes. STER-E/O made an extensive analysis of gender stereotypes and their impact on the current labour market situation in various old and new EU member states, to identify good practice and integrated strategies (see below para. 6)

Project partners in Italy: *EWA* (reference in Italy: *c/o Idea Lavoro* (non-profit association)).

Other EU Partners: *Retravailler Liege* (Belgium), *Le Piment* (Belgium), *Ancorpari* (Italy), *Virgile* (France), *CORA* (Italy), *Jol-let* (Bulgaria), *Barda* (Bulgaria).

"S.O.N.O." is an on-going initiative taken by the Italian Ministry of Labour¹⁷. In 2007, within the framework of The European Year for Equal Opportunities for All, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare has opened a public information service as part of the "S.O.N.O. Same Opportunities New Opportunities - Pink Quality Trademark". This is open to every public and private company, and aims to reward those companies which adopt policies of non-discrimination, and re-valuation of women's skills.

¹⁵ <http://www.lamoro.it/eng/equal.lasso>

¹⁶ More information at www.gendercertification.com/index.htm

¹⁷ See www.lavoro.gov.it

Out of 139 companies which were candidates for an evaluation process of their “value chain” for Equal Opportunities, 36 companies have been certified to use the “S.O.N.O. Same Opportunities New Opportunities” quality trademark, issued by the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare.

A Government proposal has also been discussed to give incentives for “certified” companies; which are to be defined at a round-table representing interested social parties, together with other responsible Ministers, to be held in spring 2008.

EXAMPLES OF ACTIONS IN COMMUNICATIONS AND MEDIA FIELDS

Eikon: an initiative promoted by Piedmont Regional Council and the Women’s Consultative Council of the Piedmont Region, seeks to reinforce gender prospects in institutional communication by fully realising the multiplicity and richness of roles that women know how to adopt. This initiative follows up the earlier adoption of guidelines to appreciate gender identity and women’s images in institutional communication, developed in 2002 by the Imago project.

There have been numerous initiatives at an institutional level to denounce publicity which is offensive to women’s dignity. Among the first initiatives, an Observatory on Publicity Offensive to Equality has been set up by the City of Turin¹⁸.

4. SUPPORT

The Italian Constitution recognizes the principle of gender equality: men and women have the right to the same treatment. It recognizes every citizen’s equal social dignity and entitlement to the same rights before the law (**article 3**), equality between women and men at work (**articles 4 and 37**), and the moral and legal equality of men and women within marriage (**article 29**).

The **Equal Opportunities Code** between Men and Women (Legislative decree No. 198, 11th April 2006) rearranged previous Italian standards for Equal Opportunities and against discrimination. It annulled many previous laws, to unify the legislation on this field in one single text.

GENDER EQUALITY IN EMPLOYMENT

Italian Law No. 215 of 25th February 1992; article 10, paragraph 6; articles 12 and 13 - “Positive action for women in business” (including the founding of a Committee for Women in Business).

Italian Law No.125, of 10th April 1991; article 11: “Positive actions to create equality between men and women at work”.

¹⁸ For information and materials, see:

<http://www.comune.torino.it/consiglio/commissionepariopportunita/osservatoriopubblicita.shtml>

Italian Law No. 903, of 9th December 1977, article 14; article 16, paragraphs 2 and 3; and articles 17 and 19: “Equal treatment between men and women at work”.

MATERNITY PROTECTION, PARENTAL LEAVE AND RECONCILING WORK AND PRIVATE LIFE

Legislative decree No.115, of 23rd April 2003. Modifications and amendments to Legislative decree No. 151, of 26th March 2001, collecting together the legal regulations to protect and support maternity and paternity into one text, within the terms of article 15 of Law No. 53, of 8th March 2000.

Legislative decree No.151 of 26th March.” Single text of legal regulations regarding protection and support of maternity and paternity, within the terms of article 15 of Law No. 53 of 8th March 2000

Law No. 53 of 8th March 2000: “Regulations to support maternity and paternity, for the right to care and education, and to coordinate time in cities”: the institution of parental leave for women and men.

