1. Italy

Introduction: Contextual overview

Key Indicators

Population, total (millions): 59.83 (2013)
GNI per capita, Atlas method (current US$): $35,860 (2013)
Poverty headcount ratio of $1.25 a day (PPP) % of population (2010): 1.4% (2010)
Fertility rate, total (births per woman): 1.4 (2012)
Share of women employed in the non-agricultural sector (% of total non-agricultural employment): 45% (2012)
Maternal mortality ratio (modelled estimate, per 100,000 live births): 4 (2013)
Number of weeks of maternity leave: 22 (2009)
Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments (%): 31% (2014)

Source: [1] http://datatopics.worldbank.org/gender/country/italy

Traditional gender roles underpin the family-employment system in Italy, shaping the family-centred character of the welfare regime. The employment regime in Italy is characterised by high rates of self-employment, high shares of people employed in small firms, a high degree of employment protection for employees on open-ended contracts (employed either in medium-large firms or in the public sector), combined with a high degree of flexibility to a large extent achieved through an increasing share of atypical contracts and an extended underground economy. All these factors give rise to the marked labour market segmentation, which is related to the extreme fragmentation in the social security system and noticeable differences in employment protection (that depends on public/private sector, firm size, employment contract and on formal/informal work). As a result, young people, women and migrants suffer significant disadvantages in gaining access to jobs with adequate rights and social security provisions. The academic system clearly mirrors the duality between fully included workers and marginal workers as it will be shown in this report (Domain 5).

In Italy (as in other Mediterranean countries), the family plays a central role in the provision of care and assistance to its members. Families are expected to support their own members (also beyond the nuclear family) when these are in need of some kind of support, without intervention by the State. Accordingly, family policies are underdeveloped in comparison with those of other EU countries, and income

[1] Accessed January 27, 2014 [Note: this is an exact copy of the text as found on the web page]

maintenance systems are inadequate, especially for young people (unemployed or in atypical jobs). This feature is mirrored in a very low share of social expenditure relative to family and children, housing and social exclusion, and a high risk of poverty after social transfer. The outcome is the combination of very low female employment rate with very low fertility rates (Villa 2012).

Over the last few decades, women have greatly improved their educational attainment, and their labour market ambitions have increased accordingly. Along with the increase in female educational attainment, the employment rate of women (especially mothers) has increased to a significant extent especially in the decade before the crisis. However, gender gaps in employment and unemployment rates remain amongst the highest in the EU28. Thus, women are not fully integrated into the labour market or remain in its periphery, especially in Southern Italy (Villa 2010).

The family-employment system is based on rather traditional gender roles, with men employed full-time in secure jobs throughout their working life, mainly responsible for earning enough for the economic wellbeing of the whole family, while women have responsibility for family caring and domestic work. Reality is more diversified than this stylised model; however, this was the model around which labour market policies and personnel management practices were constructed and implemented. In short, the male breadwinner model of the family remains dominant. This explains, on the one hand, the high share of inactive mothers (especially in Southern Italy) and, on the other hand, the pervasive discrimination against maternity, reflected in gender inequalities in the labour market (i.e. higher female unemployment rate and higher share of women in precarious jobs). Young women are caught in the intergenerational solidarity trap: because of the lack of adequate family policies and the unfavourable context towards working mothers (and in general, towards women with family responsibilities) they have to choose between the family (taking care of the children, the elderly, the frail family members) and employment.

Because women are still the main providers of domestic services and care work, when they experience motherhood, childbearing is seen to exacerbate an already heavy and unbalanced division of household labour, and this tends to limit their fertility intentions. On the one hand, there is significant discrimination in the labour market: access to secure jobs is more difficult for young women compared to young men, hence youth female unemployment rates are higher. On the other hand, support for combining

motherhood and paid work remains weak: services for the family are insufficiently developed, family-friendly organisations are few, gender-roles in the family lead to a very asymmetric distribution of tasks.

1.1 Domain 1. Education policies and practices

The main features of the Italian education system are summarized in Box 1, in which is detailed the institutional configuration ranging from the lower to the higher education.

Box 1 Education system overview

The education system in Italy is organised according to the principles of subsidiarity and of autonomy of schools. The State has exclusive legislative competence on general issues on education, on minimum standards to be guaranteed throughout the country and on the fundamental principles that Regions should comply with within their competences. Regions share their legislative competences with the State on all education issues except for vocational education and training on which they have exclusive legislative competence. Schools are autonomous as for didactic, organization and research and development activities.
Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) for children aged less than 3 years, offered by nursery schools, is organized at local level and it is not part of the education system. ECEC for children aged from 3 to 6 years is part of the education system and it is not compulsory.
Compulsory education lasts for 10 years (from 6 to 16 years of age). It covers 5 years of primary school, 3 years of lower secondary school and the first two years of upper secondary school. Compulsory education can be accomplished also by attending three and four-year courses offered within the regional vocational education and training system. The upper secondary level of education has a duration of 5 years (from 14 to 19 years of age) and it is offered in both general and vocational pathways.
Higher educations offered by both universities (polytechnics included) and the High level arts and music education system (AFAM); higher technical education and training offered by the Higher Technical Institutes (ITS); education offered by the other higher institutions.
In general, adult education includes all activities aiming at cultural enrichment, requalification and professional mobility. Within the broader term 'adult education', the domain "School education for adults" only refers to the educational activities aimed at the acquisition of a qualification and literacy and Italian language courses. A recent reform has re-organised the School Adult Education for adults sector by replacing the former Permanent territorial centres, the evening classes held in all upper secondary schools and the relevant prison divisions, with the new Provincial Centres for School Education for Adults (CPIA).

Source: https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Italy:Overview

Trends in education in Italy

Over the last 15 years, Italy has showed significant increases in the educational attainment of men and women. The share of 25-34 year-olds who have not attained upper secondary education decreased from 41% in 2000 to 28% in 2012. At the same

time, the share of university graduates among 25-34 year-olds steadily increased, from 11% to 22%.

Despite these positive trends in educational attainment, young Italians have on average lower levels of education than their peers in Europe. In 2012, the share of 25-34 year-olds in Italy without an upper secondary degree (28%) was far higher than the OECD average of 17% and the EU21 average of 16%. Moreover, tertiary attainment rate among 25-34 year-olds in 2012 was the fourth lowest among OECD and G20 countries (Italy ranks 34 out of 37 countries in tertiary attainment rates; see: OECD 2014a) and it was significantly far from the target set by the Europe 2020 Strategy (by 2020, at least 40% of 30-34 year olds should have a tertiary or equivalent qualification, EC 2014b).

Significant progress can still be made in preventing high school and tertiary education drop-out. Between 2010 and 2012, the share of 15-19 year-olds who are no longer in education grew slightly and in 2012 only 86% of 17-year-olds were still in education, one of the smallest proportions among OECD countries. At the same time, the university entry rates fell significantly during recent years (OECD 2014a).

Overall, women appear to perform better than men at all levels of education. Young women are usually more likely than young men to complete their upper-secondary education on time and perform better at school leaving examinations at the end of compulsory education and upper secondary school (Eurydice 2009). On average, 75% of young women complete their upper secondary education within the stipulated time, compared to 59% of young men (OECD 2014b: 61).

In Italy (as in EU28), female graduates outnumber male graduates by a ratio of approximately three to two (OECD 2014a). In 2011, 60.5% of new tertiary graduates were women, up from 56% in 2000 (see **Table I.4**). Tertiary education attainment of women in Italy has increased to 15.6%, which is still significantly below the EU27 average of 25.8% (EC 2014b).

The proportion of men and women usually varies considerably between different areas of study in tertiary education. This pattern is fairly consistent throughout Europe (Eurydice 2010: 97) and the promotion of gender atypical fields of study still remains a main challenge. In Italy gender differences across fields of study often are smaller than those observed in other European countries. In tertiary education (ISCED 5a), the share of women is particularly high in “Education” (90% in 2011/12), “Humanities & arts” (72%) and “Health & welfare” (65.7%) (see **Table I.5**). In the area of “Social science,

business and law", which have by far the highest number of students, women are in a slight majority (57%), while the area of "Services" is slightly male dominated (approximately 46% of student are women). Finally, the area of "Science" and "Agriculture" showed in 2011 an equal distribution of women and men. The only area markedly male-dominated is "Engineering, manufacturing and construction" where less than one out of three students were women in 2011/12. However, while on average across OECD countries only 28% of all new engineering graduates were women, in Italy they reached the 40% in 2012 (see Additional data Italy, tab. A.1.1).

The balance between male and female slightly improves when we focus on people enrolled in advanced research programs (PhD students, ISCED 6). On average in 2012 there was an equal distribution between men and women among PhD students in most fields of study. Women were still the vast majority in "Education" (73.5%), "Health & welfare" (64.7%) and "Humanities & arts" (58.6%) even if the under-representation of men in these fields was less pronounced compared with the composition of graduate students (see **Table I.5**). Also for ISCED 6, the only area where women continued to be strongly under-represented is "Engineering manufacturing and construction". In this case, 65% of PhD students were men in 2011/12. However, there is a significant variation by type of specialization. Men outnumber women in "Information technology" (80%) and "Industrial engineering" (70%), while the share between men and women is equally distributed in the case of "Civil engineering and architecture" (see Additional data Italy, Tab. A.1.2).

From education to employment

According to the 2012 data, collected for the EU employability benchmark, Italy is one of the countries (with Spain and Portugal) where recent higher education graduates face the greatest difficulties in finding work: the employment rate among recent higher education graduates is below 70% (EC 2014b). Moreover, the average real net monthly salary one year after graduation has significantly reduced during the recession: from 1,290 euro in 2007 to 1,038 in 2012 (-19.5%) (Almalaurea 2014: 167). Apart from the difficult labour market situation, these figures also suggest that there is a lack of correspondence between the courses students follow and the knowledge and skills required by the labour market. The courses students choose, as well as the quality and relevance of the programmes provided are contributing factors (EC 2014b). In general,

the field of study which guarantees the higher chances of be employed after graduation is "Health and welfare" (90%) (ISTAT 2012; Almalaurea 2014). "Engineering" is the second (70%); it is also the degree that gives access to better jobs in terms of contract, employment protection rights and long-term perspectives (ISTAT 2012a). On contrary, the situation for those with a degree in "Humanities & arts" and in "Science" (biology, chemistry, geology) is less satisfying in terms of employability with unemployment levels that exceed 40% one year after graduation (ISTAT 2012a). On average, men graduates still perform better than women in the labour market. After 5 years from graduation, 79% of men have a permanent position compared to the 67% of women and average wages are 22% higher for men (Almalaurea 2014: 159-169).

The difficulties that young tertiary educated Italians face in finding adequate work are part of the larger problem of school-to-work transitions. Italy struggles with high rates of inactivity among its young people: in 2013, 26% of 15-29 year-olds were neither in education nor employed (NEET). This share is one of the highest among OECD countries, well above the OECD average of 16%. While the proportion of NEETs in Italy decreased between 1998 (26%) and 2003 (19%), it has increased rapidly since the global recession hit in 2008. In 2013 it was 6 percentage points higher than before the recession (OECD 2014a; ISTAT/Cnel 2014).

Funding for the educational system and its gender effects

Italy is the only country where real public expenditure on educational institutions fell between 2000 and 2011, and the country with the sharpest decline (-5%) in the volume of public investment (OECD 2014a: 5). Over the same period, the share of the total funding for schools and universities that comes from private sources almost doubled and the relative weight of public funding on the total funding for educational institutions felt from the 94% of 2000 to the 89% in 2011 (OECD 2014a).

Overall the public and private expenditure per student sharply declined between 2008 and 2011 (-12%) (OECD 2014a). In part, this corresponds to a rebalancing of educational expenditures from primary and secondary schools to universities: the expenditure per tertiary student rose by 17% between 2005 and 2011. The main savings reducing expenditure per student in primary and secondary schools came from an increase of the number of students per teacher, which reduced the salary cost per student. Statutory salaries for school teachers (with 15 years of experience) were

reduced by as much as 4.5% between 2005 and 2012 across all levels of education, even if pay increases based on seniority partially compensated for the salary cut for individual teachers (OECD 2014a). However, the teacher's salaries in Italy remain definitely lower than OECD average.

One of the consequences of the increase in the students/teacher ratio, has been the considerably rise of the mean age of the teaching staff, due to the lack of job opportunities for newly qualified young teachers. In 2012, 62% of all secondary teachers were older than 50, up from 48% in 2002. This is the highest proportion of teachers of that age among all OECD countries.

