2021 Gender Budget Report - Summary and main results

Gender budgeting has the aim to conduct an assessment of the different impact of funded policies on women and men, in terms of money, services, time and unpaid work. At the national level, it was first introduced on an experimental basis by Article 38-septies of Law 196 of 2009 and carried out for the first time on the State Final Accounts 2016. It is developed according to the methodological notes of the Decree of the Prime Minister, in agreement with the Minister of Economy and Finance, of June 16, 2017 and more detailed criteria as identified in circulars of the State General Accounting Department. The relevance of analyzing the budget from a gender perspective has become even more evident after the international health crisis, which began in 2020 and has led to significant economic and social consequences for the majority of the population. In that occasion, the risks linked with the deepening of existing gender gaps became evident, and one year later, a great number of studies have pointed to the widening of these gaps, primarily in the labor market and women's increased exposure to domestic violence.

Despite ongoing improvements, a number of challenges remain for the State's gender budget and, in particular, for its inclusion within a strategic framework of goals for reducing gender gaps. Positive signs in this regard come from the presentation of the first National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021-2026 in August 2021. The National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP) will also contribute to consolidating the State's gender budget, going beyond the current experimentation and, most importantly, integrating the gender perspective (gender mainstreaming) into the budgeting process, thus strengthening the potential impact of the budget. In particular, one of the goals of the reform related to the spending review is that the budget law for 2024 will present a classification of the planned items according to the criteria underlying the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2030, regarding gender budgeting and environmental budgeting.

The current gender budget is carried out from an end of year perspective, looking at the side of both expenditures and revenues. The gender budget consists of:

- an analysis of the main gender gaps in the economy and society;
- an analysis of the gaps that exist within the staff of central State administrations and the Prime Minister's Office;
- a review of legislation introduced to promote gender equality or act on certain known inequalities;
- an analysis of the impact of the tax levy on gender and the main tax policies and some specific concessions;
- a reclassification of expenditures in the State Budget Account according to a gender perspective, together with a summary of sectoral policies implemented by administrations and some insights on off-budget expenditures.

It should be remembered that not all public policies entail burdens on the State budget (e.g., when it comes to regulation) or find comprehensive

Gender budget analysis of the State final accounts
representation therein in terms of resource allocation, implementation and beneficiaries of the measures (e.g., those composed of transfers to other government departments or funds managed off-budget). This is also the case for several policies that have the overt intent of reducing gender gaps, such as regulations on "pink quotas" (regulation), kindergartens and childcare services (the responsibility of municipalities), IRPEF deductions and allowances for "brain return" or contributions for domestic workers (which do not find a separate representation in the budget), "Guarantee Fund for Small and Medium Enterprises"-special section dedicated to women's enterprises (which is an off-budget management).

The full version of the Report to Parliament on Gender Budgeting 2021 is available on the State General Accounting Office's website (http://www.rgs.mef.gov.it/VERSIONE-I/attivita_istituzionali/formazione_e_gestione_del_bilancio/rendiconto/bilancio_di_genere/index.html) along with a review of the provisions aimed at reducing gender gaps adopted in Italy from the post-World War II period to the present (Appendix I), the responses provided by administrations to questionnaires on personnel and sectoral policies from a gender perspective (Appendix II), and the statistical indicators monitored (Appendix III). Some results are also disseminated through the Open Budget App (http://bilancioaperto.mef.gov.it/landing.html).

Gender equality can be defined as the absence of gender differences in some dimensions of well-being. The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)'s Gender Equality Index summarizes six "domains" (work, money, knowledge, time, power and health) to which 31 indicators are linked with the aim of pointing out critical areas for action. Italy is the country that has made the most relevant progress since 2010, gaining seven positions in the index ranking, with an overall index increase of 10.5 points and ranking 14th in the European ranking with a score of 63.8 points compared to a European average of 68.0. Some critical issues remain, regarding gaps in the labor domain, for which Italy remains last among European countries with a score of 63.7, gaining rather modest progress since 2010. The health domain, with 88.4 points, is the only one in which Italian scores by subdomain are not lower than those of the EU. For the money domain, the overall score for Italy is 79.4, just below the European average of 82.4, with almost negligible improvements since 2010 (+0.5 points). In the knowledge domain, Italy's score is 59.0, again lower than the European average (62.7), but with clear progress since 2010 (+5.2 points). For the domain of time, Italy's score is 59.3, lower than the European average of 64.9 but an improvement over 2010, while less distant from the European average (55.0 points) is the score for the domain of decision-making power in Italy (52.2 points). The effects of digitization on the labour market, and the consequences for gender equality, are also gaining increasing relevance over the years, especially in light of the Covid-19 pandemic and the deep changes, digitally driven, affecting working life. Women who access the Internet on a daily basis are
on the rise, slightly less than men. It is, however, strong the gender gap to the disadvantage of women in the area of high digital skills and participation in education and among those working in ICT-related fields. The Gender Budget for the 2021 Annual Report makes use of a rich set of indicators, enriched extensively since the first 2016 report, to highlight the different characteristics and behaviors of men and women with respect to several phenomena in economy and society. The indicators are articulated according to typical public policy areas and highlight the main trends below:

