

## FWF GENDER FACT SHEET - ITALY

### FACTS & FIGURES

- Human Development Index: 29 of 189 countries (UNPD 2019)
- Gender Inequality Index: 29 of 189 countries (UNDP 2019)
- Global Gender Gap Index: 76 of 153 countries (WEF 2020)
- Violence against women ever experienced, intimate partners: 19%
- Violence against women ever experienced, non-intimate partners: 5%
- Adolescent birth rate: 5.2 per 1,000 births
- Infant mortality rate: 2.9 deaths per 1,000 live births
- Maternal mortality rate: 4 deaths per 100,000 live births
- Mandatory paid maternity leave: 150 days
- Expected years of schooling: 16.2
- Literacy Rate (adult, +15 years old): 98.8 %
- Population with at least some secondary school education: female: 75.6% - male: 83%
- Share of seats in parliament held by women: 35.6%
- Skilled labour force: 69.6%
- Labour force participation rate: 48.9% - female: 40% - male: 58.4%
- Estimated gross income per capita (2011 PPP \$): female: 26,473 - male: 46,357
- Total unemployment: 10.2%
- Youth unemployment (aged 15-24): 31.5%
- Youth unemployment rate (female to male ratio): 1.20
- Vulnerable employment: 17%
- Population: 60.6 million
- Median age: 47.3
- Sex ratio at birth (male to female births): 1.06
- Languages: Italian (official), German (parts of Trentino-Alto Adige region are predominantly German speaking), French (a French-speaking minority in Valle d'Aosta region), Slovene (Slovene-speaking minority in the Trieste-Gorizia area)
- Religion: Christian 83.3%, Muslim 3.7%, unaffiliated 12.4%, other 0.6%

### COUNTRY CONTEXT:

- Italy became a nation-state in 1861 when the regional states of the peninsula, including Sardinia and Sicily, were united under King Victor Emmanuel II.
- In the 1920s Benito Mussolini established a Fascist dictatorship. His alliance with Nazi Germany led to Italy's dramatic defeat in World War II.
- **In 1946, the Italian citizens voted against the monarchy in favour of a democratic republic.**
- Italy is famous worldwide for its **cultural heritages** which are one of the main attractions for tourists; **Italy's luxury fashion industry is renowned for its high-quality craftsmanship**; the **passion for food and cooking** is a "cultural trait" of the Italians.
- Italy faces persistent problems, such as **poor economic growth, high youth and female unemployment**, organized crime, corruption, and socio-economic disparities between the north and the south.

### **Economy:**

- **Italy's economy is not "uniform"**: the north is the most developed industrial area of the country, mainly dominated by private companies; instead, the south is less developed, its economy is mainly agricultural and the unemployment rate among the young and women remains high.
- The Italian economy is mainly based on **the manufacture of high-quality goods produced by small and medium-sized enterprises, many of them family-owned**, luxury goods, design furniture, tourism and food.
- Despite being the third-largest economy in the euro zone (after the Brexit), **Italy has an exceptionally high public debt** which limits economic growth and makes it vulnerable on the financial markets.

### **The fashion industry:**

- Italy has been **renowned for its high-quality craftsmanship**, sharp tailoring and luxury designs since the 11th century.
- **The manufacturing and export of fashionable items is an integral part of the country's economy whose annual revenues account for around 5% of GDP.**
- The Italian fashion, textile and leather sector is one of the most important in the world for revenue generated, number of people employed, and the number of companies involved, with **over 82,000 businesses and more than 620,000 people employed.**
- The Italian garment industry produces **both fast fashion and luxury products.**
- **Fashion production hubs** are located across Italy, but the most relevant are located in the **Veneto, Tuscany (Prato and Florence), Campania and Marche** (shoes production) regions.
- According to the National Social Security Institute (INPS) **in 2017 about 93% of companies in Italy employed 15 or fewer employees**, 78% of which employed 5 or fewer workers.
- **Women employed in the garment sector are around 75%**, nonetheless high-levels positions are generally held by men.
- Not only Italian women are employed in the fashion industry, but also **many migrants who are low-skilled, are employed for the most basic activities and are paid less compared to the nationals.** A report conducted by the New York Times in 2018 showed that **many (national) garment workers work informally**, mainly **home-based**, with no social insurance and are paid by piece rate.
- Most of the garment workers are employed with **fix-term contracts** or are on probation periods (illegally extended). According to Invisible Fabrics, estimated **about 2,000 to 4,000 homeworkers to be employed without a contract by garment factories.**
- **In Tuscany** (mostly Prato), there is an important **Chinese community that is famous for its fast-fashion products.** Chinese workers employed in Chinese-owned factories are paid by quota or piece rate and not a monthly wage; working hours are long (12 hours) and excessive overtime is the norm. **The working conditions are mostly unhealthy and unsafe for the Italian legislation (in the recent years, judicial actions were carried out against the factory owners).**