Women account for the large majority of teachers in primary and secondary education. On average Italy shows a higher level of feminisation of this profession compared with the OECD and the G20 averages (OECD 2014b) (see Additional data Italy, tab. A.1.3). The proportion varies according to the level of education: while women are the majority among primary teachers (ISCED 1) with proportions varying between 99% in pre-primary education to 96% in primary education, for upper secondary education the share of women among teachers is about 66%. When we focus on tertiary education the proportion of women among teachers drastically falls to 36%, below the OECD average (42%) (OECD 2014b; Bettio, Verashchagina 2009) (see Additional data Italy, tab. A.1.3)

1.2 Domain 2. Employment and labour market policies and practices

The Italian labour market is characterized by long-standing imbalances, which include low female participation rates, high youth unemployment rates, and a high degree of labour market segmentation. In Italy, the process of labour market flexibilisation over the last 20 years has been characterized by partial and targeted forms of deregulation that introduced new employment contracts aimed at facilitating employment of young people. These initiatives were planned to respond to widespread unemployment and informal work episodes but also to reduce the extent of labour market segmentation (given the high degree of protection granted to core workers, employed in medium-large firms in the centre-north of the country). This duality between workers fully included in the labour market (being employed with an open ended contract, enjoying a high degree of employment protection) and "marginal workers" who (in atypical and precarious form of employment, with limited or no employment protection) does actually

constitute a major hindrance that young people and women must face when they approach labour market[2].

The various labour market reforms have resulted in significant increase in the share of precarious jobs (fixed-term contracts, temporary jobs, collaborators and other atypical contracts) (OECD 2013b). Non-standard (i.e. flexible) jobs are often accompanied by poorer working conditions, low wages, income instability, and long-term income penalties. Moreover, there is a high risk of being trapped into precarious, low protected and low-wages work positions, especially among low educated, youth and women (Cutuli 2008; Barbieri, Scherer 2009).

The last comprehensive labour market reform, approved in June 2012[3], has not modified the overall approach, though some attempts have been made to increase the economic costs (for employers) of atypical contracts. But firms still tend to hire young, inexperienced workers only if they can employ them with a temporary contract (OECD 2014b). More precisely, about 70% of new hires are on temporary contracts, one of the highest rates among OECD countries (OECD 2014c). Atypical work continues to be widespread among young people and women. Among people aged between 15 and 34 years, one employed person out of four has a temporary or a collaboration contract, with the percentage rising up to 31.7% among university graduates. Nevertheless, atypical work is not limited to very young people, as one third of these workers are aged between 35 and 49 years (ISTAT 2014, see also **Table II.16**).

Part-time work is the only type of contract that has increased between 2008 and 2013 and in a totally involuntary way (see Additional data Italy, Tab. A.2.1). It has increased from 22.1 to 25.8% among women and from 3.7 to 5.7% among men (ISTAT 2014: 89). Companies have been using part-time work as a strategy to deal with the recession (ISTAT 2013; ISTAT 2014). In nine cases out of ten the growth of part-time work occurred in the female-dominated services sector – especially retail trade, hotels and

[2] All these changes must be understood in the broader context of Southern European family-centered welfare system, typically characteristic of Italy. Lack of social policies explicitly targeted towards youth, low unemployment benefits and the weakness of family provisions are additional factors, which contributed to increase levels of uncertainty during the initial phases of adult life (see Domain 3 and 4).

[3] This reform aimed at reducing the labour market segregation tries to rebalance the use of different atypical and precarious contractual arrangements by: *i)* extending the cooling-off period between two fixed-term contracts; *ii)* reducing the fiscal incentive for some types of non-permanent contracts; and *iii)* introducing tests to re-classify independent contractors as employees. Moreover, the reform foresees the extension of the pool of workers eligible to standard unemployment benefit (OECD 2013b).

restaurants, services for businesses, health and assistance – and concerned unskilled jobs and executive professions (ISTAT, 2014) (See **Table II.11** and **Table II.15**)[4].

Trends in employment

Between 2008 and 2013, employment in Italy has decreased by 984 thousand units, men in the vast majority of cases (-973 thousand) whose employment rate has fallen from 70.3% in 2008 to 64.8% in 2013 (-5.5 percentage points). The employment crisis in Italy is particularly pronounced for men in the early or in the central phases of the adult life cycle. More precisely the employment rate has fallen from 29.1 in 2008 to 18.8 in 2013 (-11.3 percentage points) for men aged 15-24[5] and from 87.3% in 2008 to 78.5% in 2013 for men aged 25-49 (-9.8 percentage points) (see **Table II.2**). The loss of employment seems to be particularly pronounced for men aged 25-49 with low levels of education, whose employment rate has fallen from 83.7% in 2008 to 72.5% (see **Table II.2**). The more intense employment adjustment for men is consistent with the fact that the crisis affected, especially at the beginning, male-dominated sectors. GDP contracted most strongly in construction, manufacturing and agriculture, all sectors in which men account for a much larger share of the workforce than women (ESDE 2013; ISTAT 2014).

Since 2008 the employment rate of women has held quite steadily even if the economic participation rate of women is still considerably lower than men and one of the lowest in Europe (12.2 points lower than EU28 average). The employment rate has moved only from 47.2% in 2008 to 46.5% in 2013 for women aged 15-64, and from 61.1% to 57.9% for women aged 25-49 (see **Table II.2**). The stability of women's employment is the result of a set of factors: i) the contribution of foreign-born employed women, who have increased by 359 thousand units between 2008 and 2013, whereas Italian women have decreased by 370 thousand units; ii) the increase in women who enter the labour market in the South to compensate their partners' unemployment; iii) the increase in women aged 50 years and over, due to the rise in retirement age (ISTAT 201: 8).

[4] In 2013, 31.3% of all female employees (34% of women aged 25-49), and only 7.4% of the male employees worked part-time. These figures emphasize also the considerable gender gap in terms of part-time employment between men and women in Italy, which is to a large extent induced by the family commitments of women and not necessarily by choice (EC 2013: 15).

[5] Eurostat employment statistics available at:
http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Employment_statistics

Trends in unemployment

Italian labour market continues to be characterized by low security because of a high risk of unemployment combined with a welfare system that has a low coverage of unemployed people and does not provide generous income supports to those who are entitled (OECD 2014c). Between 2008 and 2013 the number of unemployed people has doubled and the unemployment rate has reached 12.2% (+5.4 percentage points since 2008) (ISTAT, 2014). This increase has hit Southern Italy in particular (+7.7 percentage points since 2008), where the unemployment rate has reached 19.7%, among the highest in Europe. The rate of long-term unemployment has risen very sharply for youth and, to a much lesser extent, for the low skilled and prime-age men, while it has remained stable for women and skilled workers.

Gender gap

Because of the worsening of employment conditions, which is felt most by men, the gender gap continues to close. The gender gap for non-participation has gone from 11 points in 2008 to less than 8 points in 2013, but still far surpassing the European average (ISTAT/CNEL 2014). In 2014 Italy continued to be among the worst performers in the Global Gender Gap Index (ranking 69th out of 142 overall), penalized above all by the economic participation and opportunity category (114th) (WEF 2014). Italy lags behind in women's access to the labour market, remuneration, career advancement, promotion to positions of leadership and new business initiatives. The gender gap is larger in the South, by almost 9 percentage points with respect to the Centre and North; it is greatest in the 35-54 years age group and is inversely proportional to educational attainment (Banca d'Italia 2012: 87).

Gender pay gap

In Italy, the average female employee earns 5.8% less than the average male employee (see **Table II.13**), which is a considerably smaller gender pay gap than the overall EU27 average (16.2%) (Eurostat 2014). However, there is the possibility that the rather low labour market participation of women to some extent distorts the picture of the gender pay gap, as data on highly educated and thus, highly paid women can skew the statistic towards a more positive picture than is overall the case (EC 2013: 21). More accurate analyses have showed that the distance between women and men significantly increase along the wage distribution. The growth is quite steadily among low and medium wages

but there is a substantial acceleration among the highest wages. This result suggests the presence of a "glass ceiling" (ISTAT 2013: 118).

Further analyses of the gender pay gap by level of education highlight that the distance between women and men wages increases with the level of education and it is particularly high among graduates. ISTAT (2013) estimated that on average the disadvantage of graduate women with respect to men with the same level of education is -10.8% (higher than the gap between women and men with a secondary degree that is -9.9). This suggests that the investment in education does not have an equalizing effect on men and women wages able to nullify the gender pay gap. This result is partially explained by three factors: i) the higher presence of women in the lowest paid sectors; ii) the high proportion of Italian graduate women employed in under-qualified work positions and part-time (ISTAT 2013) and iii) the low presence of women at the top of the work hierarchy also in female-dominated sectors.

Horizontal segregation

In Italy horizontal segregation is similarly pronounced for occupations and sectors as in the EU27. Women occupation should be promoted in male-traditional fields, in order to make full use of the female labour force potential. Two of the five most common industries for female employees, namely "Wholesale & retail" and "Manufacturing" are also among the top five male industries (26.6% of Italian women and 36.9% of men work in either of these two sectors). The remaining three industries show a clear horizontal segregation, exemplified by "Health care & social work", "Education" and "Accommodation & food service activities", which are typically female-dominated sectors throughout the EU (EC 2013: 7). Also the distribution of women and men across the type of occupations is characterized by a gender bias. Women are primarily engaged in the fields of "Service workers and shop and market sales workers", "Clerks", or "Professionals" (see Additional data Italy, Tab. A.2.2). These constitute the group of the female-dominated occupations (see **Table II.6** and **Table II.7**). Men on the other hand rather pursue careers in technical fields, as "Craft and related trade workers" and "Technicians and associate professionals" (see Additional data Italy, Tab. A.2.1).

Vertical segregation

In terms of vertical segregation, the data show a positive trend for Italian women, even if their chances of reaching top positions are constantly lower than that for man (see

Table II.17). The female share in corporate boards has increased considerably to 11.0% in 2012 (from 2% in 2003) even if still remains clearly below the EU27 average of 16.0%. Moreover, the share of women in different management positions in large companies and SMEs reached 35.0% in 2010 (from 22.0% in 2003) and now lies above the EU27 average of 33.0%. Thus, the challenge remains to establish gender equality in Italy's business environment and its economic decision-making positions not only in corporate management positions, but also in board positions (EC 2013: 12).

Work and family roles

The low female labour market participation goes together with traditional family roles. Women often do not participate in the labour market as their role in the family limits their possibilities to pursue a career. In 2011 the employment rate of married women aged 25-49 was only 54.6%, while it reached the 65.9% for single women and exceed the 74% among divorced women (see **Table II.3**). Furthermore, the employment rate is lower for women with children, by an average of about 6 percentage points for those aged 15-64 (see **Table II.4**). The impact of children is negative when they are small; it persists in terms of employment type (qualification, working hours and contract) and career continuity (Banca d'Italia 2012) (See also Domain 4).

1.3 Domain 3. Family-formation practices and policies

Family models

Italy has gone through an important revolution in the types of family models due to a number of factors: ageing, increasing schooling and educational attainment, increasing female participation in the labour market, very low fertility rates and postponement of childbirth, decreasing marriage rate partly compensated by increasing cohabitation among young couples, finally a higher risk of family dissolution. These trends have resulted in new types of families: made up of singles, unmarried couples, couples without children, and single-parent families.

Over the last three decades there has been a dramatic reduction in the number of average members per family in Italy. The average size in 2011 is 2.6 for all households, 3.8 for couples with children and 2.5 for single parents households (OECD 2014, SF1.1). Couple families (with or without children) are the most frequent type of household (62.3%). Single-person households constitute 24.9% of all, a share relatively low

compared to other countries (OECD, 2014 SF1.1). The lower proportion of single-person households in Italy is the result of the fact that young adults leave late the parental home and that elderly live with their children. Single-parent families constitute a significant minority of households (8.9%) in Italy, close to the OECD average (see Additional data Italy, tab. A.3.1) but higher than in the Netherlands and Switzerland (OECD, 2014 SF1.1). As in other countries, women head 82.5% of single-parent families. The average Italian family today is made up of one or two children (see Additional data Italy, tab. A.3.2). The reduction in the number of new births has led to an increase in the number of couples with only one child and a significant reduction of large families (3 or more children), while the number of couples without children has not increased significantly (in comparison with other countries).