- for the labour market, the female employment rate was at 49.4 percent, up from 2020 but still below 2019 levels. The gap between female and male employment rates in Italy was slightly decreasing to 17.7 percentage points. In the EU, 63.4 percent of women were employed, while the gender gap in employment was 9.9 percentage points. The share of women not actively seeking work was significant, and it was an even more intense phenomenon for the youngest 15-19 year olds (-0.1 percentage points compared to 2020) and residents of the South and Islands area. In 2021, the ratio of the employment rate of women aged 25-49 with at least one child of pre-school age (0-5 years) to the employment rate of women aged 25-49 without children was 73.0 percent, which was worse than in 2020 (- 1.2 percentage points). 23.2 percent of women (+9.7 percentage points compared to 2020) were employed by taking advantage of a tax incentive or tax break, mainly through the apprenticeship contract, southern decontribution and women's exemption of Law No. 92 of 2012 (so-called Fornero Reform). In 2021, women who are employed in their current job on a fairly stable basis (60 months or more) were 65.3 percent slightly down from the past; however, the gender gap is narrowing. In 2021, women insecure about their employment were 6.0 percent, down from 2018 but up from 2019. Women working part-time were slightly decreasing in the year, after a steady increase over the past decade. For 56.9 percent of female workers, this is a condition suffered and not a choice. Involuntary part-time, along with the higher incidence of low-paying jobs (12.1 percent in 2020), contributes to the worsening of women's wage levels as well as the increasing overeducation of the employed relative to employment and the persistent horizontal segmentation of the labor market. Indeed, on the latter front, it appears that women were mainly employed in trade, health care and education, while they were fewer in self-employment than men. The pandemic has slowed the growth of women-owned businesses in Italy, after a steady increase since 2014. In 2021 they accounted for 22.1 percent of the total and compared to men's, were smaller in size, located in the South and the Islands area and younger. The use of women's enterprises to the Guarantee Fund for Small and Medium Enterprises has decreased significantly in
the past year (about 39 percent); women entrepreneurs and professionals received financing of about 1,471 million euros.

-for work-life balance, paternity leave days in Italy increased from 3 (one of which is mandatory) to 11 (10 of which are mandatory) between 2015 and 2021, but the propensity of fathers to take optional leave remains low. Although the incidence of male beneficiaries in the total number of users of parental leave within the child's 12 years has increased over the years, the number of fathers taking such leave is lower than that of mothers. Parental leave was used on an emergency basis during the pandemic, in a context where the asymmetry of family workload still greatly disadvantaged women. Smart working, which was used as a measure aimed at stemming the Covid-19 contagion, resulted especially for women in increased family and domestic care burdens, especially during periods when schools and childcare services could not guarantee their full activity. In 2021, according to ISTAT estimates, the asymmetry of workload in couples was less pronounced than in previous years, but it still penalized women, particularly in the South. In the 2019/2020 school year, compared to 2018/2019, the percentage of children taken in by daycare centers was increasing, while the share for supplementary childcare services was slightly decreasing. "Spring sections" (open to girls and boys aged 24 to 36 months, they combine nursery care with the educational objectives and tools typical of pre-schools) are more prevalent in preschools than in kindergartens, and the highest percentage of those associated with state preschools is in the South. Overall, in southern Italy, there was a slight decrease in the number of places in public and private early childhood services compared to potential beneficiaries (+1.2 percent compared to 1.5 percent nationally) and a decrease in early years. Nurseries represent the type of services with the highest spending in absolute terms, followed by supplementary early childhood services and spring sections. User cost-sharing rates are highest in northern Italy. Between 2020 and 2021, the number of successful applications for the use of "bonus daycare centers" increased, as did the total payments and spending limits set. During 2021, the Universal Single Allowance was also established, while the emergency from Covid-19 resulted in the introduction of emergency reconciliation measures, which also include extraordinary babysitting bonuses.

