EGGE – EC’s Expert Group on Gender and Employment

Assessment of the National Action Plans on Social Inclusion from a Gender Perspective

Italy

2003

EWERC, Manchester School of Management, UMIST

Copyright Disclaimer: This report was produced as part of the work of the European Commission’s Expert Group on Gender and Employment (EGGE) and was funded by the European Commission. The European Commission has granted permission for this report to be published in this website. The opinions and views expressed in this report remain the responsibility of the authors and authors alone, and should not be taken to be representative of the views of the European Commission.
NAP/INCLUSION – ITALY 2003
Paola Villa – August 2003

The NAP/inclusion 2003 has been made available in Italian only (August 2003). All references here made refer to the Italian version of the official document sent to the Commission at the beginning of August.

The whole document is much longer than expected (50 very thick pages for the main text, 40 pages for the Statistical Annex, and another seven Annexes). The NAP/inclusion 2003 (main text) does not present indicators and statistics, with the only exception of a couple of simple (and short) tables/figures (see p. 2, 4, 23). Some data are scattered in the text, but with no reference to tables in the Statistical Annex. Moreover, the Statistical Annex is by and large incomplete (that is, many tables are not filled with data). All this makes it very difficult to formulate any reasonable comment on statistics and indicators (as well as on trends, or comparison with the NAP/inclusion 2001).

The NAP/inclusion 2003 that I have been able to read appears to be in a very draft format. The numbering of sections and subsections is not always coherent; some points are listed, but then are not discussed; other points are replicated in more than one section. All this makes it very difficult to make a reasonable assessment. In particular, the whole section 2 (“Review of progress during 2002/2003”, pp. 10-25) is very poorly organised (with some bits and pieces scattered here and there), with an unclear numbering of sections, subsections, points, etc.

It might be important to recall that the NAP/inclusion 2001 was prepared under the previous Italian government (headed by Giuliano Amato, centre-left coalition). The present Government (headed by Silvio Berlusconi, centre-right coalition) is engaged to put forward an economic and social policy radically different from what was done by previous governments. In some cases, this implies a real change of perspective (with the proposal of new measures/policies, radically different from what had been done in the past). But in some cases, particularly where nothing new has been proposed (and/or new policies have not been implemented yet), there is a clear effort to present ‘old wine in new bottles’ to the public opinion. This makes particularly difficult to produce an assessment of the progress made over the last two years; to compare the 2003 Nap with the 2001 NAP it is even more difficult (this would require a careful analysis of both documents, not possible for reasons of time and space).
Grid One: gender mainstreaming and gender issues raised by the Member states under the various objectives

Please cite what is in the NAPs and as close as possible to the way it is written without interpretation or assessment

Definitions:

**gender mainstreaming** = GM: concerns (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies, at all levels and at all stages by the actors normally involved in policy making

**Specific measures**: with a view to ensuring equality in practice between men and women, Member States may maintain or introduce specific measures to prevent or compensate for disadvantages linked to sex.

Column 1: *in italic* = extracts from the common NAP's outline
Columns 2 and 3: Comments made are not exhaustive but highlight some key points to be checked.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAP outline -</th>
<th>Gender mainstreaming</th>
<th>Specific gender issues / specific measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1- Major trends and challenges – "including indicators broken down by sex + showing gender characteristics" | • Major trends and challenges are described in very general terms, with very little concern about gender mainstreaming as if the general improvement recorded in recent years (on conditions of poverty) had nullified the need for a gender equality perspective.  
  • Major trends are presented with almost no reference to indicators disaggregated by gender (apart from the population structure by age). The only exception is the subsection on ‘disabled’ where it is stated that in Italy the employment rate for disabled is particularly low (21%); this disadvantage is even greater in the case of women (with an employment rate of only 11%, with respect to 29% for men).  
  • Major challenges are described in generic and | No specific stats and/or indicators are used in to identify gender issues.  
  There is no discussion at all about specific gender issues. Gender is never mentioned in the presentation of ‘major challenges’. |
| This section (see pp. 1-9) presents in very general terms what are considered to be major trends and challenges. It is stated that, in general, conditions of poverty and social exclusion improved with respect to the picture portrayed in the 2001 NAP/incl.  
  Major trends:  
  - Poverty is still highly concentrated in the Southern regions and concerns mainly large families (with children);  
  - Italy is an ageing country: the combination of the extension of life expectancy (more pronounced in the case of women) and the drop | |
in the fertility rate are the major factors responsible for the ageing of Italy;  
- Geographical mobility (from Southern regions) has started to increase since the ‘90s;  
- Immigration is on the increase;  
- Hidden labour continues to be a problem (accounting over 22% of labour input);  
- the social integration of disabled people is unsatisfactory (recording very low employment rates);  
- the so called ‘third sector’ (including volunteer work, non-profit organisations, social co-operatives) is more and more developed.