Leaving home and economic independence

In Italy, the number of children per family has decreased over time, but children stay at home much longer compared to the past. As it is well known, there are pronounced cross-country differences when it comes to leaving the parental home in Europe. This is a feature that should be highlighted in a comparative perspective: in Italy it is common to find adult children who live with their parents. At European level, the data (EU-SILC 2011) indicate that young people leave the parental home earliest in the Nordic countries, and latest in southern and eastern European countries. The median age at which young men leave home is 29.6 in Italy (26.8 for women), compared with 20 in Denmark (19.6 for women) (see Additional data Italy, tab. A.3.3).

Transition to adulthood

Leaving the parental home can be seen as one of the first active transitions to adulthood. It marks the event of starting to run one's own household and make one's own financial decisions. The age at which 50% of young people leave home in Italy is among the highest in Europe (as in most Mediterranean countries, but also Slovenia). After leaving home, they live alone for some time before moving in with a partner, and there is another long wait before they become parents (see Additional data Italy, tab. A.3.3). For these reasons, the age at which 50% of young people in Italy become parents is also the highest in Europe (EU27): 37.2 for men and 31.8 for women.

There has been a general trend of postponement and increased complexity of transitions to adulthood. This is explained by cultural, institutional and economic factors, such as

the protecting role of the family, the set-up of the education system and labour market segmentation (Facchini, Villa 2005). Before the crisis, among the factors associated with very slow and late transitions one has to recall: i) the lack of economic support and housing policies for young people or university students[6] and ii) the difficult and problematic school-to-work transition. In times of economic crisis, uncertainty increases among young people, which can lead to the further postponement of achieving their goals of adulthood. This implies that the economic crisis not only excludes young people economically from the labour market, but also hampers them in becoming independent citizens. This should be a source of real concern in Italy, where young people's transitions are already delayed and the age at which they become parents is considerably postponed in comparison with the rest of Europe.

The most common reasons for late transition to adulthood are the long time needed on average for completing tertiary education, the costs linked to attending university (i.e. lack of economic independence), the long and problematic school-to-work transition, finally the lack of a steady job (with a sufficient income to live independently, some prospects for economic stability in the near future and a minimum protection). All this has caused a delay in the age at first childbirth.

Fertility

Italy's low female labour market participation goes together with a low fertility rate (1.42 in 2012, with the EU28 average at 1.58) (see **Table III.1**). The total fertility rate (TFR) reached a minimum in Italy around 1995 (down to 1.19), since then a modest increase was recorded (up to 1.42). However, it should be pointed out that about half of this small increase is due to the entry of foreign women (recording a higher TFR) in the country since the mid-1990s. In 2012, the TFR is 1.29 for Italian citizens and 2.37 for foreigners (ISTAT 2013: 1).

In 2011, the mean age of women at the birth of their first child is almost 30 (see **Table III.2**), one of the highest in OECD countries. The postponement of first births can be observed in the vast majority of countries since the 1970s. In Italy it increased significantly both from 1970 to the mid-1990s (by three years), and since the mid-1990s

[6] In Italy, those who attend university (BA and Master degrees) are not, on average, economically independent.

(by two years)[7]. These variations relate to changes in the timing of family formation that have occurred over the last decades.

The specificity of the Italian case is testified by the combination of very low female employment rate and very low fertility – especially in Southern Italy (ISTAT 2014). The difficulties women face in entering employment, especially standard employment with adequate protection in case of maternity, is due to a sort of discrimination against their potential motherhood. Employers (in the private sector) do not recruit young women on a permanent basis in order to avoid having to comply with maternity and parental leave, demands of flexible working time, etc. This raises a sort of trade-off between employment and motherhood: young women are somehow forced to choose between paid work and motherhood (Valentini 2012). As a matter of fact, in Italy many young women postpone motherhood, looking for a stable job with adequate protection (Barbieri, Bozzon 2013) and this translates into a fertility rate significantly lower than the desired number of children[8].

Policies

Family formation practices, including the division of labour within the household and the decision to participate in the labour market, are interlinked with four broad policy areas: maternity and parental leave, the availability of services (See Domain 4), labour market regulations and income taxation.

Leave schemes provide parents the opportunity to spend time off work around childbirth (and later) and thereby facilitate work-life balance; moreover, they could also encourage fathers to share with mothers' child-care responsibilities. The provision of sufficient paid leave has a positive effect on the employment of mothers as it encourages them to remain active after having children.

In terms of maternity leave entitlements, the Italian system is well designed for dependent employment: the leave duration is neither too short, neither too long(see **Table III.3**); and it is also relatively generous: 100% in the public sector and 80% in the private sector for five months (see **Table III.4**). Much less generous benefits are foreseen for parental leaves (Murgia and Poggio 2009, 2013), which are paid the 30% of

[7] OECD (2014), Chart SF2.3.B: "The postponement of the first birth in 2011, since 1970".
[8] OECD (2014), SF2.2 "Ideal and actual number of children".

the parent's salary[9] and are unpaid if the child is aged 3-8 years old. Parents may be absent from work, even simultaneously, for a period of six months each (continuously or piecemeal) up to a maximum of ten months. But if the father takes leave of absence for a continuous period amounting to more than 3 months, the 6-month limit is extended to 7, and the total amount of leave entitlement for the two parents becomes 11 months (see **Table III.4**). A balanced use of leave entitlements by both parents has been shown to have positive effects in terms of distribution of household and care responsibilities and of female labour market outcomes (EC 2014: 16). But this is not the case in Italy: administrative data (INPS) show that on average 88% of the time of parental leaves is taken up by women, and that each mother takes up 18 weeks of parental leave in the first three years of the child (Mundo 2012, in EP 2014: 27). In order to increase the involvement of fathers, the Fornero Reform (L. 92/2012) introduced a pilot compulsory paternity leave of one day at full salary, plus two optional extra days subtracted from the mother's mandatory leave. Despite this a symbolic step into the direction of a greater involvement of men, fathers' take-up of parental leave remains quite low, given the high gender gap in earnings and the traditional cultural norms still prevailing in Italian society (Mundo 2012; Gramiglia 2014).

Moving to labour market regulation, in Italy several minor and major labour market reforms have been implemented over the last two decades, with the explicit goal of increasing labour market flexibility. The outcome has been a progressive enlargement of atypical contractual arrangements (including agency work, fixed-term contracts, temporary work, dependent self-employed workers) with very little or no protection. This has resulted in pronounced labour market segmentation, with the weakest segments of the labour force (young, women, migrants) having difficulties in entering standard employment (open-ended employment relationships). Given the difficulties faced by young women in the Italian labour market, they are more likely than men to hold precarious jobs. The over-representation of young women amongst atypical workers, especially on contractual arrangements with limited or no protection, implies that many young women cannot rely on any income in case of maternity.

The tax system also plays a role in the division of labour within the household, discouraging the supply of labour, especially for women. In Italy the unit of labour

[9] In the Public Administration the first month of parental leave is paid the 100 % of the salary.

income taxation is the individual. Nevertheless, the benefit system is not, at least not entirely. In particular, child-related allowances and benefits are assessed against family income. In addition, the tax system grants a 'non-working spouse allowance', which is lost if the spouse (by and large the woman) takes up employment. The deductions and other transfers, calculated on the basis of household income, raise the effective marginal income tax rate of second earners (typically female spouses) and discourage them from participating in the labour market. The distortion is greater for women with limited earnings prospects and a husband with a low-income job. In short, as recently pointed out by the Bank of Italy (2014: 73), the tax-benefit system penalizes dual-earner couples and tends to discourage female participation. In 2013, Italy was addressed for the first time a country-specific recommendation to tackle financial disincentives to work (EC 2014: 17).

1.4 Domain 4. Care & work-life policies and practices

The family – in particular, the work of women inside the family – has traditionally been the main provider of social protection and care services for the Italians, according to what has been defined the "Mediterranean model of welfare state" (Bettio and Villa 1998; Trifiletti 1999). This has hindered the participation of women in the labour market in principle and the development of private and public services for the care of children, disabled and elderly people.

Time spent by men and women in domestic activities

The distribution of care and domestic work is particularly uneven, providing further evidence on the role played by cultural factors. While in many other advanced economies, men and women work approximately the same total number of hours – with men working more in the labour market and women more in the home – in Italy women work overall much more, given the more unequal distribution of unpaid work between partners (see **Table IV.3**). Within families, even in couples where both partners work, domestic and childcare responsibilities weigh disproportionately on women (OECD 2012b). And there are no significant changes over time. According to "time use" survey, in 2008-09 women did 76 per cent of work in the home, just 2 percentage points less than in 2002-03, and 9 points less than in 1989 (ISTAT 2011a: 155-161). According to OECD, after Turkey and Mexico, Italy has the third lowest female employment rate

(47%), but one of the highest gender gap in terms of unpaid work (see Additional data Italy, fig. A.4.1). Women are often regarded as the main "family carer": Italian women do on average 3.7 hours a day of household work more than men, holding back growth in female employment growth.

Childcare services

In 2011 around 27 per cent of small children (under 3 years) benefited from day-care, nursery schools and other education services, 3 percentage points more than in 2007 but still below the European target of 33 per cent (see **Table III.5**). Despite the financing of the Special Plan for the Development of Early Childhood Social and Education Services (Law 296/2006), national data show that only half of the children in nursery school were enrolled in public nursery schools or schools operated under a convention. In the Bank of Italy survey on Italian households, the main reasons cited for recourse to private facilities at this level, unlike at the subsequent levels of schooling[10], were the insufficient number of places available and the short school day (Bank of Italy 2014: 94-95).

The lack of childcare services continues to hinder women's labour market participation in the early years of children's lives. Progress in the provision of childcare for small children has been negligible in 2005-2011 (only one percentage point, EC 2014: fig. 12, p. 13). It is not surprising that Italy has been addressed, repeatedly over the last decade, a country-specific recommendation (by the EU Commission) to improve the availability and affordability of childcare facilities. In 2013, Italy was also asked to improve the provision of elderly care services (EC 2014: 17).

Working-time arrangements of couples (aged 25-49)

The study of employment patterns among couple families (aged 25-49) (Table A.4.1) shows that, in Italy, the male breadwinner model remains the most common employment pattern among couples (34.2%), especially those with children (around 37%). The second most common employment pattern is "both partners working full-time". This arrangement covers almost 33% of all couples, but ranging from 50% of couples without children to 27.7% of couples with children. The third most common employment pattern is the "one-and-a-half earner couple families" (18.1%): men are still the main earner in families where women work part-time. This arrangement is

[10] In Italy 95% of kindergarten-age children (3 years old to mandatory school age) are in formal care facilities (EC 2014: fig. 9, p. 12).

more common among couples with children (almost 20%). Finally, where either both partners are not in employment or the men is not working cover about 11% of all couples, but with a higher share among couples with children (See Additional data Italy, tab. A.4.1).

Empirical analyses show that paid work reduces the amount of time mothers spend with their children only marginally. Working mothers compress their free time and that spent on domestic tasks; by the same token, when mothers work, the time fathers spend with their children tends to increase. Work for mothers, therefore, appears to favour a more equitable distribution of childcare.

Occupational segregation, pay gaps and glass ceilings are less prominent issues in Italy than in many other European countries because, much more so than in other countries, women with lower earnings (especially those with low education) are more likely to leave the labour market after childbirth (OECD 2012; ISTAT 2011c).

Lack of flexible working arrangements

Flexible working arrangements enable employees to vary their working hours and adapt them to their personal and family needs, improving the quality of work, which makes a better work-life balance possible. According to recent data, in Italy women reported about the same access to family related work schedule flexibility than men (EC 2014: 15-16). However, the share of workers who can vary the start and/or end times of their working day is much lower in Italy (around 44%) than female workers in the Netherlands (83%), Austria (67%), Island (65%), Slovenia (61%) and Belgium (58%). A similar picture emerge in terms of the percentage of employed people generally able to take whole days off for family reasons. In short, in Italy women with family responsibilities face serious reconciliation problems due to the lack of flexible working arrangements (especially in the private sector) and the traditional gender roles (perpetrating the unequal distribution of unpaid work within the household).

The "Law on reconciliation of work and family life" (now included in L. 198/2006) is supposed to support local projects encouraging flexible working arrangements (in terms of hours, teleworking, job-sharing, hours savings, the possibility for the female self-employed to be substituted by a co-worker). However, lack of incentives for employers and lack of funds have not allowed the generalization of some successful best practices at local level (EP 2014: 28).

