**

***Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation***

***Inter-ministerial Committee for Human Rights***

***OHCHR request for the compilation of a report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on the enjoyment of human rights around the world***

***October 2020***

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Italy has been among the Countries the most exposed to Covid-19 since its inception: due these very complex and critical conditions, nonetheless we have made hard efforts to share and collect information about the situation all over the territory.

Following to your query, Italian Authorities are in a position to provide selected information to reply to the comprehensive question “Effective actions (or sets of actions) which are in compliance with international law, including international human rights norms and standards, contribute to the enjoyment of human rights, demonstrate sustainable results through quantitative and/or qualitative evidence of positive impact, and have the potential to be successfully adapted and replicated in other contexts” by stressing, as follows: methodological data collection tools, provisional bodies working also in the view of the post-Covid-19 phase, ad hoc health measures, the highest protection of the rights of women and LGBT persons.

In the light of the emergency generated by Covid-19 and the measures taken by the Government to contain it, the Italian Institute of Statistics (ISTAT) has taken a series of actions to ensure the continuity and quality of statistical production even in the emergency situation. ISTAT has reoriented the collection of statistical data on sustainable acquisition techniques in this context, with methodological solutions and innovations in the use of data sources, and has put in place the most appropriate solutions to support statistical production processes, in full protection of workers’ health. The production and dissemination of official statistical information, as key precondition to measure the evolution of the economy and society at the service of institutions, public decision-makers, households and businesses, cannot stop, but must be reconsidered in order to be ready to provide all the necessary answers to the country, also and especially for the future, when the dissemination of data will be necessary to support and monitor the country's recovery.

An overall overview about the involvement of all stakeholders in debating over the pandemic’s impact and the need to tackling it through national, regional and local actions has been carried out since the establishment of a Task Force of experts in economic and social matters. The Italian Prime Minister, in the press conference of 10 April 2020 announced the creation of this Task Force (whose composition was amended on 12 May 2020) with the task of elaborating and proposing measures necessary to deal with the emergency and for a gradual recovery in the various sectors of social, economic and productive activities. The Task Force is chaired by Mr. Vittorio Colao and has worked in coordination with the Scientific Technical Committee referred to in Art. 2, paragraph 1, of the Ordinance of the Head of the Department of Civil Protection No. 630 of 3 February 2020. The results of this work have been introduced in a document released in early June 2020 where the identification of new organizational and relational models, taking into account the needs of containment and emergency prevention as well as social, economic and productive challenges in the post-pandemic period.

As for the recruitment of new healthcare personnel supporting hospitals, the Italian Government has given more funds to the Regions and then to the hospitals in order to be able to do this. As a result hospitals have had the opportunity to call back retired healthcare personnel and, on the other hand, to block temporary the retirement of staff on duty. Hospitals have had also the opportunity to recruit temporary doctors still in their postgraduate training path (those on the 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th year of specialization), even if in Italy to work in public hospitals it is usually compulsory to have a specialization. Similar measures were taken to facilitate the recruitment of healthcare personnel, in particular a simplified procedure was taken to allow foreign healthcare personnel from EU/EFTA countries and third countries to be able to practice in Italy (Art. 13 of Law-Decree No. 18/2020). Thanks to these measures around 27.000 healthcare professionals of which about 6000 doctors and about 12.000 nurses have been recruited during this emergency. With the same legislative means, measures were then taken to strengthen territorial assistance also through the creation of new structures (USCA) with the task of managing at home the suspected or confirmed Covid-19 patients, who do not require hospitalization, to support family doctors (Art. 8 of Law-Decree No. 14/2020). The territorial nursing services have also been strengthened (Art. 1 of Law-Decree No. 34/2020).

As per women’s rights, a Task Force named “Women for a new Renaissance” was established under the leadership of the Minister for Equal Opportunities and the Family; it is composed of 12 women representing several sectors and has been convened firstly on 15 April 2020 on streaming in order to draft ideas and proposal for the post-Covid-19 social, cultural and economic restart. The main tasks of this Task Force have been to:

• produce analysis and scientific evidence relating to the impact of the Covid-19 outbreak on gender issues;

• formulate proposals to increase the percentage of women in all areas of work, to overcome barriers to advancement in career paths, especially in the fastest growing fields (STEM, computer computing, cloud computing, data and artificial intelligence, etc.), to contrast gender stereotypes that prevent women from reaching leadership positions and to build a more inclusive sustainable future for all;

• draw up a policy document with the definition of priorities and policies in operational terms to address the challenges for gender equality in all sector and to strengthen the presence and role of women in all the areas examined, with a focus on the social, cultural and economic revival of Italy after the epidemiological emergency from Covid-19.

The Task Force was divided into thematic sub-groups to release a final Note, which is based on data and scientific evidence on the impact of the pandemic in different sectors and introduces a first series of proposal for actions and recommendations that will be integrated through the planning activities of the Department for Equal Opportunities.

As far as LGBTI people are concerned, during the Covid-19 emergence several measures are currently under process of reprogramming by the National Anti-discrimination Office (UNAR), for example within the so called National Operational Program “Inclusion”, in order to respond more effectively to the needs related to the effects the pandemic. In the first place, such measures are aimed at contrasting violence (including domestic) against LGBTI people, also through establishment of network of so called ‘refuge centers’ (centers of protection and social and work inclusion for LGBT people victims of family violence). Other measures relate to the job inclusion activities for transgender people as well as interventions aimed to enhance/improve knowledge about access to local health services. With reference to the last, the UNAR, in cooperation with National Health Institute, has also launched an experimental project aimed at the development of the first institutional web portal for transgender people (called INFOTRANS.IT). The above activities are carried out in a close cooperation with the NGOs and CSOs, active in the framework of the so-called Consultation Table (composed by 66 NGOs and CSO) established and chaired by the Minister for Equal Opportunity and the Family. At the recent meeting of the Table, held on 26 May 2020, the Minister formally announced her intention to work in the coming months on the adoption of the new LGBT National Strategy, that should contain the concrete measures to ensure the LGBT rights in different fields. The LGBT NGOs and CSOs will be strongly involved in the process of the elaboration of the Strategy.