- for labor protection, welfare and assistance, a decrease in median disposable income for Italy is recorded. In 2020, the median equivalent disposable income associated with women had decreased compared to 2019 and had reached an average of 18.2 thousand euros, including social transfers. The gender gap had remained significant (amounting to about 500 euros) although decreased compared to 2019, in fact social transfers tend to have a more favorable effect for men, who participate more actively in
the labor market. Early Eurostat estimates of poverty risk for 2021 show a slight decrease for Italy. The final Eurostat 2020 data, on the other hand, confirm a higher risk of poverty for single-parent families and, in general, for families with children. The risk of poverty is also higher for younger people, and gender gaps to the disadvantage of women become more acute for older age groups. In 2021, absolute poverty in Italy was at its highest level since 2005. Gender gaps did not appear significant; the share of women in absolute poverty in 2021 was 9.3 percent (-0.1 percentage points compared to 2020). Relative poverty has decreased as a result of the lowering of the poverty line and the differentiated dynamics that have characterized the distribution of consumption. Women reporting being in great economic hardship increased in 2020 compared to 2019 (9.4 percent vs. 8.3 percent) while those reporting living in households with severe material deprivation decreased (5.7 percent vs. 7.7 percent). The great number of support tools for workers and businesses put in place to counter the effects of the pandemic crisis have seen CIG Covid-19 play a crucial role as a counter-cyclical shock absorber (including for women) and a counter to rising inequality. However, INPS, the main national social security fund, reports that the pandemic appears to have produced limited impact on income support tools for the unemployed. In 2021, the average number of days per NASpI (New Social Security Employment Insurance) beneficiary decreased, from 149 in 2020 to 124 in 2021. There were about 1.7 million households that received Citizenship Income/Pension (RdC/PdC) for at least one month in 2021, up from 2020, as was the average amount. Emergency Income (REm) was also temporarily introduced during the pandemic, which covered 425 thousand families until March 2021 composed equally of women and men. The spread of DRC/PdC was characterized by a strong concentration in the South and Islands area. Italian women received, on average in 2021, a pension 31.3 percent lower than that of men, but they have a longer life expectancy, which contributes to their higher pension wealth. In Europe, this pension gender gap was 30 percent in 2019.

• for education and interventions against gender stereotypes, evidence shows that early school leaving is still a significant phenomenon and one that involves boys more. In 2021, Italian girls early school leavers were slightly higher than in 2020 (10.5 percent) and higher than the European average (7.9 percent). Boys accounted for 14.8 percent, down from the previous year (15.6 percent), but a higher percentage if compared to the average of other European countries (11.4 percent). The skills gap between 15-year-old male and female students in recent years decreased in both math and science, while it increased in reading, as found by the OECD with the latest PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) survey conducted in 2018. Italian female
students performed lower in financial literacy. They performed worse than both Italian males and peers in OECD countries. To counter this phenomenon, the Bank of Italy and the Committee for the planning and coordination of financial education activities also organize financial education interventions and courses that aim to reduce the gender gap. Italian women graduates between the ages of thirty and thirty-four are slightly decreasing from 2020, after a steady increase since 2006, and are more than men (33.3 percent versus 20.4 percent). Female university students enrolled in faculties in STEM disciplines are still few in number, although increasing; despite this, the largest number of women earning doctoral degrees is in the STEM area (45.8 percent of female doctoral graduates), up from 2020 (+2.6 percentage points). In 2021, employed young women graduates were 65.4 percent, a lower percentage than men, but up from previous years. The gender gap was narrowing compared to 2020. Employment of women with secondary education was also increasing slightly. Young female "neets" in Italy decreased in 2021, after an increase in 2020. Gender gaps and differences with other European countries where the phenomenon was on average less widespread remained. The migration rate of Italians with tertiary education, aged 25 to 39, has decreased over the years, and fewer Italian women graduates migrated than men in 2020. Women who access the Internet and use personal computers on a daily basis were on the rise, with numbers slightly lower than those of men. Twenty percent of Italian women said they had high digital skills, a lower percentage than men (25 percent).