Reconciliation problems and inactivity

Although the non-symmetrical nature of work within families is gradually reducing, the difficulties of balancing work and life can be seen with greater intensity when there are small children involved, as shown by the gap between the employment rates of men and women without children and with small children (see Additional data Italy, tab. A.4.2). As it is well known, while the employment rate increases for men when there are small children, it decreases for women. As a result, the gap by sex in the employment rate is much higher when there are small children; and this implies that a significant number of women leave the labour market when they become mothers. However, it should be recalled that there are large differences between the South (recording very low employment rates for mothers) and the Centre-North (recording rates close to the EU27 average). The data for Trentino, the province where the University of Trento is placed, confirm that the difficulties for working mothers are similar to those recorded on average in the European Union (see Additional data Italy, tab. A.4.3).

A national survey has shown that 46% of women who are inactive left work because of reconciliation problems (ISFOL 2010: 53). Administrative data (INPS) show that 25% of women who gave birth in 2009 were not back to work three years later (Mundo 2012, in EP 2014: 26). Inactivity due to reconciliation problems is certainly very high in Italy, though with differences across the country. While in the Mezzogiorno a large number of women in their prime age abandon active life when they become mothers (and some when they get married), in the Centre-North they move to part-time jobs.

The availability of means of reconciling work and family commitments influences the decision on how much to work and where. Owing to the uneven distribution of roles between the sexes, shortcomings in the supply of care services (especially for the very young and the dependent elderly) have a greater impact on female participation choices. In particular, the availability of crèches is positively correlated with women's working hours outside the home.

The recent introduction of vouchers (by Law 92/2012), granted (only) to working mothers as an alternative to parental leave, may improve women's employment outcomes and give parents more options in providers. However its overall effect is unclear due to the cuts in public funding for early childhood education at a time when the extension of retirement age is expected to reduce informal childcare provided by grandparents. Clearly the willingness of Italian men to engage in more unpaid

housework will co-determine to what extent Italian women will be able to increase their participation in employment.

Commute time

Another decisive factor in the supply of labour is commute time, which is a work related fixed cost. These costs can cause people to opt out of the labour market entirely, accept only very well paid offers, or circumscribe their job search, inducing them to accept less favourable offers. The more pressing the requirements of family care, the greater the burden of home-to-work travel, as happens when there are small children and for women especially, who shoulder most of the housework (Bank of Italy 2011). According to ISTAT's "time use" survey, in 2008-09 working males on average spent 58 minutes commuting to and from work every day, as against 52 minutes for working women and 47 minutes for working women with children. Analyses based on the two surveys conducted in 2002-03 and 2008-09 show that higher average regional commute times are associated with a significant reduction in labour market participation by both men and women, and are a stronger deterrent to women, especially mothers. The time it takes to reach the workplace can also influence the choice of how many hours to work. The Bank of Italy (2011: 91) has estimated that the impact of commute times on hours worked is negative for women and nil for men.

Policies

Policy-makers have tried to address this situation in recent years focussing on the provision of childcare services introducing a symbolic paternity leave (one day only), and by timidly encouraging some flexible work arrangements. All measures have always been underfunded and seriously hit by budget cuts in recent years, driven by austerity policy (EP 2014: 26).

In Italy, the regions (and the two autonomous provinces, Trento and Bolzano) were given the power to introduce legislation to remove all obstacles to genuine equality between the sexes. Policies for salaried employment, female entrepreneurship and reconciling work and family life vary greatly from region to region. While it is difficult to isolate policy effects, an indicator of the regional situation was recently constructed by the Bank of Italy with the aim to highlight the geographical differences underlying Italy's backwardness at European and international level (Amici, Stefani 2013). This indicator, which adapts the Gender Equality Index developed by Plantenga et al. (2009) for EU

countries, considers four dimensions: a) work (counting both employment and unemployment), b) income, c) representation in leadership positions (separately for local politics and corporate management) and d) the use of time within the home. The indicator can be interpreted as a gauge of the progress made towards gender equality. This gender gap indicator is constructed for the Italian regions, including the Autonomous Province of Trento. A limited number of regions, led by Piedmont and Emilia Romagna, are approximately halfway down the path, while a larger group is positioned around the Italian average, i.e. one-third down the path. By contrast, all the southern regions (except Sardinia) lag far behind.

The 2010 indicator (see Additional data Italy, tab. A.4.4) shows that all Italian regions are far from assuring equality: if the Italian average is compared to that estimated for the other European countries, Italy ranks 21st out of 25. Moreover, it varies considerably across regions: Piedmont and Emilia Romagna are closest to the European average, Calabria furthest behind while the Autonomous Province of Trento is only slightly better than the Italian average.

1.5 Domain 5. Equal opportunity policies and practices

Equal opportunity policies and practices: Historical overview

Gender equality legislation

Italy has put in place different measures having constitutional, legislative, and administrative nature on the elimination of gender discrimination and the respect for the principle of gender equality in the economic, social, cultural, and political life of the country (see Additional data Italy, tab. A.5.1, for a synthesis). This paragraph provides a brief overview of the most significant equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation adopted in Italy.

The general principle of equality between women and men is enshrined in Article 3 of the Italian Constitution providing that “All citizens have equal social dignity and are equal before the law, without distinction of sex, race, language, religion, political opinion, personal and social conditions”. In addition, Article 37 states that: “Working women are entitled to equal rights and, for comparable jobs, equal pay as men. Working conditions must allow women to fulfil their essential role in the family and ensure appropriate protection for the mother and child”; and Article 51, which was amended in

2001, through its new wording envisages that "Any citizen of either sex is eligible for public offices and elected positions on equal terms, according to the conditions established by law. To this end, the Republic shall adopt specific measures to promote equal opportunities between women and men".

The gender equality principles set in the Italian Constitution inspired several national laws enacted over time. However, it is widely acknowledged that achieving substantive equality between men and women is still far. At the root of gender inequalities still shaping Italian society are traditional norms and values. In particular, a number of factors explain the difficulties in reforming the Mediterranean welfare regime to meet the new demands of a society that began changing in the 1970s. These include: a highly male dominated decision-making arena (see Additional data Italy, fig. A.5.1 and A.5.2) and a gender-blind culture little inclined (and indeed unwilling) to promote women's rights. The idea of the woman as responsible for the family rather than occupied in a professional career is a hangover from a past, which is still present in the current political discourse, and in other arenas (economy, society, culture).

In this type of context, the development of a gender-equality policy was largely influenced by EU membership and the activities of the women movement (Quing 2007). As from the 1970s, implementation of European directives on gender equality profoundly changed the Italian legal framework centred on the 'woman-mother' and helped overcome cultural and social resistance; this change started with the adoption of L. 903/1977 on equal treatment on the workplace. In the 1970s due to the women's rights campaigns promoted by the women movement, there was the approval of the divorce law (1970) and the abortion law (1978), together with the reform of family law in 1975, which recognized the parity between partners within the family institution. To note, only with the approval of L. 66/1996, violence against women was considered a crime against the person.

In 2006 the National Code for Equal Opportunities between Women and Men (D. Lgs. 198/2006) was enacted, gathering into a single code all the laws in force on gender equality and women's empowerment with the view of regulating the promotion of equal opportunities between women and men in all areas of society. The Code has introduced the principle of gender mainstreaming: government authorities have to adopt a gender perspective in the drafting of laws, regulations and administrative acts, and in all policies and activities. Besides providing for general provisions, the Code focuses on the

organisation of facilities and bodies established for the promotion of equal opportunities.

In the most recent years, some new measures have been adopted to enhance women in leadership positions: gender balanced promotion in local government (L. 215/2012); mandatory quotas in the boards of companies listed in the Stock Exchange (L. 120/2011)[11]; finally, mandatory quotas in companies owned by the public administration (at least 20% for the first year, and 33% for the following years) were established by Presidential decree (D.P.R. 251/2012). But there are no mandatory gender quotas in the Italian parliament.

In 2009, a law introduced stalking as a type of punishable offence. In 2013, the Council of Europe convention on violence against women and domestic violence (so-called Istanbul Convention) became law by unanimous approval of the Parliament (L. 119/2013), but the network of anti-violence centres lacks of funds and resources (EP 2014: 5; Donà 2014).

Concerning funding, the L. 53/2000 on work-life balance measures is partially not implemented since 2011 due to lack of funding to cover the financial incentives for firms effecting more flexible working arrangements.

To conclude, despite the significant amount of legislation approved, Italy is far away from achieving full equality between men and women: according to the Global Gender Gap Report Italy ranks 69, out of 142 countries (World Economic Forum 2014).

5.1.2 Institutional structure for gender equality and equal rights

It's due to note that the influence of the EU resulted crucial in the set up of a women's policy machinery at national (and local) level, which became an arena through which women were able to convey their demands in policymaking. In Italy, the governmental machinery for equality is composed of several institutions (see Additional data tab. 5.1).

The Italian women's policy machinery was established during the 1980s, especially in the field of labour, and was consolidated during the 1990s, both at the national and local levels. An important initiative undertaken in 1997 by the then Prime Minister and the Minister for Equal Opportunities was the National Directive to promote actions aiming

[11] The 2011 law establishes that the gender quota in the boards of directors for the least represented gender should increase up to 33% by 2015. The percentage of women in boards increased from 7% in 2011 to 17% in 2012.

at the attribution of responsibilities and rights to women; its aim was to mainstream gender equality in all institutional activities and policies, as part of the 1995 UN Beijing Platform of Actions obligations ratified by Italy and the EU. So far, gender mainstreaming is far from been generally adopted and implemented at the national level (in central government activities), while local governments are more advanced in gender mainstreaming policies under EU structural funding requirements.

Table 5.1: Equal opportunities and anti-discrimination institutional structure (current situation)

Institution	Main functions
Prime Minister' Office Department for Equal Opportunities (since 1997), which includes the Office against Racial Discrimination (UNAR)	Activities in the EU and international arenas; monitoring the adoption of EU legislation; verification of the application of mainstreaming in government activities; law-making schemes, monitoring and assessment of the state of implementation of equal-opportunities policies. Gathering of complaints, and legal assistance; promotion of research activity for combating discrimination on different grounds of discrimination; networking with NGOs.
Ministry of Labour National Committee for Equal Treatment (since 1983; reinforced as from 1991) National Equal Opportunities Counsellor (from 1991)	Monitoring anti-discrimination legislation at the workplace. Approval and monitoring of affirmative-action programmes. Proactive work in the field of equal opportunities in the labour market. Inspection activities in cooperation with Labour Inspectors.

Since the outset of the financial and economic crisis, in the fall of 2008, four different Governments ruled the country. In these problematic six years, gender equality issues and gender mainstreaming were put on aside. According to the 2014 Shadow Report (AAVV 2014), the role of the Equal Opportunity Department progressively weakened in terms of political leadership and centrality. The last two female Ministers appointed were simultaneously responsible for other policy areas (respectively, Labour Affairs and Sport and Young People promotion), with a negative impact on the political visibility of equal opportunities and gender issues. The current government (2014-) decided not to nominate a specific Minister for Equal Opportunities, leaving the competence under responsibility of the Prime Minister Office. The lack of a political reference means that there is no commitment on the issue, lack of political activity and of connections with

civil society organizations. The result is that, despite having a gender balance government composition (about half of the ministers are women), up until now the current Government's agenda do not include women's issues and gender mainstreaming, despite the on-going debate on reforming the following fields: school system, labour market policies, Senate composition and electoral rules.

The lack of attention to gender equality at the national level is mirrored also at the local level. At regional level, the Councillors for equality are almost near to disappear. Established by law in 1984, the main function of the Councillors for equality is to put into practice the principle of equal treatment for women and men in the field of labour. They can report offences to the juridical authorities and institute legal actions. Their role was reinforced and actually implemented only in 2000 (D. Lgs. 196/2000), when a national fund to implement the activities of the Equality Councillors was established and a national Network of Equality Councillors was set up in order to exchange best practices and to coordinate local activities. During the recent years, the need to cut public expenditure meant that the founding for the Councillor activities has been dramatically reduced in such a way that according to Maione (2014) it's quite likely that this figure is going to disappear soon.

At the local level, Equal Opportunity Commissions (CPOs) were active in each institution of the public sector since 1988 (regional, provincial, municipal administrations, universities, local units of the national health system, etc.). Their performance is extremely diverse. Some confine themselves to dealing with minor problems of the staff while others are active in promoting gender equality in society at large (EP 2014: 12). The CPOs have recently been transformed (by L. 183/2010) into CUGs (Unified Committee for the rights of the employees), which combine the former CPOs with the committees for protection against mobbing (Tomio 2012).

Equal opportunity/promotion of women in science policies and practices

In Italy, the university system lacks policies and practices explicitly targeted to promote gender equality in academia and/or women in science. Nevertheless, the need to promote equal opportunities in the Italian university system and women in science has entered the debate, and some initiatives have been recently put in place. In this section we present: i) the most significant initiatives for gender equality in education and

women in science coordinated by the Department for Equal Opportunities; ii) an overview of the scope and diffusion of gender studies within tertiary education.