### **Women in the society:**

- According to the Italian tradition, women were expected to marry, have children, take care of their children and husbands. **In the last decades there were great social changes and women are encouraged to be study, find a job and be economically independent.**

- Despite the fact that traditional social attitudes are changing, **women still face great difficulties in their career progression** as they may not be taken seriously.
- **More than half of all Italians who graduate are women.** Nearly 59% of bachelor's graduates are women, while women make up 52% of PhD graduates, according to Istat.
- **The female employment rate in Italy has grown in recent years, reaching 53%, but it is still one of the lowest in Europe** (the European average is 67%). Common challenges in the workplace are represented by **lower wages and preference for male employees.** In fact, **Italy's pay gap is a little over 5%**, lower than any other EU country except Romania, according to Eurostat.
- **Italian men contribute very little to housework and childcare:** according to the Harmonized European Time Use Survey (2010) **women spend an average of 5 hours for domestic chores and family needs, instead men spend around 1 hour and a half.**
- Italian mothers often decide to leave the job market permanently or for an extended period of time once they have their first child because they find **extremely difficult to find a balance between family and work** (lack of affordable and good-quality childcare).
- According to new data by the national labour watchdog (INL), around **37,600 women with children submitted voluntary resignations in 2019, compared with just over 13,900 fathers.**
- Women are more likely than men to be employed in **unstable forms** and in the **lowest-paid sectors.** Italian women are particularly **underrepresented in management positions.** According to a recent Eurofound report, the total cost to Italy of underuse of female human capital is 88 billion euros - 5.7% of GDP.
- Despite the fact that in Italy abortion was legalized, **68.4% of the gynecologists identify as "conscientious objectors,"** according to 2017 Italian Ministry of Health data. In the southern regions of Molise and Basilicata objecting at rates of 96.4% and 88.1%.

#### **Gender-based violence:**

- According to Istat (2018 report), **31.5% of women experienced physical or sexual violence** (6.8 million), **20.2% physical violence** (4.3 million), **21% sexual violence** (4.5 million), **5.4% rape or attempted rape** (1.1 million), **23.3% psychological and economic violence, 16.1% were victims of stalking** (3.5 million).
- **The perpetrators of the most serious abuse are mainly current or former partners;** more than one in three women, among the victims of partner violence, received bruises, contusions or other injuries (37.6%). **About 20% were hospitalised as a result of the injuries received.** More than a fifth of those who were hospitalised suffered permanent damage.
- According to the Italian Senate, **over the last 6 years, a gradual reduction in the number of crimes of sexual violence were reported:** they fell from 4,617 episodes in 2011 to 4,046 in 2016 (approximately -12%). In the first nine months of 2017 there was a very slight further decrease (-0.2%) **These are crimes committed mainly by Italians, though the percentage of foreign perpetrators has risen.**
- **Homicides with female victims represent more than a quarter of total homicides committed over the last four years.** Most of the time these murders (femicides) take place within the family or within a sentimental relationship. **In Italy, a woman is killed every 72 hours.**
- Based on a survey conducted by ISTAT in 2016, **it is estimated that 1,403,000 women, during their working life, have suffered sexual harassment or blackmail in the**

**workplace**; perpetrators of sexual harassment were mostly men: they were for 97% of the victims women and for the 85,4% of the victims men.