- for participation in economic, political, and administrative decision-making processes, with the support of related legislation, the growth of women's presence in the boards of directors and auditors of listed companies and unlisted publicly controlled companies continues. By 2021, almost all listed companies in Italy had mixed management, and women accounted for 41.2 percent of board members. However, in the absence of regulatory constraints and given the characteristics of directors within boards of directors who are mainly independent and interlockers, a significantly lower presence of women in leadership positions than on boards of directors continues to be observed. In the largest companies listed on the Italian stock exchange, in fact, there is evidence of a lower incidence of women in the position of chairperson, albeit an increase compared to the past (23.5 percent in 2021 compared to 2.6 percent in 2011) and the absence of women among Italian CEOs in 2021 (after a meager presence around 3 percent in 2018 and 2019). In publicly controlled companies between 2014 and 2020, the presence of women on Boards doubled (from 14.8 percent in 2014, to 26.2 percent in 2017 and 28.8 percent in 2020), although it still fell short of the share required by regulations and was 10 percentage points lower
than their presence on the boards of listed companies. In the legislature through 2021, which began on March 23, 2018, the representation of women in both houses of parliament exceeded one-third of the total. This was the highest since the beginning of the history of the Republic and higher than the average of other European countries. During the Conte II government, the proportion of women increased compared to the original composition, although the percentage still remained lower than that reached in 2014. As a consequence of the redistribution of seats due to the United Kingdom's exit from the Union, in the European Parliament the representation of Italian female MEPs decreased slightly and stood at around 40 percent. In local governments, as a result of various reforms aimed at encouraging gender equality, the presence of women has increased mainly among city councilors and aldermen, while the increase and their presence at the regional and provincial levels has been more contained. The Covid-19 pandemic has helped to interrupt the gradual decline in civic and political participation among Italians and also to generate renewed interest among women. Compared to 2020, the percentage of women who have engaged in at least one civic and political participation activity has grown more than twice as much as that of men.

- The increase in cases of gender-based violence around the world as a consequence of the pandemic as early as 2020 was defined by CEPOL (European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training) and the United Nations as a "shadow pandemic" phenomenon, in view also of its consequences on health and welfare systems: there are, in fact, short-term and long-term negative effects on the victim's physical, mental, sexual and reproductive health. The consequences for women can, in addition, result in isolation, inability to work, limited ability to care for themselves and their children. In addition, the effects of gender-based violence affect the well-being of the entire community: children who witness violence within households (witnessing violence) may also suffer from emotional and behavioral disturbances. Also in Italy, an increase in cases of violence against women was registered; data from calls to the national anti-violence hotline 1522 show that calls, which decreased in the 2016-2018 three-year period, have increased since 2019, with an acceleration in 2021 when valid calls totaled more than 36,000 (+13.7 percent compared to 2020), of which more than 16,000 came directly from victims. Reported violence is mostly physical (43.7 percent), but all women experienced multiple forms of violence, including one-third also report psychological violence. Total homicides decreased in 2020 compared to 2019 (-9.2 percent), but those that have women as victims did not. A total of 141 victims in the family or emotional environment were reported in 2020 (49.3 percent of the total) of which 97 were women, up from 2019 (+4.3 percent) and down
from 2018 (-8.5 percent). In 2020, women were killed mostly by their partners or other relatives (77.6 percent of homicides): 60 homicides (51.7 percent) were caused by a man with whom the woman was in an emotional relationship at the time of her death (husband, partner, boyfriend), while 30 (25.9 percent) were caused by another relative. Typical occurrences of gender-based violence, in addition to those that resulted in a fatal outcome (most of which were voluntary homicides), include crimes in the form of battering, stalking, and sexual assault. Limited information is available compared to what emerges from the reports and/or arrests that are made by the police, and much violence is at risk of not being intercepted. Regarding stalking, for all years considered, complaints/arrests predominantly involve men, with percentages around 82 percent for the 2009-2020 period. Over the period under examination, the number of reports of men for stalking has been gradually increasing, albeit with a slight decrease in 2020 compared to 2019 (-2.6 percent). This is a fairly steady growth probably due to increased awareness of women and more effective sensitization with respect to the issue. In 2020, there were 12,194 victims of stalking, more than tripled from 2009, when there were 3,898. For battering, too, the majority of complaints were against men; in 2020 there were 9,357 complaints of which 7,084 (75.7 percent) were against men. A picture seems to emerge from the 2009-2020 data that shows a slow reduction in the phenomenon of beatings against women: the number of men reported grew until 2017 (592 complaints), while starting in 2018 it showed a decrease reaching 555 complaints in 2020. A similar situation emerges for women victims of beatings; again, from the 2009-2020 data, a decrease in women victims of beatings is shown starting in 2014. In fact, it went from 7,204 victims in 2014 to 6,125 in 2020 (down 5.0 percent). In contrast, the number of women victims of sexual violence, gradually decreasing from 2009 to 2016 (from 3,813 to 3,241 cases), rose again in the following two years with a peak in 2018 (4,025 cases), and then declined again the following year (4,016 in 2019) even more sharply in 2020 (3,803 cases). For 2020, however, the lockdown effect due to the Covid-19 pandemic may have contributed to a reduction in the number of violence that normally occurs on the street (down 5.3 percent from the previous year). Victims of sexual violence were almost all women, up 92.6 percent in the past year. The perpetrators of sexual violence were overwhelmingly men (98.1 percent).