The most significant initiatives for gender equality in education and science

Italy has achieved full literacy for girls, so this is no longer a matter of concern. In primary education, schooling rates for girls and boys are now equivalent and, in most levels of secondary schools, girls actually do better than boys. Over the past decades, in fact, there has been a marked tendency of Italian women continuing their studies, especially at higher levels.

In recent decades the access to and participation of women in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) has been addressed by several initiatives. The number of women who take up a career in the scientific sector has remarkably increased in the past 25 years, although only a minimal share achieve leadership positions. There is also a positive evolution in the number of women students and graduates in STEM, but the gender gap is still present during the career evolution and is particularly striking at the top level.

In this scenario, the Department for Equal Opportunities has carried out several actions to improve the role of women in the scientific field and fight against the discrimination that women suffer in this strategic sector[12]. The projects financed by the EC 7FP for research, coordinated and co-funded by the Italian Government are four: i) PRA.G.E.S. "PRActising Gender Equality in Science" (2009); ii) WHIST "Women Careers Hitting the Target" (2009); iii) STAGES "Structural Changes to achieve gender equality in science" (2012); iv) and TRIGGER "TRansforming Institutions by Gendering contents and Gaining Equality in Research" (2013).

Following these projects the pro-tempore Minister for Equal Opportunities signed, in 30 September 2013, a Memorandum of Understanding (*Protocollo di intesa*) with the Ministry of Education, University and Scientific Research aimed at promoting equal opportunities in science, thus creating for the first time in Italy, a national strategy to increase the participation of women and girls in science and technology education, training, research and employment. It has provided the institution with a Consultation

[12] Response of the Italian Government to the UNECE Questionnaire on the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and the Platform of Action (1995) and the outcomes of the 23rd Special Session of the General Assembly.

Panel composed of experts coming from public administrations, Universities and the civil society, with a view to elaborate concrete measures to achieve gender equality in science, fighting the under-representation of women in the scientific fields, facilitating the advancement of female careers, and improving the presence of women in the labour market and, in particular, in decision making positions. At time of writing (December 2014) it appears too early to evaluate progress and effects of the initiative.

Before concluding, it should be recalled that if, on the one hand, the Department for Equal Opportunities was taking initiatives to improve the position of women in science, the Ministry of Education and University was implementing (since 2010) major reforms for both the university and the school system, based on impressive budgetary cuts (with an overall reduction equivalent to 32% of the 2008 budget). Suffice it to say that the negative impact on women - as students, teachers, researchers, professors - has been substantial (due to reduced full-time school, teaching staff downsizing, lack of resources for recruiting young researchers).

Teaching gender in Italian universities

In Italy, more than in other countries, gender studies are accused of 'poor science'. This position is also found within academic institutions. This explains the little diffusion of degrees, courses, classes explicitly including a gender perspective.

A recent research has done a mapping of the teaching courses explicitly considering a gender perspective in the Italian universities in the academic year 2011-12 (Antonelli, Sarra, Sorrentino 2013). The analysis considers: (i) the institutional framework (i.e. the boundaries set by the law for the organization of teaching), and (ii) the effective supply of gender sensitive courses in the Italian universities.

The institutional framework, defined at the national level, intervenes at two levels. First, the "scientific disciplinary fields" (which by law categorise the research fields in which knowledge is organised in the Italian academia) are identified. Out of 165 fields considered, gender studies do not appear as a specific disciplinary field; and only in 4 out of 165 fields gender is recognised as an "object of study" (medieval history, modern history, contemporary history, social statistics). Second, the "classes of degrees" (i.e. undergraduate programs and masters) are described in terms of educational goals,

teaching areas, etc. None of the classes of degrees considered (of the 78 examined)[13] is focused exclusively on gender issues; out of the 26 undergraduate programs and out of 52 master programs, only 6 and 11, respectively, include among their educational goals the need for a gender perspective in the study of social, cultural, political, economic phenomena or related to the body. To sum up, the legal framework for university teaching does acknowledge the area of gender studies, even if in a confused and incoherent way (i.e. limiting to list the need for a gender perspective in certain disciplinary areas).

The way in which these abstract possibilities are translated into gender sensitive teaching programs is rather disappointing. In the Italian universities there are no degree programs specifically focused on gender issues, while the total number of courses (of those surveyed) explicitly 'gender sensitive' (i.e. including some attention to the gender dimension) amounted to only 57 courses (an extremely small number compared with the total number of teaching courses active in 2011/2012). Not only the total number of courses on gender issues is very small, but these courses appear also highly concentrated in few teaching sectors: 60% is attributable to sociology, languages and foreign literature and history. The teaching of gender studies is extremely limited in law and economics, despite the statutory provisions.

To sum up, the teaching of gender studies in tertiary educational is still very limited, fragmented, disjointed and does not correspond either to the extension of research in this area or to the even contradictory and limited statutory provisions set by law for undergraduate and graduate programs. Thus, entire degree programs, crucial for the formation of the Italian ruling classes, do not provide courses that include a gender approach.

Evaluating the effects of equal opportunity/promotion of women in science policies

The need to promote equal opportunities in the Italian university system and women in science has entered the debate, and some interesting and innovative initiatives have been recently put in place. However, both the characteristics of these initiatives, as well as the nature of their goals (promoting greater attention to gender inequality in academia, combating gender stereotypes in education, etc.), and their relatively recent

[13] The researchers focused their analysis on those teaching areas more likely to include a gender perspective (sociology, law, economics, history, medicine, etc.).

launch do not allow to provide an evaluation of their effects. At the same time, the university system has gone through important institutional changes in the recent decades. And these changes do affect the position of women in the academia, as well as the debate on gender and career advancement. This section will focus on these issues. To start with, we present some background information about the Italian university system and the selection procedures for recruitment and promotions.

The Italian university system

In Italy there are 89 universities (28 private and 61 public) and 6 higher education institutions. The latter usually dispense only masters and PhD courses, being more research oriented than most of the other universities. Three out of the 61 public universities are polytechnics. 11 out of the 28 private universities are distance-learning institutions. Overall, the university system is employing over 110,000 people (57,300 teaching staff, 56,600 non-teaching staff), offering courses to 1.7 million students (undergraduate and post-graduate).

The Italian university system is regulated by national laws and by local statutes. Recruitment procedures, employment conditions and salaries fall under the control of nation-wide norms[14]. Each professor is characterised by a level of arrangement (full professor, associate professor and assistant professor/researcher) and by one research field (out of 372[15], grouped into 14 research areas). Any vacancy is coded by a given research field, and applicants are evaluated by professors of the same field. Given the public nature of the employment contracts, university professors can only be hired through public competitions that should grant publicity of the vacancy, selection of the selecting committee based on objective criteria, transparency of the selection process.

The institutional design of selection procedures for recruitment and promotions has changed radically over the last three and a and half decades:

- between 1979 and 1998, centrally managed nation-wide competitions were used to hire (i.e. promotions) associate and full professors, while assistant professors

[14] Salaries vary only by level of arrangement and seniority, and departments are prevented from linking payment to research productivity and/or teaching loads.

[15] The 372 research fields (*settore scientifico disciplinare*) are defined by the National University Council (CUN), according to homogeneity of research topics. However, the identification of research fields does not necessarily follow rational rules, nor they do adjust to the evolution of research (Checchi, Verzillo 2013: 2). As a matter of fact, they tend to reflect the way in which academic power is organised.

(with tenure) were recruited through local competitions (though the selecting committee was appointed at the national level);

- starting in 1999, recruitment procedures became entirely local, and each university could organise its own selection procedures (for assistants, associates and full professors) through local committees;
- year 2008 marked a turning point in the rules governing competition for associate and full professors in Italy. A new system for the selection of commissioners was set (due to the application of Law n. 230/2005, best known as Moratti Reform), involving a random extraction (by lottery) of 4 external professors out of a pool of previously elected professors (for the same research field) and an internal commissioner appointed by the faculty which decided to run the competition. The aim of this procedure was to avoid the formation of ad hoc committees (i.e. collusive behaviour favouring local candidates) and to increase competition;
- in 2010 the recruitment procedure has been reorganized and partially re-centralized. The Gelmini reform (L. 240/2010) has established a 'national scientific qualification' (NSQ)[16] as a necessary prerequisite for access to permanent positions (associate and full professor).

The new National Scientific Qualification (NSQ) system and its gender effects

In December 2010 a comprehensive reform (L. 240/2010, or 'Gelmini reform') introduced new rules for the academic staff recruitment procedures (as well as the institutional governance and internal organisation of Italian universities). A two-step procedure has been established: first, at the national level, the national committees (one for each research filed) have to select the candidates that deserve the scientific qualification (*idoneità*) for associate professor; second, at the local level, each Departments can decide - within the next four years - to open a local competition to either recruit or promote somebody as associate professor in that specific research filed. This two-step procedure applies (but separately) also to full professorship.

These national committees are made of five members: four extracted from a list of all professors (available to be included in these national committees) who meet in their research field some minima scientific requirements (identified by biblio-metric

[16] In Italian: Abilitazione Scientifica Nazionale.

indicators) and one external professor (teaching abroad) designated at the central level (identified in terms of international reputation).

The 2010 Gelmini reform has changed not only the recruitment process (introducing a two step procedure) and the rules for the setting up of committees, but has also further stressed the importance of 'merit evaluation', indirectly opening the door to the problematic relationship between 'merit evaluation' and 'quantitative indicators' for scientific productivity (Rossi 2012).

It is important to note that the composition of teaching staff by position and sex in the Italian University system shows that the vast majority of full professors are men (only 21% are women)[17], while in the lower levels the share of women tends to increase, though it remains below the numerical parity: 35% among associate professors and 46% among assistant professors (see Additional data Italy, tab. A.5.1).

In this context, the preliminary results of the *National Scientific Qualification* (NSQ) system from a gender perspective suggested that women are less competitive and less productive than men; however on average, women do not seem to be discriminated against in the NSQ procedure based on biblio-metric criteria. In fact, there is only a negligible gender difference in the probability of success. Here follows a list of main points from the most recent literature:

1. On average, there is a lower number of women compared to men participating in the competition for NSQ (with differences across research fields). The share of applicants on total 'potential candidates' is 48% among women, but 54% among men (De Paola, Ponzo, Scoppa 2014; Baccini, 2014; Baccini and Rosselli 2014).
2. In a recent paper on the determinants of individual scientific performance (on a dataset that includes 942 permanent researchers of various scientific sectors in Italy, for 2008-2010) the results confirm the gender productivity gap, previously documented in the literature (Baccini et al. 2014: 20). The gender effect is moderately significant and affects all the research production measures negatively. This suggests that women face *ceteris paribus* more difficulties than men in publishing.
3. Scientific productivity (assessed by biblio-metric indicators) seems to play a crucial role for success in NSQ (De Paola, Ponzo Scoppa 2014).

[17] Unsurprisingly, there are very few women as rectors, heads of departments and members of the ruling bodies.

4. The new rules for the setting up of national committees (the random designation of four commissioners, the inclusion of one commissioner teaching abroad and the assessment of their productivity) has allowed to estimate the effect of the national committees composition by sex on gender differences in the probability of success. Quite surprisingly, the probability of success for female candidates in NSQ competition is reduced when the committee includes at least one woman (Bagues et al. 2014). Previously, De Paola and Scoppa (2011) analysed the competition to associate professor and full professor held in 2008 in economics (when 4 out of 5 members of the national committees were extracted). They found that the presence of women in the national committees enhanced the probability of success of female candidates and helped reducing the bias against women produced by 'all-men committees'. The hypothesis advanced to explain the 'surprising' outcome in NSQ competition, is that the evaluation system tends to change when a committee includes both sexes (as if all members tend to adopt more stringent evaluating criteria).

Post-doc and entry positions

The flexibilization of the early stages of the academic career. Over the last ten years the recruitment process of academic staff has substantially changed (see the 7.1 GARCIA deliverable – Report on gap formal actual criteria), developing a process of flexibilisation of the research positions. In 2005, the Moratti reform established the elimination of the 'permanent assistant professors' (to be completed by 2013) and introduced the 'fixed-term researcher' for the newly recruited in academic career. The duration established for this new position was 3 years, renewable only once (up to 6 years). Given budget constraints, and the lack of resources to invest in new positions, to allow for some further flexibility in research and teaching, the Moratti reform introduced also the possibility to open positions as 'research collaborators'[18].

