

## Stocktaking on Mainstreaming Ageing in the UNECE region

### County note - Italy

#### **About**

The Italian Republic is constituted by Municipalities, Provinces, Metropolitan Cities, Regions. The Municipalities, Provinces, Metropolitan Cities and Regions are autonomous bodies with their own statutes, powers and functions, in accordance with the principles set out by the Constitution (Title 5 of the Constitution). In particular, Regions have legislative power over all matters not expressly reserved for State legislation.

In this legislative framework, ageing issues are approached by means of specific measures at State and/or Regions level, which are not yet embedded in an overall ageing strategy and which usually call for specific agreements stipulated from time to time between Central Government and Regional Governments.

The Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and the Regional Implementation Strategy for UNECE region (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe) - MIPAA/RIS greatly contributed to fuel the debate and the raising of awareness towards the need for a national ageing strategy, especially during and after the 2012 European Year of Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations. After the conclusion of the 2017 UNECE Ministerial Conference on Ageing, the Department for Family Policies of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers took stock of the two Review and Appraisal cycles of MIPAA/RIS, in the context of the Third National Conference on the Family. The conclusions of the Conference started the process of definition of a national project aimed at establishing a national coordination framework on active ageing policies and measures, with the participation of Regions, other Public Institutions, Social partners and all relevant stakeholders (see Structures).

#### **Structures**

Ageing issues are currently distributed among different Ministries and government levels, according to the Constitution and relevant laws. In particular, National Government is responsible for: work and social protection; a part of continuous vocational education and training and minimum income (Ministry of Labour and Social Policies); health (Ministry of Health); adult education (Ministry of Education, University and Research). Regional Governments are responsible for active labour market policies; training policies; the local organization of the National Health Service and the coordination of social services; Municipalities provide social services. As anticipated above, specific mention is to be done about the national coordination project implemented by the Department for Family Policies of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers.

#### ***National Coordination Project on Active Ageing (Department for Family Policies)***

The project is based on the general mandate of the Department for Family Policies and what established by article 1, subsection 482 of Budget Law nr. 145/2018, which establishes that the National Fund for Family Policies should provide measures in support of the family, childbearing, parenthood with the priority of contrasting the demographic crisis and also supporting older households' members.

On this basis, in April 2019 the Department launched a national coordination initiative, involving all government levels (Municipalities, Provinces, Metropolitan Cities, Regions and central authorities) and relevant stakeholders, aimed at establishing a shared and participated model of intervention for the promotion of active ageing in Italy. The project is expected to:

- collect information about the status of the art at national and regional level, concerning policies/intervention of active ageing;

- develop guide-lines for modeling interventions for active ageing and social inclusion of older people at national/local level, involving Regions and Municipalities, also adopting the Active Ageing Index as a monitoring tool, and strengthening intergenerational solidarity, in accordance to MIPAA/RIS;
- collaborate to the realization of the fourth review and appraisal of the implementation of the MIPAA/RIS, favoring the bottom-up approach and involving all relevant public and private stakeholders;
- disseminate the results of the project, at national and international level.

The project has currently activated its network of stakeholders and is about to start the collection of information on national and regional policies/intervention of active ageing.

## **Laws, Policies, and Strategic Framework**

Apart from the implementation of the National Coordination Project on Active Ageing, the coordination of policies on ageing issues is managed at national level in five domains: health, adult education and training, health and safety at the workplace, employment, social protection.

### ***Health***

The **National Prevention Plan 2014-2018** includes among its main goals the reduction of the burden of disease, in connection with the demographic situation, reducing mortality from non-communicable chronic diseases, also promoting active ageing. These goals should take into account the situation of specific fragile social groups, combating inequalities and preventing the onset of disabilities.

The Plan envisages a strategy based on a life-course approach, also referring to the WHO guidelines, in order to favor the social participation and solidarity between generations, to support elderly persons in their own social environment, slowing down the coming of the loss of autonomy and social isolation. The Plan claims that an early prevention of wrong lifestyles can also contribute not only to maintain good physical health, but also to prevent cognitive decay and the onset of dementia.

The current discussion about the new National Plan 2020-2025, while confirming the objective of the previous one, introduced the principle “health in all policies”, emphasizing the importance of the health literacy and the empowerment of citizens and their communities. Following the “One Health” approach, the Plan identifies its main strategic areas on the prevention of communicable and non-communicable chronic diseases, by means of the promotion of healthy lifestyles and the attention to the health determinants, in connection with social inequalities.