LEGISLATION ESTABLISHING INSTITUTIONS AND MEASURES TO PROMOTE AND PROTECT GENDER EQUALITY¹⁹

Decree No. 115 by the President of the Republic, on 14th May 2007: Order for the reorganisation of the Commission for Equal Opportunities between Men and Women.

Ministerial Decree of 30th September 2004: reorganisation of the Department for Equal Opportunities.

Ministerial Decree no. 275 of 19th May 2004, Order collecting together regulations for the organisation and operation of the Commission for Equal Opportunities between Men and Women.

Legislative Decree no. 226 of 31st July 2003: transforming the National Commission for Equality, into the Commission for Equal Opportunities between Men and Women, within the terms of article 13 of Law no. 137 of 6th July 2002.

Legislative Decree no. 196 of 23rd. May 2000: Regulating the activities of women and men Councillors for Equality; and the rules regarding positive action, within the terms of article 47 of Law no. 144 of 17th May 1999.

Legislative Decree no.3003 of 30th.July 1999: article 5 of the Order by the President of the Council of Ministers: “the President promotes and coordinates Government actions aimed to ensure Equal Opportunities, and to prevent and remove discrimination, as well as to allow the application, coordination and monitoring of the use of relevant European funds”.

¹⁹ Equal opportunities - bodies for national reference: (<http://www.lavoro.gov.it/Lavoro/Europalavoro/SezioneCittadini/PariOpportunita>)

Various institutions exist to guarantee the principle of Equal Opportunities between Men and Women, including:

- the *National Committee for Equal Opportunities*,. which has operated since 1991 at the Ministry of Work, responsible for implementing the principles of equal treatment and opportunities for men and women workers.
- the *Commission for Equal Opportunities* between Men and Women, which has operated since 1990 at the *Presidency of the Council of Ministers*, responsible for providing the *Minister of Equal Opportunities* with advice and technical-scientific support, to determine and carry out Equal Opportunities policies between men and women;
- *Committees for Equal Opportunities* operating since 1986 at various government departments, responsible for promoting actions to create conditions of substantial equality between women and men at work, within individual workplaces.
- *national, regional and provincial women and men Equality Councillors*, who are institutional figures responsible for promoting and checking how the principles of Equal Opportunities and non-discrimination between men and women, are put into practice at the workplace.

Law no. 164 of 22nd June 1990: the institution of a National Commission for Equality and Equal Opportunities between Men and Women, at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers.

LEGISLATION RELATED TO REPRESENTATION AND POLITICS

Bill of law by popular initiative, presented on November 2007: Standards for Egalitarian Democracy in Elected Assemblies.

Law no.90 of 8th April 2004, article 3: the institution of a “quota” of one third of women in the electoral lists for elections to the European Parliament, with financial sanctions for non-compliance.

Decree of the President of the Council of Ministers of 27th March 1997: Actions aimed to promote the attribution of powers and responsibilities to women, to recognise and guarantee freedom of choice and social quality to women and men (Prodi – Finocchiaro guidelines).

For an easy-to-consult list of all national regulations until 2004, consult the 2 CD-ROMs from the *Ministry of Work* on women work, which can be downloaded at:

<http://spinn.welfare.gov.it/SPINN/DocPrg/cd/CD2/home.htm>

<http://spinn.welfare.gov.it/SPINN/DocPrg/cd/CD3/home.htm>

ACRONYMS

IT	Italy
EC	European Commission

EU	European Union
EU25	The 25 Member Countries of the European Union (from May 2004 to December 2006)
EU27	The 27 Member Countries of the European Union (as from January 2007)
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEM	Gender Empowerment Measure
GNP	Gross National Product
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
ISCO	International Standard Classification of Occupations
NACE	Classification of Economic Activities in the European Community
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
UNDP	United Nations Development Program