During the Covid-19 health-related emergency - starting in particular from March 2020 onwards -, the Roma, Sinti and Camminanti (RSC) Community has represented a particularly vulnerable group that, in some settlements characterized by overcrowding and precarious sanitary conditions, encountered specific difficulties in the access to basic goods-related supply. It should be recalled that by Decree of the President of the Council of Ministers, dated March 9, 2020, the Italian Council of Ministers had introduced measures that considerably limited the movement of citizens within the national territory, thus preventing the normal performance of daily activities.

The specific situation of housing distress during the Covid-19 health-related emergency made the continuation of the inclusion and integration processes already underway even more difficult. The situation of generalized crisis determined by the long phase of social distancing to limit the pandemic risk has been the subject of numerous reports, from both the NGOs participating in the National RSC Platform (established by the National Anti-Discrimination Office - UNAR) and the other Associations operating throughout the national territory, indicating the socio-economic, housing and health-related impact caused by the isolation of RSC families living in the most marginal settlements.

In particular, the spread of Covid-19 and the consequent and necessary restrictive provisions have exacerbated subsistence problems of the people who live in the settlements (recognized, spontaneous, micro-areas, collective centres), by specifically affecting the most marginalized groups or those ones most at risk of discrimination among the RSC. Hence, it is emerged the extreme hardship of RSC families and children living in marginal settlements and / or characterized by critical issues with respect to their legal status (the so-called de facto stateless persons: people without citizenship and residency enrolment, thereby at risk of being excluded from any types of support.

Against this background, it is to be mentioned the UNAR-promoted P.A.L. project, standing for "Pilot interventions for the establishment of Working Groups and Networks of stakeholders involved, in various capacities, with the RSC community, in order to encourage the participation of Roma in social, political, economic and civic life", funded by the NOP (standing for, National Operational Programme)-Inclusion (Axis 3 - Ob. spec 9.5 - Action 9.5.4), operational in eight metropolitan cities (Rome, Milan, Bari, Naples, Catania, Messina, Genoa and Cagliari). In tandem with the other actions already implemented by UNAR and financed by the NOP Inclusion, this has made it possible to reach out to the RSC, also through an array of actions aimed at both formal and informal settlements, in conjunction with the Municipalities concerned and the NGOs active at a grass-root level. Alongside the main activities of the P.A.L. project, which will be spelled out below, the health-related emergency made it necessary to expand the P.A.L. project’s scope and made it possible to promote a series of low-threshold interventions through the distribution of basic goods (drinking water, foodstuffs, etc.), health devices (sanitizing gels, face masks, hygiene products) and information, awareness-raising and support interventions, to facilitate access of hard-to-reach people to ordinary and extraordinary measures implemented at a national level through the Municipalities and Regions. The initiatives focused on the cities of Milan, Rome, Naples, and Giugliano, where the RSC settlements showed a major urgency within the framework of the pandemic-related emergency.

a) As regards the city of Milan, the implementer of the relevant activities was the Casa della Carità and among the relevant actions mention has to be made of the following:

- Establishment of a coordination working group to detect the most vulnerable situations and needs of Roma and Sinti families;

- Realization of an assessment of Roma and Sinti families living in conditions of greater vulnerability, such as the families in occupied social housing solutions, those living in unauthorized settlements, and carnies;

- Mapping of the needs of families, which highlighted food needs, educational aid-related needs relating to distance learning, and products for children, aged 0-3 (milk, diapers);

- Interventions implemented in response to food needs, both by organizing the distribution of parcels to the settlements, and by delivering to the beneficiaries' homes shopping purchased online by the third sector stakeholders.

Stakeholders involved: Naga, Sant’Egidio, Caritas, ERRC, Opera Nomadi, Ass. Casavola, Upre Roma.

b) As regards the cities of Giugliano and Naples, the implementer of the activities concerned was Associazione 21 Luglio and the following is to be reported:

- Detection of needs and coordination activities with local stakeholders of the third sector;

- Distribution of food packages. In Giugliano, products for personal hygiene and house cleaning were added to foodstuffs. In Naples, some families were provided with recreational and educational material.

Stakeholders involved:

Naples: Chi rom e….. chi no, The Sisters of Providence; The Jesuit community of Scampia; The Lasallian community; Magma.

Giugliano: Arrevutammoce NGO and the Lasallian community.

c) As regards the Municipality of Rome, the implementer was Associazione 21Luglio and the following interventions are to be reported:

- Based on the identified needs, actions targeted in particular families with children, aged 0-3. Thanks to the resources of this project, from May 2020 up to date, 630 baby packs have been packaged and distributed, on a weekly basis, of which 240 in Castel Romano Village, 260 in Salone Village, 130 in the informal settlement “Tor Cervara”. The activities have continued to be carried out until September 2020;

- In order to counter forms of anti-gypsyism, the related packaging activity involved both Roma and non-Roma people. With support from a nutritionist and a paediatrician, this activity consisted in five different types of packages for children in accordance with their respective age group: each package, prepared according to the weekly needs, contains diapers; wipes; powdered milk, when necessary; baby food; flour; pasta.

Stakeholders involved: Caritas of Rome and Diocese of Rome.