Major challenges: it is argued that social exclusion is a multidimensional concept that required to develop an integrated, decentralised, diversified policy, based on partnership. The following areas of concern are listed:  
- family policies;  
- entry into life and active life;  
- the right to ‘universal services’;  
- social inclusion;  
- psychic-physical autonomy;  
- social cohesion;  
- horizontal measures.

2- Review of progress during 2002/2003

This section (see pp. 10-25) summarises what are considered to be the principal areas of intervention against poverty and social exclusion at both the national and regional level.

Nine thematic areas are listed (p. 11) and discussed rhetoric terms, with no reference either to indicators disaggregated by sex, or to specific gender issues.

- Improvement or deterioration of specific gender problems: no mention of any specific gender issue.  
- Changes in policies: none concerning specific gender measures.  
- New initiatives concerning specific gender
The nine thematic areas presented are the following:

2.1 – The coordinated and integrated approach: the implementation of Law 328/2000 (“legge quadro sull’assistenza”) (pp. 11-12)
2.2 – Facilitating participation in employment (through the reform of the labour market, the reform of the schooling system, public/private employment services, employment centres, continuous training) (pp. 12-15)
2.3 – Facilitating access to resources, rights, goods and services for all (p. 15)
2.4 – To prevent the risk of exclusion (p.15-16)
2.5 – To help the most vulnerable (pp. 16-22)
2.6 – Policies/strategies financed by the European Community (Equal and ESF)
2.7 – Policies to promote local development
2.8 – To mobilise all relevant bodies
2.9 – Policies for equal opportunities [listed at p. 11, but comment is missing in the text]

This section is written by listing the actions taken, not by assessing their impact. In fact, no assessment of possible improvement/deterioration of different groups of people is provided. In particular:
- no information on gender gaps (and their reduction) is provided for in the text;
- changes in policies, related to gender issues, are not mentioned;
- initiatives relating to GM are not mentioned.

To sum up, this section has not been prepared in order to assess the extent to which the overall targets and objectives set in the first NAP/incl have been achieved. Not having described what progress has been made implies also lack of information by gender.

It has to be mentioned that this section presents some actions/policies undertaken to stop the illegal trafficking of women and girls (to foster female prostitution) (p. 22-23). This is certainly a critical and serious problem. Nevertheless, it has to be said that it cannot exhaust gender issues related to poverty and social exclusion.

This section presents seven main objectives (that are identified as “priorities for action for the years 2003-2005”):

1. family policies

- In the whole document there are almost no quantitative targets, with the only exception of the quantitative target concerning the employment rate. This target is disaggregated by gender (see table p. 33, in Section 4).
- Quantitative target for 2005:
  - Employment rate (MF): 58.5%
  - Female employment rate: 46%