In 2010, the Gelmini Reform introduced further changes, in particular concerning the early stages of the academic career (after PhD). An "ideal path" (lasting a maximum of 12 years) composed of three stages/positions has been envisaged:

[18] These are self-employed contractors (co.co.co), supplying qualified consultancy and freelance work coordinated by an employer (i.e. the faculty). In 2010, the Gelmini reform has restricted the use of collaboration contracts (co.co.co) only to support activities for research.

- up to 4 years as post-doc 'research fellow' (*assegnista di ricerca*)
- up to 5 years as fixed-term *researcher of type A* (RTDa, 'ricercatore a tempo determinato di tipo A')
- up to 3 years as fixed-term *researcher of type B* (or tenure track) (RTDb, 'ricercatore a tempo determinate di tipo B').

The first step (after PhD award) should be the access to a 'research fellow' position[19]. However, this is not a proper employment contract, rather a sort of post-doc position financed by a grant (for example, EU research funds) to develop research activities on a specific topic for at least one year (renewable up to 4 years). There are no teaching duties. People entering this position are not entitled to unemployment benefit, parental leaves or other welfare provisions (with the only exception of the compulsory maternity leave).

The second step should be the access to a 'fixed-term researcher of type A' position (RTDa): a work contract with a 3-year duration, renewable for up to five years. It foresees both research and teaching duties.

The third step should be the transition into a 'fixed-term researcher of type B' position (RTDb) a sort of tenure-track with a maximum duration of 3 years, not renewable. It foresees both research and teaching duties. The access to this position is subordinated to a previous experience as fixed-term researcher of type A (or 3 years as post-doc research fellow before the Gelmini reform). At the end of the third year, after receiving the NSQ, the hosted university can call the researcher as permanent associate professor. According to this path, a young researcher with a regular track in education and research should be able to reach his/her first permanent position, as associate professor, at the age of 39 or 40. If by that age he/she has not been able to succeed, he/she will have to leave the academic career.

Consequences of the flexibilisation of the early stages of the academic careers. Between 2008 and 2013 the total teaching staff in academia (permanent and non-permanent positions) has increased by 5.2%, but while permanent positions have decreased, non-permanent positions have steadily increased. In particular, permanent positions (full

[19] This position was introduced in 1997 (L. 449/1997, art. 51, c. 6) and modified in 2010 (L. 240/2010, art. 22). It is generally open to PhD holders, but in some cases can be required only a university degree. The Gelmini reform has increased the minimum financial amount of the yearly gross grant to 19.367 euros/year.

professors, associate professors, assistant professors) have shrunk by 18.5%[20], whereas non-permanent positions (fixed-term researchers, post-doc research fellows and research collaborators) have increased by 71.2%. In 2013, non-permanent positions account for 37% of the total teaching staff (+14.3 percentage points from 2008)[21]. More than 60% of the non-permanent positions are post-doc research fellows, while only 10% are fixed-term researchers (type A and B). While there is an equal distribution by sex among research fellows and research collaborators, women are under-represented (only 43.3%) among-fixed-term researchers (see Additional data, tab. A.5.1).

This imbalance between permanent and non-permanent positions is the result of two main processes: a) the changes introduced by law in the recruitment process, aiming to introduce some flexibility in the early stages of academic career (as already discussed); b) the changes imposed to the university system in order to reduce public expenditure. In particular, academic staff turnover has been limited by law since 2009 (limited at 50% on the ceasing staff for the recent years)[22]; academic staff salaries, fixed nationally, have been frozen since 2011; finally, since the outset of the economic crisis, consistent cuts in university public funding have been set by low (-18.7% between 2008 and 2013). In this scenario, the near future for both the Italian university system and the young researchers looks quite gloomy.

It has been projected (Anvur 2014) that in the next five years (2014-2018) there should be further 9,300 retirements from permanent academic positions (equivalent to 17% of the total permanent staff). This outflow could produce considerably consequences on the efficiency of the university system if there will not be a yearly recruitment of at least 1,850 new academic positions (900 full professors, 500 associate professor and 400 fixed-term researchers of type A or B). It has been suggested that the university system requires for its efficient functioning the recruitment of 9,000 new fixed-term researchers (5,000 of type A and 4,000 of type B) by the end of 2016 (CUN 2014). Unfortunately, the current recruitment process is definitely much slower. In 2013 were

[20] The reduction in permanent positions (-26.6% for full professors, -13.4% for associate professors, –7.2% for permanent assistant professors) is due for the most part to retirements.

[21] The share of non-permanent positions on the total academic positions overcomes 50% when also PhD students are included.

[22] Moreover, since 2012, the turnover limitation does apply no longer at each institution depending on the ceasing staff, but at the systemic level (L. 135/2012); since then on, yearly the Ministry assigns to each university the maximum number of available credits for new positions by ministerial decree (Donina, Meoli, Paleari 2014: 7).

announced only 520 fixed-term associate professor of type A positions and 130 tenure track positions (Bonatesta, Montalbano e Ferrara 2014: 32).

The future prospects for those working at the university in a non-permanent position are discouraging, as highlighted by the few studies on the consequences of the flexibilisation of early career stages in the Italian university. The various reforms implemented over the last 10 years have resulted in the exclusion of young researchers from the academic system. In the decade 2004-2013, only 6.7% of those who worked with a non-permanent research position at the university (mainly post-doc research fellows) has succeed to enter a permanent position (Coin et al. 2014). Given the constraints in the recruitment process after the Gelmini reform, the current chances of recent PhDs[23] to reach a tenure-track position is only by 3.4%, while the 86,4% will exit from the Italian academic system after the period as research fellow and the 10.2% after the period as fixed-term researcher of type A (Bonatesta, Montalbano, Ferrara 2014: 33). This suggests that there is a serious issue concerning the dispersion of highly qualified competences and professional skills developed inside the academic system.

2015 will be a crucial year because the first round of post-doc research fellows will finish the 3 possible renewals of their contract (a limit set by the Gelmini reform). For these researchers the possibility to continue in their scientific career in Italy are very limited. They can apply for a fixed-term researcher position at the university, or look for a research position abroad or outside the university[24,] or give up their scientific career. In the mid-term, a similar set of problems will also be faced by the first round of fixed-term researchers of type A, when they will complete their 5th year of contract. This situation is even more serious if we take into account that the mean age of the post-doc research fellows was 34 in 2013 (Anvur 2013: 245) and that the PhD degree is not appreciated outside academia in Italy[25.] According to Coin et al. (2014), 40% of the post-doc researchers and fixed-term researchers interviewed ponder that they will move abroad in order to continue in their research career[26].

[23] Since 2003 the number of PhD awarded every year almost tripled reaching the highest level in 2008. In 2013 the number of PhD awarded was 11,288 (5,232 men, 6,056 women). See Additional data Italy, tab. A.1.2.

[24] They could also accept a position as research collaborator but it would mean a devaluation of their career because these positions are foreseen only for research support activities and are not considered a valuable step in the "ideal path" of the (Italian) research career drawn by the reform.

[25] As a matter of fact, in Italy the PhD does not give additional points to facilitate the access to other position both in the public and in the private sector (Bonatesta, Montalbano, Ferrara 2014).

[26] This proportion reaches the 60% among PhD students (Coin et al. 2014).

The high levels of insecurity which affects the first stages of academic career tends to produce negative consequences on the young researchers' ability to manage their present and future work. According to a recent research project (Coin et al. 2014), aimed at analysing the work conditions of young precarious researchers, 84.3% of the people interviewed think that their insecure work position negatively affects their work performance and 50% are unable to imagine their professional future in 10 years. For Italian precarious researchers it is very difficult to program their present work because of the constant need to search for a new job position. The lack of welfare protections is an open issue. Precarious researchers (*assegnisti*) are not entitled to receive unemployment benefit and are also excluded from income support measures because they are considered as 'students' (hence part of the inactive population), not as workers.

Highly-skilled migration and the brain drain

In recent years, growing attention has been devoted to the phenomenon of brain drain, i.e. the emigration of people with tertiary education to somewhere for better pay or conditions. In the case of Italy, the lack of research policies and funding means that our country is less able than other countries to attract and retain talent. This situation is worsening given the context of a long economic crisis, fiscal consolidation and severe budget cuts.

Inability to attract foreign talent. In 2005, the share of foreigners with a tertiary education in Italy (12.2%) was amongst the lowest in the OECD countries, well below the overall average for destination countries (23.2%) and EU average (18.6%). This can be attributed to a lack of restrictive and selective immigration policies. Indeed, Italy has not adopted programs that facilitate the entry of highly skilled personnel: the majority of migrants (including those with tertiary education) enter Italy to fill unskilled jobs. In 2005, the number of graduates who migrated to Italy (246,925) was smaller than the number who left Italy (294,767). Therefore, before the crisis, Italy's problem lied in its limited capacity to attract skilled human capital, rather than in the fact that a percentage of our graduates moved abroad (Milio et al. 2012). Over the last six years, there has been an increase in the share of young graduates moving to EU countries with better employment opportunities (especially Germany and the UK); this tends to reinforce the hypothesis that Italy lacks the capacity to attract and retain talent. A recent study (Economist Intelligence Unit 2011) demonstrates that Italy is plodding along in the "war

for talent", ranking in 23rd place in the league table for "ability to attract and produce talent" (see Additional data Italy, tab. A.5.3).

Italian talent mobility. Data available on the destination countries of the Italian highly-skilled workers (in particular, those employed in Science and Technology) seem to suggest that there is a high proportion of scientists, engineers and researchers among highly-skilled emigrants. In other words, if the data on skilled migration in general is left aside to focus on migration in the scientific field, it would seem that the Italian problem is not solely one of a failure to attract talent but is also a matter of failing to retain it. A major problem for Italy is therefore the negative net flows between incoming and outgoing talent, exacerbated by the high qualification levels of those leaving the country compared to those arriving (Terzi, 2014). Lack of funding and sponsorship, lower salary levels (compared to many foreign countries), the non-meritocratic criteria pursuant to which funds are allocated, and the lack of adequate infrastructure and equipment are considered the main causes of scientific migration.

Current challenges and debates on women and science issues in the Italian context

As we have evidenced in the previous sections, Italy lacks a centralized university politics able to attract, retain and promote talent, and to reconfigure the academic structure in a more gender balanced way. More precisely, we showed that in academia the high levels of insecurity and precariousness of working contracts affect the early stages of career. This situation affects negatively the young researchers' ability to manage and plan work and private life.

Moreover in promoting equal opportunities programs there is a lack of: i) coordination between university structures and ii) implementation of monitoring and evaluation tools at central level, coupled with limited resources both in terms of personnel and funding.

To overcome these limits, since 1980s women involved in research have been actively supporting a variety of initiatives for the promotion of equal opportunities in research, but with mixed results among disciplinary fields. Women started to organized activities in STEM fields first, and then other fields followed more recently (Economics); other disciplines register the total absence of activities on gender issues (for example, Political Science). Moreover, projects aiming to enhance the role of women in science and fight

discrimination have been promoted by central government institution for equal opportunities or universities under the European 7FP funding. These projects are very few, and isolated since they are not part of a national strategy to promote women in science. Another point to note is the very limited, fragmented and disjointed diffusion of gender studies in tertiary education. Entire degree programs, crucial for the formation of the Italian ruling classes, do not provide courses that include a gender approach.

The debate on gender and career advancement shed some light on the gender effects of evaluation criteria, in particular how biblio-metric criteria and productivity measures may have negatively affected the likelihood of women to NSQ procedure. To add, the measures introduced to evaluate scientific research and teaching activity in order to rationalize the central system of (decreasing) public funding for universities are currently under discussion within the academic community. To note, Italy is a country with no experience in evaluation, and this lack of experience is mirrored in the current difficulties to introduce and implement an effective system of university evaluation.

Periodically, the media debate focuses on the issue of Italian brain drain. Lack of funding and sponsorship, lower salary levels (compared to many foreign countries), the non-meritocratic criteria pursuant to which funds are allocated, and the lack of adequate infrastructure and equipment are the main causes scientific migration. This scenario is mainly due to government and business world deficiencies. In the next future the scientific migration it's likely to increase given that the declining public funding and the restrictive recruitment criteria, taken together, will cause the exclusion from the university system of 96% out of the total of the current research fellows. If these data are confirmed, the dramatic haemorrhage of young educated people will result in a collapse for the Italian system as a whole.