- **The national 'Anti-violence and anti-stalking' helpline (1522) supports victims of gender-based violence and stalking.** It is free of charge, accessible 24/7, with multi-lingual support available: from December 2012 to August 2016 the helpline received 168 887 calls, 91 % of which were from women.
- **There are 486 women's shelters in Italy** with over 1,045 shelter places having hosted more than 19,456 women and children.

## **COUNTRY LEGISLATION:**

### **National legislation:**

- **Art. 3 of the Italian Constitution states that "all citizens are equal and have equal dignity under the law**, without distinctions on grounds of sex, race, language, religion, political opinions and personal or social conditions"; the second paragraph establishes that the state has to remove social and economic obstacles which limit the freedom and equality of citizens.
- **Art. 37 the Constitution states that a female worker shall have the same rights and, in the case of equal work, the same remuneration as a male worker**; working conditions for women must be adequate for the protection of the mother and her children.
- Art. 51 of the Constitution lays down the **principle of equality between men and women as regards eligibility for public office and for elected positions.**
- **Law 198/2006** (the so-called Equal Opportunities Code between Men and Women), **contains all anti-discriminatory provisions relating to gender discrimination and equal opportunities** in all civil, political, social and economic fields, including the working sector. **The terms gender and sex are not legally defined.**
- Law 216/2003 included **sexual orientation among the grounds of discrimination.**
- **Law 198/2006 prohibited sex discrimination** as regards **equal pay and equal treatment at work, pensions**, access to public employment, and equal treatment in a military career.
- Art. 26 of the Equal Opportunities Code states that "**sexual harassment**, that is any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a worker, in particular when creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment"; **it is also included in the list of discrimination on the ground of gender.**
- Law 151/2001 provides for a specific **health and safety risk assessment related to pregnancy**, imposes a ban on performing dangerous duties which put at risk the health of the mother and the child; eventually, the employer must transfer the pregnant woman to another job. **From the beginning of pregnancy until the child is 1-year old women cannot work at night (from 12p.m. to 6a.m.).**
- **Maternity leave lasts for 5 months**: 2 before the birth and 3 after it (changes are allowed). During the maternity leave, **80% of the overall wage is paid by the National Institute for Social Security (20% on the employer)**. This applies to workers employed in the private and public sectors and to self-employed persons. **Contributions are taken into account for pension rights and amounts.**
- The law guarantees **two hours a day for breastfeeding until the child is 1-year old.**

- **Fathers are entitled to 5 days of compulsory paid paternity leave** during the first 5 months from the birth.
- **A dismissal during the pregnancy, maternity leave, parental leave and for a period of 12 months after the birth is considered is prohibited.**
- According to law 198/2006 during the first year of marriage women cannot be dismissed.
- **In 2011, it was introduced a quota system** for the appointment of **managing directors of state companies**, where each sex cannot be represented in a proportion lower than one third.
- **In 1981, “honour-related killings” were excluded from the Italian Criminal Code.**
- Art. 609-bis of the Criminal Code criminalizes rape and any form of sexual abuse; **marital rape is punishable under this provision.**
- **Art. 572 of the Criminal Code criminalizes domestic abuse**, including non-relatives who cohabit. According to the jurisprudence of the Italian Supreme Court, **this provision shall be applied also to employment relationships at certain conditions.**
- **No specific law against sexual harassment at the workplace exists in Italy**, but other norms offer a protection against these behaviours.
- **In 2018, the “Red Code” Bill was adopted** by the Italian Parliament; it aims to protect women from violence and stalking, punishing those sharing sexual images or videos of someone without consent. **The so-called revenge porn is a criminal offence** (up to six years imprisonment or fines of up to €15,000).
- **Abortion has been legal here since 1978**; women seeking terminations in the first 90 days of pregnancy are protected. Women are allowed to ask for an abortion after the 90<sup>th</sup> day mark in case of serious foetal damages or if the mother’s life or health is at risk.

#### International legislation:

- **Italy signed and ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1985; in 2000, its Optional Protocol was ratified too.**
- **Italy signed the Istanbul Convention in 2011** and ratified it in 2013. No reservation to the provisions were issued.

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