- for health, lifestyle and safety, there was a slight recovery in life expectancy at birth in 2021 (a total of 82.4 years, with a gender gap of 4.6 years in favor of women) compared to 2020, the year in which the Covid-19 pandemic had abruptly interrupted the upward trend. The infant mortality rate saw positive trends for both genders until 2017 and a narrowing of the gender gap in favor
of women; in 2018, the rate did not change much and then declined again in 2019, reaching the lowest value in the entire historical series considered (2.7 for men and 2.3 for women). The mental health index reports that the gender gap was 5.1 points in 2021 (70.8 for men and 65.7 for women). In particular, for depression, the indicator for women was higher than that for men. For people’s lifestyles (obesity, smoking and alcohol consumption), men had more risky behaviors; for alcohol, as well as other risky behaviors, women were catching up with men; people who reported no physical activity always represent a high share of the population; and sedentary lifestyle was more common among women. Looking at the cancer mortality rate per 10,000 residents, there was an overall decrease over the past decade, due in part to increased prevention. The road accident mortality rate has shown an overall improving dynamic in the time series. In 2020 a more noticeable reduction in the rate following the pandemic restrictions, especially in the lockdown phase (67.2 for men and 14.7 for women) was reported, while in 2021 the rates went back up while remaining lower than the period before the health emergency from Covid-19 (83.2 for men and 15.8 for women). The indicator for people who have experienced accidents in the home environment confirms, as is easy to assume, that the gender most exposed to this risk is women: about 13.5 women per 1,000 had domestic accidents in 2021 compared with only 7.6 men per 1,000. Hospitalization rates, which express a summary measure of the use of hospital services by the population, showed a downward trend in recent years, for both genders in the case of ordinary regimen for acute care. The annual value of the hospitalization rate presents higher values for women for all types of regimen activities. Regarding psychiatric services in 2020, there was a clear reduction in the rates of psychiatric service users, a phenomenon that can probably be attributed to the Covid-19 pandemic, but as in previous years, the evidence of greater use for the female gender is confirmed and important gender differences by diagnostic group also remain. Schizophrenic, personality, substance abuse and mental retardation disorders are more frequent in the male gender than in the female gender, while the opposite is true for affective, neurotic and depressive disorders. As for the number of employees in the National Health Service, there was a 2.2 percent increase in 2020 compared to 2019, compared to a general reduction of 4.5 percent in the years from 2010 to 2020. The workforce-more than 600,000 people in 2020 including managers-was more than two-thirds women, prevailing in all roles with minor exceptions; they mainly perform personal care and assistance activities. The analysis on drug addiction in Italy showed that in 2021, out of a total of about 30 thousand individuals aged 15 years and older reported to the Prefectures for violations for
In central state government, the share of female workers increased from 53.5 percent to 57.2 percent between 2008 and 2020, with nearly 80 percent of them employed in the School sector. Women made up the majority of employees in preschool, primary and secondary schools, while they represented a minority in universities. The female presence was prevalent in the prefectural career and the judiciary. In the Armed Forces, the Police Corps and the Fire Department, on the other hand, a strong male predominance was noted, as was the case in the Diplomatic Career and the Institutes of Higher Education in Artistic and Musical Education. Relating to ministerial and Presidency of the Council employees, in 2020, women accounted for 53.3 percent of the staff, with very high shares in some ministries, such as those of Labor and Social Policy, Justice, and the Interior. In contrast, men made up more than half of the employees in the ministries of Defense, Infrastructure and Transport, Agriculture, Food and Forestry, and Economic Development. For the other central state administrations, the male figure in 2020 was not very different from the female figure, and for the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, there was a slight female predominance. Among managerial staff, the male presence appeared more pronounced and increased nearing to the top positions. Post-graduate degrees and age under forty-five were more prevalent among female executives than male executives. In 2020, the turnover rate was 76.6 percent for women and 52.6 percent for men resulting in fewer employees, which is relatively more pronounced for men. Men are willing to provide a more assiduous presence in the workplace and, from 2013 to 2020, earned more in terms of overtime pay on average than women, who instead tended more to work part-time and take time off work, mainly for family care needs.