Conclusions

Notwithstanding the advances of recent decades, the economic participation rate of women is still considerably lower than that of men in Italy. In 2014 the country continued to be among the worst performers in the *Global Gender Gap Index* (ranking 69th out of 142 overall), penalized above all by the economic participation and opportunity category (114th), while the gap in educational attainment was narrower (62th). Italy lags behind in women's access to the labour market, remuneration, career advancement, promotion to positions of leadership and new business initiatives.

The education gap had been closed. Less marked, but still observable, is the traditional concentration of women graduates in education and humanities while engineering remains the only male-dominated field or study.

Gender gaps in the labour market are still large. Female employment rates remain low, especially in Southern Italy and in general for women with low education. Young women are more likely than young men to be unemployed, to be employed in less stable forms of employment and in the lowest-paid sectors (horizontal segregation).

Lack of services for children (and above all for the elderly) combined with rigid work arrangements make it hard to reconcile work and family life. Female unemployment rates are higher than male rates; career progress is difficult; and young women are over-represented in atypical and precarious jobs, with limited or no protection in case of maternity.

A policy mix comprising access to standard jobs (good quality, open-ended positions), affordable childcare, neutral tax and benefit systems, flexible working time arrangements and the provision of paid leave for both parents can support them in reconciling work and family and effectively promote female employment.

Women's position in Italian society has been deeply affected by socio-cultural changes and European Union requirements since the beginning of the 1970s. However, transformations in the structures of the society have not been always consistent with it. Political parties were slow to respond to the requests of civil society movements including women's movement. The persistence and the dominance of a conservative and traditional political discourse has meant the difficulties to promote norms, legislation and measures aimed to promote women's roles other than the 'caring role' and their presence in all the fields of society.

The problem of efficient institutional mechanisms for promoting, enacting and monitoring legislation on gender equality in Italy has never been satisfactorily solved at the national level of central government, as witnessed by the variety of solutions adopted over the years. The Department for Equal Opportunities, established in 1997 has been headed by various Ministers (nine ministers in 18 years), whose action has always been impaired by lack of resources, short terms of office and sometimes even lack of experience in gender issues. The importance of gender inequality vs other grounds of discriminations has been interpreted by each minister very differently, according to political parties membership, culture and openness to civil society.

Academic careers have undergone profound changes in the access and promotion rules. Since these processes have gone hand in hand with the drastic reduction in the available financial resources the consequences at the individual and structural level are ambivalent and the current situation of the Italian university system is quite alarming: i) over one third of the university research staff has a non-permanent position; these positions are all concentrated among the new generation of researchers; ii) the severe budget cuts of the university system produced a serious contraction of permanent teaching staff which negatively affects the current efficiency of the university both in teaching and research activities; iii) the new rules seems not to reduce the female disadvantage in the career advancement (at least in the short run).

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Additional data Italy

Tables

Table A.1.1: Percentage of tertiary qualifications awarded to women in tertiary-type A and advanced research programmes, by field of education, 2012

	All fields	Education	Humanities and arts	Health and welfare	Social sciences, business and law	Services	Engineering, manufacturing and construction	Sciences	*Life sciences*	*Physical sciences*	*Mathematics and statistics*	*Computing*	Agriculture
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
Austria	*55*	80	68	68	58	42	25	36	69	32	37	16	64
Belgium	*55*	76	65	67	60	39	26	35	53	33	40	10	57
Iceland	*65*	84	63	86	64	80	33	39	*60*	*44*	*35*	*13*	73
Italy	*62*	88	75	69	59	51	40	55	71	42	54	25	48
Netherlands	*57*	79	59	75	54	52	21	26	61	27	32	13	55
Slovenia	*64*	85	75	80	69	56	31	44	75	41	62	15	62
Switzerland	*51*	73	62	69	49	55	19	35	52	35	29	9	66
OECD average	***58***	**78**	**66**	**75**	**58**	**51**	**28**	**41**	***63***	***43***	***46***	***20***	**53**
EU21 average	***60***	**81**	**68**	**76**	**62**	**49**	**29**	**42**	***65***	***44***	***50***	***20***	**54**

Source: OECD (2014), http://www.OECD-ilibrary.org/education/education-at-a-glance-2014_eag-2014-en

Table A.1.2: Percentage of PhD awarded to women by field of study, 2002-2012

	PhD awarded										
Field of study	**2002**	**2003**	**2004**	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**
Civil engineering and architecture	54.4	48.5	47.7	50.8	47.9	46.5	45.8	49.9	47.8	53.1	51.6
Information Technologies	15.2	13.7	15.6	22.3	23.2	20.5	21.4	19.8	19.3	21.9	21.4
Industrial engineering	24.8	25.8	25.4	27.6	27.4	27.7	29.5	31.1	30.2	31.8	29.9
Agricultural sciences	50.9	52.0	52.2	53.4	50.7	51.9	47.9	51.6	53.6	52.0	53.2
Biology	74.1	72.5	70.1	67.4	69.1	65.5	68.7	68.2	64.8	65.7	65.2
Chemistry	57.9	58.8	58.2	54.5	54.2	55.6	55.6	59.6	51.4	53.8	53.0
Earth sciences	48.5	50.0	47.9	52.2	44.3	42.5	42.7	44.1	47.1	50.0	50.8
Sciences relating to the Ancient world, Philology and Literature	62.8	64.3	64.0	65.2	66.1	63.8	64.3	63.7	62.2	65.8	68.4
Sport sciences	100.0	33.3	33.3	50.0	75.0	66.7	50.0	54.5	48.1	58.3	48.0
Business economics	51.0	44.2	45.1	47.4	47.3	55.9	56.6	51.9	52.9	58.4	51.4
Economic sciences (socio-politics)	41.3	52.5	37.7	47.1	46.1	46.0	46.7	45.3	43.0	44.5	49.5
Physics	27.9	28.6	31.2	30.2	31.5	36.6	34.0	39.7	37.1	34.9	41.6
Law	48.2	48.4	49.3	47.7	51.1	48.4	53.5	52.8	50.6	55.1	50.1
Computer sciences	36.7	25.0	33.3	28.7	21.8	23.7	19.8	30.6	26.6	31.3	24.4
Mathematics	47.5	39.5	40.8	46.3	42.6	49.0	41.7	37.4	44.9	36.7	38.2
Medicine	60.3	61.5	64.3	62.3	62.6	64.8	62.4	61.9	63.8	61.7	64.3
Education	85.3	72.5	76.0	67.8	68.3	72.7	69.1	72.4	76.7	69.9	71.0
Politics and social sciences	50.0	48.4	45.0	60.8	49.8	45.7	56.2	56.2	55.6	54.5	55.8
Psychology, anthropology and geography	51.7	68.8	64.2	64.7	67.7	66.9	69.0	67.1	68.8	65.5	66.4
Statistics	67.4	53.7	47.1	49.4	50.0	61.5	55.3	56.3	57.3	49.3	58.8
History and Philosophy	54.5	50.5	49.0	49.2	48.6	49.0	43.8	50.6	48.4	48.2	54.4
Arts	60.6	56.1	65.3	60.8	64.1	65.0	54.3	68.2	56.9	61.0	59.5
Veterinary sciences	68.7	60.2	50.5	57.9	61.4	61.9	57.6	59.0	64.0	67.0	56.2
N Male	1,993	3,066	4,028	4,556	4,880	4,974	5,894	5,671	5,401	5,216	5,232
N. Female	2,146	3,183	4,318	4,921	5,177	5,485	6,514	6,431	5,933	5,956	6,056
Total	**4,139**	**6,249**	**8,346**	**9,477**	**10,057**	**10,459**	**12,408**	**12,102**	**11,334**	**11,172**	**11,288**
Nfemale/total %	**51.8**	**50.9**	**51.7**	**51.9**	**51.5**	**52.4**	**52.5**	**53.1**	**52.3**	**53.3**	**53.6**

Source: MIUR WEBSITE (http://statistica.miur.it/, December 2014).

Table A.1.3 Gender distribution of teachers, 2012

Percentage of women among teaching staff in public and private institutions by level of education, based on head counts

	Notes	Pre-primary education	Primary education	Lower secondary education	Upper secondary education			Post-secondary non-tertiary education	Tertiary education			All levels of education
					General programmes	pre-vocational/ vocational programmes	All programmes		Type B	Type A and advanced research programmes	Total tertiary education	
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
Austria		99	91	71	63	50	54	53	x(10)	x(10)	40	**65**
Belgium		97	81	62	61	x(6)	61	x(6)	x(10)	x(10)	46	**70**
Iceland	1	96	81	81	x(6)	x(6)	54	x(6,10)	x(10)	x(10)	47	**73**
Italy	2	99	96	78	75	61	66	m	33	36	36	**77**
Netherlands	2	86	85	50	50	50	50	51	41	40	40	**64**
Slovenia		98	97	79	71	64	67	x(4,5)	x(10)	39	39	**75**
Switzerland		98	82	53	45	42	43	m	33	37	37	**58**
OECD average		**97**	**82**	**67**	**59**	**53**	**57**	**55**	**47**	**40**	**42**	**68**
EU21 average		**96**	**86**	**69**	**64**	**56**	**60**	**54**	**50**	**40**	**42**	**71**

1. Year of reference 2011.
2. Public institutions only (for Italy, from pre-primary to secondary levels).
Sources: OECD (2014), http://www.OECD-ilibrary.org/education/education-at-a-glance-2014_eag-2014-en

Tab. A.2.1: Part-time employment and involuntary part-time for women aged 25-49 (%)

	PT as % of total employment			*Involuntary PT as % of total PT*		
	2004	2008	2013	2004	2008	2013
EU27	28,3	28,8	30,3	17,4	23,2	26,9
Belgium	40,7	39,3	39,3	15,7	13,2	8,5
Italy	25,9	29,3	34,1	31,1	37,2	57,9
Netherlands	72,9	71,7	73,0	2,7	3,8	8,2
Austria	41,6	43,8	47,8	6,9	9,0	9,0
Slovenia	5,7	6,0	8,8	15,0	13,0	17,3
Iceland	30,3	27,7	24,9	:	7,1	22,8
Switzerland	61,8	60,6	62,1	5,0	5,1	6,9

Source: Eurostat, online codes: [lfsa_eppga], [lfsa_eppgai].

Table A.2.2: Occupations by sex and level of education, 2013

Percent of corresponding total of all occupations	**WOMEN**		**MEN**	
	All	Tertiary Education (Level 5-6)	**All**	Tertiary Education (Level 5-6)
Legislators, senior officials and managers	2.3	2.7	4.6	7.1
Professionals	17.7	50.4	10.6	54.1
Technicians and associate professionals	16.4	22.9	17.9	22.8
Clerks	18.7	13.5	7.9	6.4
Service workers, shop and market sales workers	23.6	6.9	11.6	3.6
Skilled agricultural and fishery workers	1.3	0.2	3.3	0.7
Craft and related trade workers	3.7	0.5	22.9	1.4
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	3.1	0.2	9.9	0.9
Elementary Occupations	13.0	2.7	9.3	1.4
Armed forces	0.1	..	1.9	1.6
Not stated	..	..	..	..
Total	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*

General note: Data come from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) unless otherwise specified. Data from the LFS and from population censuses normally comply with the definition above.
Source: UNECE Statistical Database, compiled from national and international (Eurostat and ILO) official sources.

Tab. A.3.1: Types of households in Italy and OECD average in 2011 (in % of all households)

	Italy	**of which:**	**OECD average**	**of which:**
Couple families	62.3	66.7% with children	57.6	58.6% with children
Single person households	24.9		27.7	
Sole parent families	8.9	82.5% sole mother	9.1	84.5% sole mother
Other private households	3.9		7.0	

Source: Population census 2011, in: OECD (2014), "SF1.1: Family size and household composition"

Tab. A.3.2: Households by number of children* in 2011 (% of all households)

	0	1	2	3 and more	% of households with children < 6
Austria	63	18	14	5	14
Belgium	57	18	17	8	16
Italy	52	25	19	4	18
Netherlands	61	15	17	7	16
Slovenia	50	25	20	5	16
OECD-24	56	20	17	7	17

* For European countries, data include children not yet 15 years of age, or aged 15 to 24 and dependent (not employed and with at least one parent in the household).
Source: Population census 2011, in: OECD (2014), "SF1.1: Family size and household composition"

Tab. A.3.3: Age at which 50% of young people leave home, live with a partner and become parents, 2011

	Leaving home (age)		Living with partner (age)		Having children (age)	
	M	W	M	W	M	W
AT	25.9	23.3	29.6	26.5	33.5	29.8
BE	24.6	23.2	28.2	25.6	34.2	29.4
DK	20.6	19.6	26.0	25.1	33.5	29.7
FI	21.1	19.8	23.7	21.5	33.8	30.1
IT	29.6	26.8	33.8	28.9	37.2	31.8
SI	29.9	27.0	32.1	28.2	34.2	29.1
EU27	26.3	23.8	29.4	26.4	34.3	30.1

Note: Denmark and Finland have been included for comparison (even though not included in the GARCIA project).
Source: EU-SILC 2011, in: Eurofound (2014, tab. 4, p. 23).

