**

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

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

***Italy Reply to the request of Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights for the compilation of the annual report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to education***

***February 2020***

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Following to your query, Italian Authorities are in a position to provide the following information.

**The right to education within the Italian legislation**

The Italian Constitution guarantees the right to a free compulsory education (art. 34, see further CRC/C/8/Add.18, §154), independently from the nationality or social and legal conditions of parents. This concerns also foreign minors, regardless of their legal status, on an equal foot with Italian citizens. The educational path lasts for at least 10 years, being compulsory education addressed to minors aged between 6 and 16, and it is aimed at the completion of the secondary high school until 18 years. The national guidelines for vocational orientation, adopted on 19 February 2014, promote a coordination system to prevent and contrast juvenile distress and to favour job access, social inclusion and intercultural dialogue.

By Act No. 107/2015 the school reform has been introduced, whose primary goals are to increase the educational level and students’ competences to counter social, cultural and territorial inequalities, to prevent and cope with school drop-out, to promote the right to education and equal opportunities on training and vocational education of citizens. Each educational institution should define in its Triennial Plan of educational offer some initiatives connected to the cultural, social and economic local context. Secondly, the Law introduces in the school autonomous organisations some figures dedicated to the reinforcement of the educational offer in order to implement priority projects.

Act No. 107/2015 provides for a reinforcement of school autonomy, finalized to the strengthening of the educational offer and project activities, and identifies among the educational objectives “the valorisation and the enhancement of language competences, with particular reference to the Italian language and to English and other languages of the European Union, also through the use of the Content Language Integrated Learning methodology”.

In implementing Act No. 107/201515 on 27 October 2017 the Ministry of Education, University and Research launched the National Plan for Education to Respect. This Plan is aimed at promoting in all schools educational paths and training actions to ensure the acquisition and development of cross-cutting social and civic skills, which are part of the broader concept of education for an active and global citizenship. The Plan, articulated in 10 main working areas, contains actions addressed at combating gender discrimination and mutual respect for differences; it also includes the creation of the website (Noisiamopari.it) to collect contributions, teaching materials and proposals for new training paths designed for teachers, students and families, also in order to launch activities to combat stereotypes and discrimination.

Act No. 107/2015 does not contain specific norms on minority languages, however it lays down some provisions that constitute major opportunities for minority language teaching. Consequently, each educational institution can define the number of teachers needed to strengthen the educational offer and so that teachers could be employed when possessing specific linguistic competences, even those qualified to teach in other educational levels, to activate the minority language teaching for the 20% autonomous part of their curriculum. Besides, each educational institution should also define in its Triennial Plan of educational offer some activities responding to the cultural, social and economic needs of the local context, using those teachers that have specific minority language competences. Moreover, the educational institutions that would like to promote and develop the minority culture and language can use the funds provided by the Legislative Decree No. 60/2017 dedicated to the enhancement of the humanist culture, the valorization of the cultural heritage and productions and the support to creativity. In fact, the Decree includes the so-called Plan of Arts that provides specific funds and defines strategic priorities such as “ensure linguistic pluralism and an attention to minorities and local popular traditions”.

Bill No. 3541/2016 provides for a special protection of the linguistic and cultural heritage of Roma and Sinti Communities and aims at promoting their oral traditions, children participation to cultural activities and religious practices, children use of their language, dissemination of culture, language, history, music, literature of Roma and Sinti Communities.

**The cultural dimension of the right to education**

The Ministry of Education and Cittadinanzattiva signed in 2015 a MoU aimed at promoting a culture of legality, security, well-being and citizenship in Italian schools through laboratories and activities involving families and local stakeholders. Actions are financed by the ad hoc funds provided for by the Ministry (Decree of 1 September 2016) on matters such as road safety, nutrition and dietary requirements, active citizenship and legality, social innovation projects, initiatives related to the National Day for safety at school.

In the database created by Act No. 285/1997 several initiatives are reported involving children and adolescents in projects on the use of play as a tool to promote creativity and socialization, to counter young uneasiness, school drop-out, bullying, to encourage social inclusion of children in economic restraints, to advance active citizenship and legality, and to develop good practices of social inclusion.