In 2021, the largest use of part-time for both genders was observed in the Ministry of Ecological Transition (10.4 percent of female employees and 7.1 percent of male employees) and the widest gap was found at the Ministry of Interior (15.0 percent of women in part-time and 0.9 percent of men). Between 2020 and 2021 in almost all administrations the incidence of part-time employees declined further, to a greater extent for women. The only exceptions were the Ministry of the Interior (from 11.4 percent in 2020 to 15.0 percent in 2021) and the Ministry of Economy and Finance (from 8.0 percent in 2020 to 8.1 percent in 2021). Between 2020 and 2021, compulsory maternity days taken increased only for employees of the Ministries of Economy and Finance, Health, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, and Ministry of Economic Development. In addition, in many ministries in 2021 no days of paternity leave were taken in lieu of maternity leave. The gender composition of staff in ministries affects the difference in the number of female and male users of parental leave: in 2021 more men than women used it in the ministries of Economy and Finance, Justice and Interior. As far as days of
absence for parental leave are concerned, fathers in the Ministry of Economy and Finance also used the leave more than mothers, as did those in the Ministries of Interior, Justice, and Agriculture, Food and Forestry. In contrast, the duration of parental leave taken by mothers was longer than that for fathers in all other administrations. The average number of days of leave taken by mothers was higher than for fathers in the various ministries, except for the Ministry of Ecological Transition. In addition, the average days of parental leave taken by fathers and/or mothers increased in most administrations between 2020 and 2021. In 2021, adherence to ordinary agile work was more chosen among women. It is noteworthy that in 2021 many administrations did not report information regarding the number of managers and employees for accepted instances related to smart working excluding initiatives for the extraordinary extension of agile working arrangements granted as of March 2020. In those Ministries where smart working is now a used and properly regulated measure, monitoring procedures have been put in practice to test the satisfaction and effectiveness of the new agile working mode of both employees and managers in order to provide feedback on institutional requests from the Department of Civil Service. Some Administrations provided feedback through a rapid survey on the return to presence of public administration personnel following the Decree of the Minister for Public Administration of October 8, 2021, having as its objective not only to monitor the status of implementation of regulatory provisions, but also to delve into the organizational choices and operational solutions put in place regarding agile work. In addition, implementing the current regulatory framework, several administrations have adopted the Organizational Plan for Agile Work 2021-2023 (POLA), included as a section of the Performance Plan. Generally, the questionnaires submitted to staff revealed satisfaction, both from the perspective of users and referrers.

In 2021, almost all administrations provided their staff with services to facilitate work-life balance. In most cases, the daycare service is under direct management. Compared to 2020 and 2019, the use of nurseries was decreasing in almost all administrations; the only exceptions are: the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry with no change for men, of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Sustainable Mobility with an increase in applications from women, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation where there was an increase in applications received from women (and with an increase in applications for both women and men compared to 2019), the Ministry of Economy and Finance - Department of General Administration, Personnel and Services with an increase in applications from both men and women. As in previous years, women used this service the most, with the exception of personnel employed by the Ministry of Economy and Finance (Department of General Administration, Personnel and Services and Guardia di Finanza), the Ministry of Ecological Transition, the Ministry of Sustainable Infrastructure and Mobility, and the Ministry of Defense. In 2021, summer and/or after-school centers were active only in the Prime Minister’s Office, the Ministry of the Interior, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International
Cooperation. The Ministry of Economy and Finance, on the other hand, offered vouchers to employees for home care expenses for disabled parents, children under the age of 13, or people with disabilities regardless of age. In 2021, nearly all administrations were offering specific training courses on topics relevant to gender and equal opportunity culture or gender budgeting, in which mainly women participated. Courses common to several administrations covered: gender-based violence, smart working, work wellness, gender budgeting, and Diversity Management in Public Administration.

