



ITALY

***PRESIDENCY OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS***

**DEPARTEMENT FOR FAMILY POLICIES**

**CSW 57 Session - 12 March 2013 10: 00 a.m.-p.m.**

**Panel on “The equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS”  
Focus on Sharing and balancing life-work responsibilities**

Ms Chairperson,  
Distinguished panellists and delegates,

I’m honoured to be here today, representing Italy, taking the opportunity to share views and policy responses on the review theme of this CSW session.

I have been listening to the panellists intervention and I will take on board many of the reflections and analysis highlighted.

Equal sharing of responsibilities and work, life and private balance are **issues that are still high on the national and international Agendas** as it is also proved by the current campaign, at EU level, to have 2014 designated as the European Year for Reconciling Work and Family Life.

From 2009 CSW Agreed Conclusions, **ITALY** has been keeping on promoting several important measures aimed at **3 main objectives** :

1. **Facing the declining birth rate**, which particularly low in Italy (the current fertility rate in Italy is about 1.35 children per woman) **and the demographic challenges of our ageing society** ;
2. **Increasing** the female employment rate (currently 46% );
3. **Encouraging** men’s involvement in domestic and parental tasks.

To achieve these objectives, Italy has been implementing medium and long term comprehensive initiatives, introducing:

1. **a National plan, aiming at providing accessible, affordable, high quality child care and educational services**, with an important allocation of resources (approx. 827 million EUR for the period 2007-2010). At this regard, supplementary funds in favour of childcare and

non self-sufficient elderly care have been allocated especially for some disadvantaged Regions (more than 1 billion EUR) aiming at **reducing disparities** linked to household socio-economic conditions and at enhancing women's freedom of choice. **Both objectives and results are measured through *ad-hoc* indicators and recent data show an important improvement of child care services coverage in Italy** (from 2004 to 2009, the percentage of municipalities with child care services passed from 38% al 56%).

2. **a National Action Plan for access and inclusion of women in the labour market**, with special focus on different actions on reconciliation between work and family, such as flexible working time arrangements, child care service in rural areas, vouchers to pay social services. From 2010, 55 billion Euros have been allocated through important cooperation with local authorities. This extensive program, together with the implementation of further positive actions has increased the number of men using these facilities in order to support their partners and to play a more active role in their family, overcoming traditional gender stereotypes.

At this regard, I would like to mention an interesting tool that it has been supported by the Department for family policies that is the **Family Audit**, aimed at promoting a cultural and organizational change within private and public institutions and to measure policies for human resources management in order to promote family friendly solutions and balance between private and working life.

3. **last but not least, a parental leave scheme**, that entitles fathers to paternity leave, by providing couples with a longer paid period where fathers take a minimum period off (at least 3 months), a compulsory/mandatory paternity leave and a more flexible use of parental leave, both recently introduced by a labour reform.

**What we have learnt or better we are learning from the implementation and monitoring of the different actions? :**

- that it is very important to have a national framework and a local-oriented approach in order to adapt measures to different cultural, social and economic needs:
- that is crucial to look for a cooperation with all stakeholders.