Since 2001, measures of **Long-Term Care (LTC)** are considered as one of the mandatory minimum levels of assistance, funded by the National Health Service and established at national level, on the basis of specific agreements between Central Government and Regional Governments. The last update of the agreement, which occurred in 2017, gives also a particular relevance to the surveillance and primary prevention of chronic diseases (the majority of which affect older population).

The revision of the agreement took stock also from the **National Chronicity Plan 2016**, and the **Agreement for Digital Health 2016**, both of which gave great relevance to the consequences of population ageing.

Since 2004 the Ministry of Health implemented also interventions aimed at mitigating the impact of “**heat waves**” on population health, providing specific guidelines. The current version of the guidelines provides the most recent scientific evidences about the effects of heat on health conditions of specific social groups (among which the elderly); describes the national alert system, the measures addressed at the target groups and recommendations for the various population groups; present the effects of air pollution on health and the available prevention strategies.

## ***Adult Education and Training***

The Italian system currently provides three main life-long learning channels targeting adult population:

1. Continuous Vocational Education and Training (CVET), managed by Regional Governments and Social Partners (Employers and Trade Unions);
2. Adult education aimed at updating adult vocational skills or improve their literacy, provided by Provincial centres for adult education (CPIA), under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education (MIUR)
3. Inter-professional Funds managed by Social Partners, that provide upskilling pathways addressed at workers (currently there are 19 active Funds in Italy).

The 2012 Labour market reform has definitively established the right to life-long learning, envisaging the possibility of validation of non-formal and informal learning of adult population. Recent national Agreements between Employers and Trade Unions in the engineering sector for the first time established, starting from 2017, the subjective right of workers to participate in training programs.

Active labour market policies managed at Regional level also include training pathways for jobseekers. Depending on the type of institutional framework of each Regional system, public and private agencies are involved in the delivery of training services. Noteworthy are also educational institutions participating in the movement of the University of the Third Age.

The Italian life-long learning strategy is part of the European Qualification Framework, aimed at favouring the adoption of National Qualification Frameworks – NQF in accordance with the Bologna Process. The development of NQFs allows to develop national legal framework for the validation of non-formal and informal learning, which can be of utmost importance for adult learners.

In 2018 the **Program Impresa 4.0**, aimed at boosting the adoption of ICTs by private organizations, envisaged the establishing of Digital enterprise points (information for digitisation of production, training and support); Innovation Hubs (supporting Small and Medium Enterprises - SMEs in new commercial and production strategies, managed by Employers organizations); Competence Centres (providing higher education and research concerning 4.0 technologies, involving Universities, research centres and enterprises).

Italy is also actively involved in applying the Council Recommendation of the European Council of 19 December 2016 on “Upskilling Pathways: New Opportunities for Adults” (2016/C 484/01). The Recommendation invites by 2018 EU Member States to build on existing national structures and set up arrangements to provide a fresh start to adult people in need of basic skills development. This should be achieved in close cooperation with all actors involved in adult learning and with the support of EU through several funding programmes, notably the European Social Fund and Erasmus.

## ***Health and safety at the workplace***

Italian legislation provides a mandatory insurance against accidents at work, which is managed by the National Institute for Insurance against Accidents at Work (INAIL). In 2008 a large reform occurred in the field of health and safety at the workplace (Legislative Decree No. 81/2008) in order to: extend safety regulation to all economic sectors, including both public and private organizations, at every risk level; reorganize control activity to enhance its efficacy; finance specific interventions in the prevention field; rationalize administrative and penal sanctions regarding the different involved actors’ responsibilities; modify the functions of the different actors involved, such as medical doctors, employers, workers’ representatives, providing some specific training as well.

The reform provides specific obligations to employers and workers. The most relevant ones concerning the formers are:

- mandatory assessment of health and safety risks and prevention planning (a specific document is to be prepared and given to the workers representatives);
- risk elimination or reduction (reduced use of specific chemical, physical or biological agents);
- work organisation according to ergonomic principles;
- reduce the number of workers at risk;
- mandatory activity of information and training on health and safety;
- periodical risk assessment to protect the population's health as well as the environment.

Even though legislation considers older workers as any other group of workers, employers are responsible for assessing the risks for the safety and health of workers taking into account also those risks associated to particular categories of workers, and with age. More generally, legislation contains several provisions concerning handling of loads, physically demanding tasks, medical examinations and work ability verification which ensure a better protection of older workers.

The system governance is led by a Steering Committee chaired by the Minister of Health and including an Advisory Committee in charge of suggesting legislation modifications as well as Regional Committees with coordination functions and specific workers representatives at local and organizational level.