The NAP/inclusion 2003 does not present a clear strategic approach. A long list of goals, objectives and priorities are scattered throughout the NAP, and it is very difficult to find out what are the ‘actual’ main objectives. Even more difficult is to assess the weight given to gender issues and/or the role played by gender specific measures. Most of gender specific measures are described under the Subsection 7 - “Equal opportunities” (pp.
| 2. measures in favour of disabled people | - Old age employment rate: 40% |
| 3. policies to combat extreme poverty | What is missing (about this point) is some information on trends in the female employment rate by geographical area. In fact, the geographical gap in the female employment rate (that is, the difference in female employment rate between the North-Centre and the South) has widened in recent years. The female employment rate has increased significantly in the North and Centre of the country, while it stagnated in the South. There is no mention – in the whole NAP/incl. – about the specific problems faced by Southern women in entering employment rate. |
| 4. policies to combat dependency | What is also missing is some concern about the crucial role of female employment to reduce the risk of household poverty. As is well known, dual participation household (couple household with both persons in employment) drastically reduces the risk of poverty. In Italy, families with children (more than one child) have higher risk of poverty. At the same time, poverty is highly concentrated in Southern regions. Not surprisingly, the female employment rate in Southern regions is particularly low (only 27.1% in the South compared to 53.6% in the North - data refer to April 2003); this is matched by a very unequal distribution of dual participation households in the country: over 52% in the North, no more than 25% in the South. |
| 5. welfare to work (labour market policies) | 30-31). Most of the measures listed here are to be considered as the implementation of previous provisions/policy decisions: - Law on equal opportunities (L. 125/1991); - Law on female entrepreneurship (L. 215/1991); - allocation of 10% of ESF (European Social Fund) for financing projects promoting equal opportunities; - Law on parental leave (L. 53/2000), allocating a special fund for financing companies willing to experience innovative proposals favouring reconciliation; - etc. |
| 6. policies in favour of | Something new has been done in the following areas: - childcare services (favouring the spreading of crèches at the company level) - political representation (through the revision of art. 51 of the Italian Constitution). |
| 7. equal opportunities | 4 – Policy measures |
| “indicate how the gender perspective has been | Gender mainstreaming – NAP/incl, Section 4 (policy measures) |
| General comments on Section 4 (policy measures and financial resources): |
In this section, main objectives and key targets are presented according to the three objectives singled out in the Copenhagen summit. According to these three broad objectives, the following ‘priorities’ are listed.

**Objective 1 - Facilitating participation in employment, access to resources, rights and basic services.**

1. National policies facilitating participation in employment (especially female employment and in Southern regions)
2. Regional policies for the fostering of female employment
3. To increase the employment rate of people aged over 55
4. To increase participation to active life of disabled people
5. To favour the social inclusion (through employment) of people in jail
6. To favour the emergence of hidden labour
7. To facilitate geographical mobility of the labour force (young people)
8. To develop the social responsibility of companies
9. To develop continuous training
10. To support large families
11. To develop services for families
12. To support policies for the development of ‘custody of children to families’
13. To develop reconciliation policies

**Policy measures are here presented simply as a long list of general goals (or better, ‘priorities’) to be achieved. Very little is said about the actual policy tools to be used to meet these goals. Almost no attention is devoted to gender mainstreaming (in the sense that most of policy measures are presented in gender neutral terms).**

- A gender equality perspective has not been developed. Most of the policies are presented and discussed in gender neutral terms as if there were no differences neither in the initial situation described, nor in the possible impact of the policy proposed. This lack of attention to gender issues is emblematic in the following policy areas:
  - old age employment rate (women in old age face different problems with respect to old men that have been active for most of their life);
  - employment rate for disabled people (it is simply mentioned that female disabled should be encouraged to active life – no specific policy is provided for);
  - hidden labour (one has to recognise that there are significant differences by gender in the distribution of hidden labour; this would require different policy tools);
  - geographical mobility (nothing is said about the composition, by gender, of geographical mobility);
  - continuous training (it is well known that women are at a disadvantage in continuous training, but there is no mention of the

**As already argued, the NAP/incl is concerned in listing goals to be achieved, more than presenting ‘policy measures’. In most of the cases, the ‘goals to be achieved’ are described in very general terms, therefore they appear as wishful thinking more than actual objectives to be pursued through the implementation of policies (and their monitoring).**