During 2021, legislative activity on equal opportunity and reducing gender inequality produced numerous measures. Among those introduced by the Budget Law for 2021, in the area of work-life balance include: the financing of the Fund for interventions to acknowledge the social and economic value of the non-professional care activity carried out by family caregivers; the extension, for 2021, of the mandatory paternity leave of 10 days (also with an optional alternative day of leave for the mother), then made structural as of 2022; the renewal of the Birth Allowance for each child born or adopted in 2021; the increase in allocation of the Universal Allowance and Family Services Fund and other related measures, for the reorganization and systematization of policies to support families with children, including the Birth Allowance; the allocation (as of 2022) of a share of the new Fund established to implement as well interventions to reform the tax system, for the Universal Allowance and Family Services, introduced in 2021; the increase in the share of the Municipal Solidarity Fund for the increase of places in kindergartens, a share that underwent a further increase with the Budget Law for 2022, also with the determination of a minimum level of available places to be guaranteed in municipal kindergartens. In the area of the labor market, we highlight: contribution waivers for hiring female workers between 2021 and 2022; the establishment of a Fund to support women’s enterprise and the Women’s Enterprise Committee, to conduct economic, statistical and legal analyses on the gender issue in enterprises and make related recommendations; annual funding, from 2021, of the National Micro-credit Board, again to support women’s entrepreneurship; the establishment of the Fund for the Support of Gender Equal Pay, also subsequently increased by the Budget Law for 2022; the allocation of additional resources, for 2021, to the Venture Capital Support Fund, for investment in highly innovative women's entrepreneurship projects. Resources for combating gender-based violence were also increased by guaranteeing and implementing the presence in penal institutions of psychologists for perpetrators of crimes against women, but also by establishing the Fund against Discrimination and Gender-based Violence. Regarding labor protection, welfare and assistance, we note: the establishment of a Fund to house convicted parents, with accompanying children, in dedicated facilities; a new Fund to finance municipalities to establish free parking spaces for vehicles used to transport the disabled or pregnant women; a monthly contribution to unemployed or single-
income mothers who are part of single-parent households with dependent disabled children (a provision later amended to allow, more generically, the recognition of the benefit to an unemployed or single-income parent in single-parent households with disabled children); the application of the pension provisions on access requirements and the starting date regime in force prior to the introduction of the Fornero Law, aimed at specific categories, including workers on leave to care for disabled children who have completed the relevant requirements by December 2021, as well as the recognition in full, for private sector employees, of the part-time work period for the purposes of reaching the seniority requirements for access to pension entitlement (in fact, it is more often women who give up work or take part time for family care). The extension to access the so-called "Ape sociale" (Social Security Retirement Advance) benefit to those who accrue the relevant requirements in the year 2021, confirming the reduction of contribution requirements to women with children (benefits subsequently extended for those who accrue the relevant requirements in the year 2022); possibility of using the "Women's Option" also for female workers who have accrued, by December 31, 2020 (deadline later extended to December 31, 2021 by the Budget Law for the year 2022), a contribution period of at least 35 years and an age of at least 58 years for female employees and 59 years for self-employed workers. Additional measures address health, lifestyle and safety and the issue of equal rights, in particular: the establishment of a Fund for the purchase of genomic tests for hormone-responsive breast cancer and funding to implement the Plan of Action in compliance with UN Security Council Resolution No. 1325 of 2000 on Women Peace and Security. During 2021, gender-related provisions were also approved in measures other than the Budget Law. Measures to promote work-life balance include: the delegation to the Government to adopt measures necessary for the adoption of certain European directives, including Directive 2019/1158 on work-life balance for parents and caregivers; the delegation of power to the government to reorganize, simplify and strengthen measures to support dependent children through the Single and Universal Allowance, which was preceded by a "temporary allowance" (from July 1, 2021 to February 28, 2022) and was finally established for dependent children up to the age of 21, according to the household's ISEE indicator, for the period between March of each year and February of the following year. Establishing this was accompanied by the creation of the National Observatory for the Single and Universal Allowance for Dependent Children. Regarding the labor market, we note: the extension for female entrepreneurs, of any age, taking over the management of a farm, of facilities for the development of agricultural entrepreneurship and generational turnover; the provision, in the bidding procedures for public investments financed with the resources of the NRRP and the National Plan for Complementary Investments, of recruitment obligations and the assignment of an additional score to the candidate who complies with given requirements on gender equality; the obligation to ensure criteria geared toward
effective gender equality for the recruitment of fixed-term staff (according to various recruitment methods, except those provided for by competition); the establishment of the Fund for design competitions and ideas for territorial cohesion, to finance projects useful for achieving at least one objective among increasing the participation of women in the labor market; the introduction of a non-repayable contribution for tourism enterprises that can be increased for female or youth enterprises; the extension of the obligation to prepare a staff status report also to companies employing more than 50 employees (instead of more than 100, as previously provided); hiring incentives, tax breaks, tools to promote work-life balance; and a gender equality certification system. As far as participation in economic, political and administrative decision-making processes is concerned, Decree Law No. 77/2021 stipulates that the composition of public bodies established by the aforementioned norm must be defined in compliance with the principle of gender equality, in particular with regard to: the appointment of members of the PNRR-PNIEC Technical Commission (for the environmental assessment of projects included in the PNRR, those financed by the Supplementary Fund and those implementing the Integrated National Plan for Energy and Climate - PNIEC) and members of the National Committee for the Evaluation of Research (CNVR). The gender proportion among members of the Boards of Directors of publicly controlled companies is then raised from one-third to two-fifths, as already provided for listed companies. In the area of combating gender-based violence, we highlight: the ratification of the International Labor Organization's Convention on the Elimination of Violence and Harassment in the Workplace; the extension of the applicability of the provisions to protect victims of domestic and gender-based violence, introduced by Law No. 69 of 2019 (so-called. Code Red), also to victims of such crimes in the form of attempted and attempted murder; a unified rite, as part of the reform of the civil process, for all proceedings related to the status of persons, minors and families; the delegation of authority to the government to regulate cases in which gender-based or domestic violence is attached or reported; and the introduction, in the Code on Personal Data Protection, of Article 144-bis referring to the phenomenon of Revenge porn. In the area of solutions to integrate gender policies into public action (gender mainstreaming), some measures have been introduced too. The Steering Committee for the NRRP must report to the Chambers on the status of implementation of the Plan and, among other things, on the impact of policies to support gender equality and women's participation in the labor market. The adoption of an Integrated Plan of Activities and Organization was prescribed to public administrations with more than fifty employees, which also indicates the ways and actions for full compliance with gender equality, including the composition of examining boards for public competitions. Provision has been made to strengthen the structures of the State General Accounting Office, with recruitment of additional staff for the activities of developing the Gender Budget envisaged under the NRP. With regard to equality in civil relations, the Protocol of Amendment to the Convention for the
Protection of Individuals with Regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data (Strasbourg, 2018) was ratified. According to the Protocol processing of data revealing a person's sex life is permitted only with precise safeguards against the risk of harming the interests and fundamental rights of citizens or suffering discrimination. The Treaties on Extradition and Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters between the Italian Republic and the Dominican Republic have also been ratified: the former provides, among the mandatory reasons for refusal of extradition, that the request is deemed to be made for the purpose of prosecuting or punishing a person on grounds of sex and/or sexual orientation; the latter stipulates that mutual legal assistance may be refused if it is deemed to be for the purpose of prosecuting a person based on gender. In the area of labor protection, welfare and assistance, amendments to the Highway Code were included with the possibility for municipalities to reserve, in built-up areas, spaces for parking also for vehicles serving pregnant women or parents with a child up to two years of age, equipped with a special badge ("pink permit") while, as part of the interventions against gender stereotypes, a ban on roads and vehicles on any form of advertising containing gender stereotypes or sexist, violent, discriminatory messages was included among the amendments to the Highway Code. The state of emergency brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic has lasted through 2021, resulting in the enactment of specific measures, some of which are time-limited in effect and relevant to gender gaps. These include measures pertaining to the area of work-life balance (in the areas of agile work, extraordinary leave, baby-sitting bonus) and equality in civil relations (such as support for the provision of maintenance allowance by separated or divorced parents).