More recently, the Law December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2014, n. 190 (Budget law 2015) charged INAIL with the task of facilitating the reintegration at work of persons with disabilities originating from their job. This task includes tailor projects aiming at job protection or job search, training programs, accessibility and adaptation of the workplace. In the same period, the Institute continued its activity concerning the assessment and management of work-related stress risk, providing technical support and methodological tools for both employers and employees.

### ***Employment***

Italian legislation does not provide any official definition of the elderly population and the older labour force. Usually, the older labour force includes people aged either over 50, or between 55 and 64.

Current employment legislation envisages a cut of 50% in social security contributions paid by the employer in the case of hiring 50+ unemployed for 12 months (duration of cutting 18 months, if hired without fixed term contract or otherwise 12). In the case of women unemployed for 24 months or more there is no age threshold. The same incentive is provided in the case of women in sectors characterized by gender segregation or living in disadvantaged areas.

The Budget Law 2019 envisaged a reform of Public Employment Services, aimed at supporting the new measure providing a minimum income level (so called Citizenship Income, max 9.380 Eur per year). Citizenship Income will give households in need a monthly allowance. The components of the household must provide in return their immediate availability to start a job. 65+, persons with severe disabilities, caregivers and persons attending training courses are not obliged to be available to work. Employers who hire persons receiving the Citizenship Income will benefit from a cut of social security contributions (780 Eur per month, for 18 months). Foreigners with unlimited residence permit, residing in Italy for ten years, are also eligible for the measure.

The Citizenship Income envisages also the possibility to entrust jobseeking applicants to vocational training institutions or schools, in view of the acquisition of an educational attainment, where necessary.

Up to July 2019 the National Social Security Institute (INPS) had received 1,400,000 applications for the Citizenship Income, almost 900,00 of which have been accepted. Considering the whole of beneficiaries of Citizenship Income and Citizenship Pension (see Social protection), more than 26% were minors and 58% of households were of one or two members, with an average age of 36,4.

## ***Social protection***

The Italian pension system is structured in a mandatory public pillar for employees and some categories of self-employed, supplemented by membership of private pension schemes on a voluntary basis. The public pillar is managed by the National Social Security Institute (INPS), which receives contribution from almost the total of public and private employees, and some categories of self-employed workers.

In 2011 a notionally defined contribution scheme for the public pillar was established for all the workers (public, private and self-employed) who started to work after January 1, 1996. It was also established an increased retirement age, which is currently 67.

Early retirement is possible after a definite period of contribution, raised gradually year by year in relation to the increase in the life expectancy and established in 2019 at 42 years and 10 months of contributions for men and 41 years and 10 months for women. The pension undergoes a reduction for each year of early retirement.

In case of death of persons receiving a public pension, the spouse (alternatively children, minor or persons unable to work; parents 65+ or unmarried brothers and sisters unable to work and dependent on the involved pensioner) can receive the benefit.

In order to strengthen the equity of the pension system and to favour generational turn-over in the labour market, in 2019 an experimental early retirement scheme has been enforced (so-called "quota 100 "). The scheme established a minimum threshold for early retirement at the age of 62, with at least 38 years of pension contributions. Calculation parameters remained in place, giving workers the possibility to choose whether retire before 67 or not, without cuts in the pension benefit. However, given the reduced years of contribution, the pension allowance will result lower than the benefit a worker could receive if retiring with full entitlements.

The budget Law of 2019 also confirmed the so-called "woman option", a measure introduced by Italian Law No. 243/2004, and launched from 2008 on, aimed at giving women employees the possibility of retiring at the age of 58 and self-employed women at the age of 59, in both cases with more than 35 years of contribution. In this case the calculation of the pension is entirely on the basis of the notionally defined contribution scheme.

In analogy to the Citizenship Income, for 67+ there is also a minimum income measure (so called Citizenship Pension) up to EUR 780 monthly. Citizenship pension can be provided also in case of household members under 67, if they are persons with severe disabilities.

## **Methods and tools**

### ***Data collection and analysis***

The National Statistical Institute (ISTAT) currently manages an **Information system on the elderly population**, available by general public via the web (<http://www4.istat.it/it/anziani>). The system provides statistical information about:

- population and households
- education, training and employment
- social and economic conditions
- health and lyfe-styles
- culture, media and ITC

ISTAT is also currently involved in the elaboration of the indicators of the **Active Ageing Index** at regional level.

**Passi d'Argento or Silver Steps** is a national surveillance system (<https://www.epicentro.iss.it/passi-argento/info/info>) (enforced by the DPCM of 3 March 2017 - GU General Series n.109 of 12 May 2017), funded by the Ministry of Health, dedicated to the 65+ population which provides information on health conditions, habits and lifestyles and the specific care and assistance needs of the elderly population. The system is based on the definition of "active aging" by the WHO, taking into account the contribution that the elderly offer to society and their support needs within their own family and community and fundamental aspects such as participation and psychological and social well-being of the person.