- Section 4 (on policy measures) is filled with expressions such as “the Government intends to …”, “in order to reach this objective, the intention is to promote …”, etc.
- The document is written in such a way that it is very difficult to distinguish between: (i) policy measures already enacted; (ii) generic proposals (without any specific commitment).
- Financial resources: the NAP/incl does not provide - in a systematic way - information on the financial resources allocated to each policy measure. In fact, it is stated (in Section 3, p. 26) that this will be possible only after the definition of the Budget Law (*Legge di bilancio*) that would be drafted in September 2003.

Section 4 does not present any measure dedicated to specific gender issues. One could simply say that a gender dimension is either explicitly or implicitly involved in presenting the following ‘priorities’:
- National policies facilitating participation in employment (especially female employment and in Southern regions) (see Objective 1, priority 1)
- Regional policies for the fostering of female
| 14. To develop services for disabled people | 15. To strengthen services for old age people (over 65) | Objective 2 - *Prevent risks of social exclusion*.  
1. To reduce dropouts in schooling | Objective 3 - *Help the most vulnerable*.  
1. To improve access to services for disabled people  
2. To improve immigrants’ language skills  
3. To promote co-ordination and co-operation among institutional bodies engaged in reducing drug dependency  
4. To promote the social inclusion of people addicted to drugs  
5. To fight extreme poverty  
6. To favour the social inclusion of people finishing imprisonment | The list could continue, but these example should suffice to make the point. | employment (see Objective 1, priority 2)  
- To develop services for families (see Objective 1, priority 11). |
5 – **Institutional arrangements**  
(relevant bodies, those at risk of exclusion, NGOs).

NAP/inclusion 2003 focuses on institutional arrangements at the national level.  
Nine institutional arrangements are listed (see Section 5.1, pp. 42-3). All of them involve Ministries, on the one hand, and other Ministries, or national institutional bodies (such as Regions, ANCI, Confindustria, Unioncamere¹) on the other hand.

Five committees/observatories are listed (see Section 5.3, pp. 42-43):
- a) Committee on poverty and social exclusion
- b) Observatory on voluntary work (third sector)
- c) Observatory on childhood
- d) National observatory on the family
- e) Committee for training and promoting the employment of people in jail.

- Equality bodies (and NGOs) are not mentioned. None of the nine national institutional arrangements listed in this section includes an equality body.
- There is no mention of participation of women and men in committees involved in drafting and implementing the NAPs; in fact, it is not possible to guess, from the text, if equality bodies have been involved at all in the process.
- There is no mention of participants by gender in the five committees/observatories listed in section 5.3.

To sum up, neither the involvement of equality bodies nor a balanced participation of women and men appear to be an important issue.

---

¹ ANCI is the national association of Italian municipalities; Confindustria is the national association of Italian employers; Unioncamere is the association of Chambers of Commerce.
Grid two : Assessment of gender mainstreaming

taking into account the gender perspective in the identification of challenges, the design, implementation and assessment of policies and measures, the selection of indicators and targets and the involvement of stakeholders