The Ministry of Education and the National Italian Olympic Committee (CONI) signed in 2016 a new MoU “School and sport” that, through the promotion of sport activities at school, aims to correct healthy lifestyles, to counter drop-out, violence and bullying, and advancing a legality culture. At the local level the use of public spaces is promoted to favour play and recreational initiatives, recorded in an ad hoc Registrar concerning social intervention and services.

In partnership with the Department for Anti-Drug Policies of the Prime Minister’s Office, in 2015 the Department for Youth launched a call for projects aimed at the prevention of the use of drugs and psychotropic substances and the related prevention of road accidents, as well as the responsible use of the Internet. NEETs are the target group of the activities. The projects are now underway.

As of early 2019, the new Government allocated additional resources – i.e. 30 million euros per year - to support youth policies, and the Department is about to launch a special measure aimed at supporting youth self-entrepreneurship. The call for proposals will offer financial and technical support to social and cohesive self-employment initiatives based on project proposals developed by young people for the improvement of the living conditions of the population at large. Young people will be able to submit a project proposal to face a "social challenge" identified by them in one of the following areas: 1) equality for all genders; 2) inclusion and participation; 3) training and culture; 4) spaces, environment and territory; 5) autonomy, welfare, well-being and health.

As for the languages and cultural traditions of linguistic minorities each year the Ministry of Education, University and Research publish financing plans to realise national and local projects. The public calls are addressed to the school leaders of the first cycle institutions – included pre-primary schools – that are situated in “delimited local and municipal areas where the provisions concerning the protection of historical linguistic minorities is applied”. The school leaders can submit project proposal concerning the local network of institutions to be implemented in the following two years. The Ministry has issued a public call also for the period 2018-2020. 14 project proposals were received and 10 projects have been financed distributed in 5 regions and targeted at 8 minority languages for a total amount of € 171,681. Moreover, considering that year 2019 marks 20 years since the passing of Law No. 482/1999, the Ministry provided in the financing plan also the organization of a National Seminar, that will be realized in fall 2019, in order to present and disseminate the best practices.

The last public calls have had the objective to promote a new type of projects that are not only finalized to the valorisation of historical or folklore aspects but also to the dissemination of the use of the living language and a real contextualisation of learning. In that direction, the Ministry has fostered the implementation of the projects during the curricular timetable together with the prosecution of extra-curricular activities as part of the educational offer; the Ministry requires the production of materials and didactic tools that could be transferable and be able to support the methodological innovation and process innovation; finally, the Ministry calls for an exchange among the different cultural and linguistic realities that are present in a territory fostering the presentation of project proposals concerning the collaboration among the different minority languages safeguarded by Law No. 482/1999.

In the framework of the National Strategy for Inclusion of Roma, Sinti and Caminanti (2012-2020), the theme of integration of RSC children falls transversely across the four lines of action of which it is composed the Strategy (Education, Work, Health, Accommodation), articulated in a total of 12 specific objectives. It should be stressed that the Education axis represents the first area of intervention identified by the Italian Strategy, whose treatment is "propaedeutic" to the others, with particular impact on the conditions of RSC minors. Since 2012, UNAR and MIUR (Ministry of Education) have gathered the National Working Group on Education (Tavolo Istruzione) and organized various bilateral meetings aiming to identify a set of programming initiatives in the framework of the Strategy in order to discuss a number of cases and critical issues related to RSC minors, and the procedures for sharing the tools and the financing opportunities for the promotion of the inclusion of Roma in schools with the NGOs and the communities. These meetings were organized through an institutional confrontation table as part of the Observatory for the Integration of Foreign students and for intercultural issues. In recent months MIUR has published notices (through the PON School but also through national and local funds invested), dedicated to schools at risk of dropping out which are communicated to the NGOs in order to facilitate their participation and in order to create networks with the educational establishments. In the framework of APAD Project (funded by UNAR with national funds and implemented in 2018), various NGOs (The Associations Ruggiu with scholarships for pupils in secondary education, the Comunità di Sant’Egidio and Cieli Aperti for primary schools) provide projects and scholarships to high-potential Roma students. MIUR and Ministry of Labour in the framework of the Action 9.5.1 of PON INCLUSION “Actions to combat school dropping-out and to develop schooling and pre- schooling”, are promoting specific projects in the schools of various Municipalities.