Passi d'Argento has become a continuous collection of data since 2016. It is implemented by the local units of the National Health Service (ASL), in collaboration with the social services, coordinated by the Regions and under the supervision of the Higher Institute of Health (Istituto Superiore di Sanità - ISS), which provides technical and scientific support. Data collection is carried out by telephone interviews (or vis a vis), using a standard questionnaire, by the ASLs. The interviewees are part of a statistical sample of the population, extracted from the list of the users of the National Health Service. The survey provides information useful for the planning, monitoring and evaluation of health promotion and disease prevention of the elderly population, at national and local level.

The Ministry of Economy contributes to the activities carried out by **the EU Working Group on Ageing Populations and Sustainability (AWG)**, established within the Economic Policy Committee. The EPC's Working Group on Ageing Populations and Sustainability is constituted to contribute to improving the quantitative assessment of the long-term sustainability of public finances and economic consequences of ageing populations of the EU Member States, so as to assist policy formation. The common budgetary projections by the EPC's AWG provide the basis for the assessment by the Council and the European Commission of sustainability of the Member States' public finances, within the context of the Stability and Growth Pact.' The work by the AWG should also feed into the work of the Europe 2020 strategy and other relevant co-ordination processes. The AWG:

- carry out the common age-related budgetary projections;
- contribute to the development of the assessment of long-term sustainability of public finances based notably on the common long-term projection results including through appropriate indicators;
- may also contribute to the discussion on other important issues in analysing long-term fiscal sustainability and the macroeconomic aggregates most likely to be affected by ageing.

INAIL manages a national database providing **statistics about accidents at work and occupational diseases** which occurred to employed and self-employed workers insured with this institution. Data are available in open format and freely accessible and reusable by citizens and by employers according to the Italian Open Data License v2.0.

### ***Awareness raising, advocacy and education***

Italy actively contributed to the **2016–17 Campaign: Healthy Workplaces for All Ages**, coordinated by the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA) and managed at national level by INAIL. The campaign was aimed at:

- promoting sustainable work and healthy ageing from the start of the working life;
- preventing health problems throughout the working life;
- providing ways for employers and workers to manage occupational safety and health in the context of an ageing workforce;
- encouraging the exchange of information and good practice.

## Good practices

In 2009 (Law 196 of 2009, subsequently modified by Legislative decree n. 90 of May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2016 and by Law 163 of 2016) the guidelines to the Government for the reform of the budget of the State envisaged the testing of a methodology of gender budgeting. The methodology is aimed at the evaluation of the impact of the public budget on gender, in terms of money transfer, provision of services, time and unpaid work. The Ministry of Economy was charged to provide a general methodology which should have been implemented by Public Administrations. These latter were asked to return to the Ministry of Economy the related information on an annual basis, in view of the provision of specific reports to the Parliament.

The methodology requires that, after the end of the accounting year, the Central Administrations of the State should reclassify costs and expenses according to gender and communicate actions planned and realized for the reduction of gender gaps in their policy domain.

The methodology identifies three classes of measures: gender-neutral; gender-sensitive (measures which impact differently on men or women); measures aimed at reducing gender gaps. The actions planned and realized for the reduction of gender gaps are divided into two groups: 1) policies which address the personnel of the Administration; 2) sectoral policies which involve the specific Administration domain.

The information concerned can be described also by means of output indicators, with particular relevance devoted to the indicators on **well-being** provided by ISTAT (so called BES indicators), which are also included in the Economic and Financial Document by the Ministry of Economy, which forms the basis of discussion for the annual Italian Budget Law. BES indicators cover the following 12 domains (<https://www.istat.it/en/well-being-and-sustainability/the-measurement-of-well-being/indicators>):

1. Health;
2. Education and training
3. Work and life balance
4. Economic well-being
5. Social relationship
6. Politics and institutions
7. Security
8. Subjective well-being
9. Landscape and cultural heritage
10. Environment
11. Innovation, research and creativity
12. Quality of services

The procedure of gender budgeting could serve as a pathway for the provision of a test of an active ageing budgeting.

(See Ministry of Economy for Gender budgeting: [http://www.rgs.mef.gov.it/VERSIONE-I/attivita\\_istituzionali/formazione\\_e\\_gestione\\_del\\_bilancio/rendiconto/bilancio\\_di\\_genere/](http://www.rgs.mef.gov.it/VERSIONE-I/attivita_istituzionali/formazione_e_gestione_del_bilancio/rendiconto/bilancio_di_genere/))