GM = gender mainstreaming

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main NAP fields of assessment</th>
<th>Main questions to be raised</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Progress made since last NAP           | ▪ **Importance given to gender issues**: INSUFFICIENT (at the best, marginal)  
▪ **To what extend have they been dealt with and how, compared to the commitment taken by MS in their NAP 2001?** The NAP/inclusion 2001 was one of the last official act of the previous Government (centre-left coalition). In May 2001, Berlusconi won the elections and became Prime Minister of the new Government (centre-right coalition). Too many changes occurred in between the two NAPs/inclusion (2001 and 2003) to make a comparison (in few lines).  |
| Identification of challenges           | ▪ **Importance given to GM and Gender issues in the key identified challenges**: The only real challenge identified in the NAP/inclusion 2003 is the intention to promote the female employment rate (identified with the quantitative target of 46%, for the country as a whole, in 2005)  
▪ **Comment in the light of the other challenges mentioned**: One has to say that also the other challenges mentioned are not clearly specified. In particular it is almost impossible to distinguish between the actual challenges (and targets to be seriously pursued) and whatever else it would be very nice to meet in the near future (but without any significant engagement).  |
| Statistics and indicators              | ▪ **Assess the means for / use of gender analysis**: negligible in the main text, imprecise (with too many missing data) in the Statistical Annex                                                                                                                                 |
| Strategic approach and targets         | ▪ **Assess the importance / attention given to GM – assess the resources (financial, human, organisational,… ) allocated to it – see also part on “mobilising all stakeholders**: Both in terms of strategic approach and in terms of targets the attention given to GM is, at best, MARGINAL.  
▪ **Assess the importance given to gender in the choice of quantitative targets**: VERY POOR.                                                                                                                                 |


Design of policies and measures

- Assess importance/attention given to / ability demonstrated for GM: NEGLIGIBLE.
- Assess the balance between gender mainstreaming and specific measures: On the one hand gender mainstreaming is lacking (if not in-existant), on the other hand specific measures are insufficient (and very poorly specified).

Implementation of policies and measures

Monitoring and assessment of policies

- Assess the means for/ use of / reference to gender impact assessment : NONE

"mobilisation of relevant stakeholders"

- To what extent have stakeholders for gender issues have been involved (and how relevant are the stakeholders that have been involved for gender issues)? No information is provided for in the document. I contacted (by e-mail and by phone) the Comitato Nazionale di Parità (the Equal Opportunity Committee at the Ministry of Labour) and the Dipartimento di Pari Opportunità (the office in charge of equal opportunities within the Government) in order to have information about their involvement in the preparation of the NAP/incl, but I had no answer yet (August is vacation time in Italy). My guess is that these two Equality Bodies were asked to prepare few pages on what they have done in the past two years; these pages have been included (with some cuts) here and there, in the final document.

Overall assessment

- Gender has been very poorly mainstreamed across the NAP (it is not a priority in this NAP/incl).

**Grid three: gender proofing in good practice presented by Italy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good practices mentioned</th>
<th>Q 1: Gender dimension Q 2: gender proofing</th>
<th>Q 3: positive impact on gender equality</th>
<th>Q 4: negative impact on gender equality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. ‘Progetto anziani’ – This is a local project (municipality of Bologna and Ravenna) intended to provide home care services to dependent elderly people.</td>
<td>It is stated that the project will promote the employment of female immigrants, employed as carers. It is also stated that one of the objective of the project is to improve their working conditions (training,</td>
<td>This project will produce positive effects on families with dependent elderly people. By reducing the burden on the family, this will reduce the burden on women (by and large the main care providers within</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Project Description</td>
<td>Gender Dimension</td>
<td>Relevance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>‘Banco Alimentare’ – This is a national project (organised in 18 regional centres) concerned with the collection and distribution of food items that otherwise would be destroyed.</td>
<td>No gender dimension is mentioned. It is stated that about 700 volunteers (in addition to about 20 paid workers) are involved in this project. But it is not specified their distribution by gender.</td>
<td>Not relevant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>‘Sostegno domiciliare alle famiglie in difficoltà’ – This is a local project (municipality of Campobasso) concerned with helping families at risk of social exclusion in dealing with their children (in order to avoid the institutionalisation of minors).</td>
<td>No gender dimension is mentioned.</td>
<td>This project is mainly concerned with the relationship between families in difficulties and their children. The focus is on families (with children) facing social and/or economic difficulties. The attention is by and large focused on educational/relational problems, including schooling attendance. Helping families in raising children might help especially working mothers, henceforth producing a positive impact on gender equality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Setting up of a ‘Service Centre and Planning on Social Inclusion’ – This is a local project (municipality of Potenza) concerned with the collection and analysis of statistical data on social inclusion.</td>
<td>No gender dimension is mentioned.</td>
<td>Not relevant.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>