Tab. A.4.1: Working-time arrangements of couples aged 25-49 years by family circumstances and age of youngest child, 2012 (%)

	Without children	*Child aged < 6*	*Child aged ≥ 6*	**All couples**
Men FT, woman inactive	21.9	36.6	37.3	34.2
Both FT	49.8	30.5	27.7	32.9
Men FT, woman PT	14.0	18.6	19.3	18.1
Men & woman not working	4.2	6.2	7.7	6.5
Men not working & woman FT	3.4	2.3	2.5	2.6
Men not working & woman PT	1.9	1.7	2.0	1.9
Other working-time arrangements	4.8	4.1	3.5	3.8

Source: table IV.2.

Tab. A.4.2: Employment rate (25-49) by sex and presence of children in 2012 (%)

	Italy			*Trentino*			*EU27*		
	M	F	*gap*	M	F	*Gap*	M	F	*Gap*
Without children	76,1	66,1	*10,0*	91,1	76,9	*14,2*	78,9	77,1	*1,8*
1 small child (<5 yrs)	89,0	61,9	*27,1*	94,8	68,6	*26,2*	89,0	68,0	*21,0*
2 or more children (<5 yrs)	89,1	53,1	*36,0*	96,2	65,0	*31,2*	90,0	63,4	*26,6*

Source: PAT (2013: 49).

Table A.4.3: The Gender Equality Index for Italy and the Autonomous Province Trento, 2010

	P.A. Trento		Italy	
	absolute	standardized	absolute	Standardized
Employment gap	17.24	0.52	20.35	0.43
Unemployment gap	10.18	0.51	12.13	0.42
Standardized work dimension		**0.52**		**0.43**
Wage gap	11.40	0.18	9.94	0.29
Standardized wage dimension		**0.18**		**0.29**
Gap in regional councils	77.14	0.23	78.89	0.21
Gap in regional government	55.56	0.44	55.12	0.45
Gap in ISCO 1 (top occupations)	0.46	0.28	0.49	0.23
Standardized political power dimension		**0.31**		**0.28**
Gap in time spent in children care	100.95	0.57	104.17	0.55
Gap in leisure	21.92	0.44	26.91	0.31
Standardized time dimension		**0.50**		**0.43**
The Gender Equality Index		**0.38**		**0.36**

Source: Amici, Stefani (2013).

Tab. A.5.1: Main legislative acts to promote women's rights and gender equality

Source	*Main disposition*
Art. 3 and Art. 37, Art. 51, Constitution (1948)	Formal equality between men and women Pay Equality between men and women Equal access to public office
Law 868/1950	Tutela fisica ed economica delle lavoratrici madri
Law 898/1970	Divorce Law
Law 1204/1971	Tutela delle lavoratrici madri
Law 1044/1971	Child care facilities under local government
Law 151/1975	Family Law Reform
Law 903/1977	Equality of treatment between men and women on the workplace
Law 194/1978	Abortion Law
Law 125/1991	Positive action for achieving parity between men and women at work
Law 215/1992	Positive action for female entrepreneurship
Law 66/1996	Measures agains sexual violence
Law 53/2000	Measures to promote reconciliation of work- family life
Reform of art. 51 of the Constitution	Legal Recognition of electoral gender quota
Law 154/2001	Measures against intimate violence
Legislative Decree 198/2006	National Code of Equal Opportunities between Women and Men
Legislative Decree 196/2007	Equal treatment between men and women in access to and supply of goods and services
Law Decree 11/2009	Measures against gender violence and stalking.
Law 120/2011	For public and private board composition, no more than 2/3 members of the same sex on the board
Law 215/2012	For the local elections, no more than 2/3 candidates of the same sex on the lists; gender preferences
Law Decree 93/2013	Measures (among others) against gender violence, converted in Law 119/2013
Law 65/2014	For the European Parliament elections, candidates of both sexes on the lists; gender preferences

Table A. 5.2: Global Talent Index

2011 RANK	COUNTRY	SCORE/ 100	2011 RANK	COUNTRY	SCORE/ 100
1	United States	74.2	31	Chile	43.7
2	Denmark	64.7	32	Slovakia	43.3
3	Finland	63.2	33	China	41.1
4	Norway	61.9	34	Russia	40.8
5	Singapore	60.2	35	India	40.5
6	Australia	60.1	=36	Malaysia	40.1
7	Sweden	59.5	=36	Romania	40.1
8	Hong Kong	59.1	38	Mexico	39.7
9	Switzerland	58.5	39	Venezuela	39.4
=10	Israel	58.3	40	Colombia	39.1
=10	Netherlands	58.3	41	Saudi Arabia	39.0
12	United Kingdom	58.2	42	Brazil	38.2
13	Germany	57.9	43	Ukraine	38.0
14	Canada	57.8	44	Philippines	37.6
15	New Zealand	57.7	45	South Africa	37.4
16	Ireland	57.4	46	Thailand	36.8
17	Austria	55.7	47	Peru	36.4
18	Belgium	55.5	48	Turkey	35.0
19	France	55.1	49	Bulgaria	34.7
20	Taiwan	54.5	50	Ecuador	33.5
21	Spain	49.7	51	Egypt	32.8
22	South Korea	48.4	52	Vietnam	30.7
=23	Greece	46.7	53	Kazakhstan	30.5
=23	Italy	46.7	54	Azerbaijan	29.8
25	Czech Republic	45.9	55	Iran	29.7
26	Portugal	45.4	=56	Algeria	27.0
27	Japan	45.0	=56	Pakistan	27.0
28	Argentina	44.6	58	Indonesia	26.5
29	Poland	44.0	59	Sri Lanka	26.3
30	Hungary	43.8	60	Nigeria	23.1

Source: Economist Intelligence Unit (2011) http://www.globaltalentindex.com/

Table A5.3 - Academic research staff, 2013 and 2018

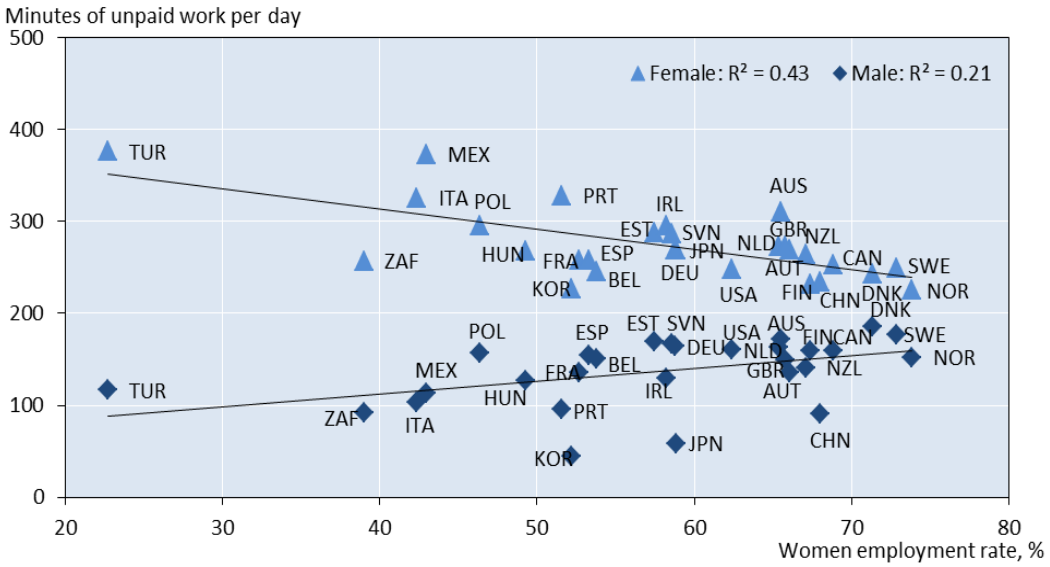
	2013				2013 %			var % (2008)		
	M	**F**	**TOT**	**F/TOT%**	**M**	**F**	**TOT**	**M**	**F**	**TOT**
Permanent positions:										
- Full professor	10955	2935	13890	21.1	22.0	8.5	16.4	-28.7	-17.7	-26.6
- Associate professor	10278	5532	15810	35.0	20.7	15.9	18.7	-14.9	-10.4	-13.4
- Permanent assistant Professor	12923	10823	23746	45.6	26.0	31.2	28.1	-8.0	-6.2	-7.2
Non-permanent positions										
- Fixed-term researchers (type A and B)	1798	1364	3162	43.1	3.6	3.9	3.7	454.9	459.0	456.7
- Research fellows	9592	10107	19699	51.3	19.3	29.1	23.3	67.9	65.8	66.8
- Research collaborators	4222	3946	8168	48.3	8.5	11.4	9.7	56.8	29.2	42.2
	49768	*34707*	*84475*	*41.1*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*			

	2008				2008 %		
	M	**F**	**TOT**	**F/TOT%**	**M**	**F**	**TOT**
Permanent positions:							
- Full professor	15364	3565	18929	18.8	30.6	11.6	23.4
- Associate professor	12080	6176	18256	33.8	24.1	20.1	22.6
- Permanent assistant Professor	14044	11539	25583	45.1	28.0	37.6	31.6
Non-permanent positions							
- Fixed-term researchers (type A and B)	324	244	568	43.0	0.6	0.8	0.7
- Research fellows	5712	6097	11809	51.6	11.4	19.9	14.6
- Research collaborators	2692	3053	5745	53.1	5.4	10.0	7.1
	50216	*30674*	*80890*	*37.9*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*

Source: our elaborations on Miur data ("Banca dati dei docenti di ruolo" and "Banca Dati del Personale Docente a Contratto e Tecnico Amministrativo"), December 2014, http://statistica.miur.it/

Figures

Fig. 4.1 - Unpaid work and women employment rate in OECD countries



Source: OECD (2012a), Closing the Gender gap: Act Now (Chapter 17, fig. 17.2). OECD Secretariat estimates based on national time-use surveys and OECD Labour Force Surveys for employment rates.

Figure A.5.1: Gender representation in the governments (prime minister and ministers) of republican Italy, 1948-2014

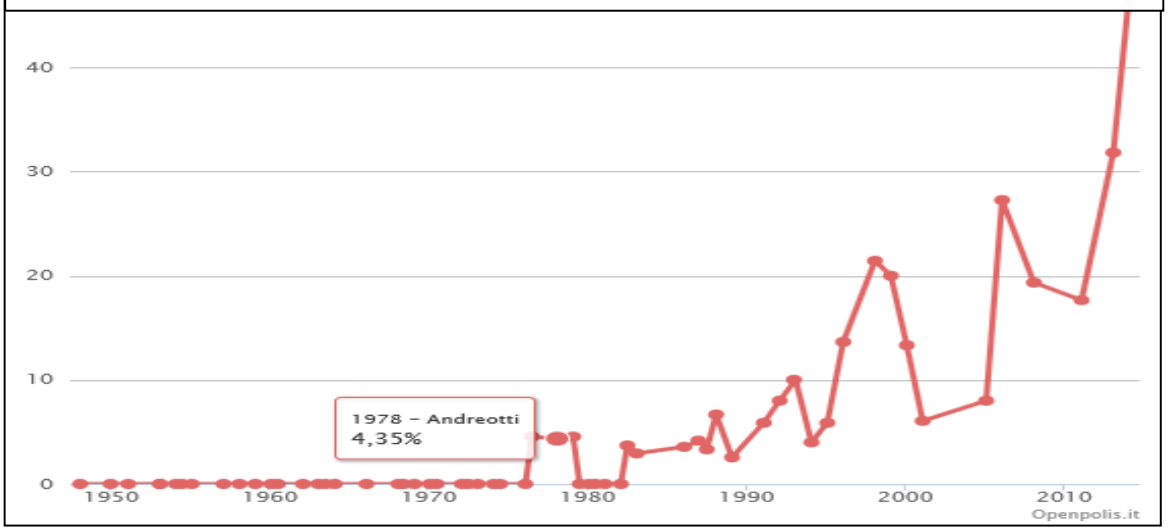


Figure A.5.2: Percentage of women in the Italian parliament since 1948

Chamber of Representatives Senate