The Budget Law for 2022 also introduced new measures with a gender impact. In the area of possible ways to integrate gender policies into public action (gender mainstreaming), we note: the adoption of a National Strategic Plan for Gender Equality, with the creation of an inter-institutional steering committee and a National Observatory for the integration of gender equality policies; the allocation of resources, as of 2022, in the Fund for policies related to rights and equal opportunities. To counter gender-based violence, we find: the development and subsequent adoption of a National Strategic Plan against violence against women and domestic violence, with a structured system of governance through an inter-institutional steering committee and a dedicated Observatory; the establishment of a Fund to prevent and combat cyberbullying and increased funding to the Fund for policies related to rights and equal opportunities, to establish and strengthen rehabilitation centers for abusive men, anti-violence centers, and shelters; and funding for the "Donnexstrada" Association to guarantee pathways to protect women's safety. In the sphere of women's participation in the labor market, the application of measures for the development of agricultural entrepreneurship and generational turnover was extended to agricultural enterprises with predominantly or totally female participation, reserving for them part of the resources allocated, for 2022, in the Revolving Fund
to encourage the development of female entrepreneurship in agriculture, with subsidized loans and non-repayable grants. Finally, social security contributions payable by employed mothers in the private sector were reduced for 2022. Among the measures to protect and support maternity, the following were provided: recognition, for specific categories of female workers below a certain income threshold, of maternity allowance for an additional three months after the end of the maternity period; suspension of the commencement of deadlines for tax obligations to be fulfilled by freelancers, including in the case of premature birth; and a temporary replacement service for family caregivers (very often women) during vacations, illness and maternity. Relating to the area of health, lifestyle and safety, the following should be noted: a VAT reduction for non-compostable feminine hygiene protection products; the suspension of the time limit for tax obligations to be paid by freelancers even in the case of termination of pregnancy beyond the third month from the beginning of the pregnancy. Finally, regarding education and interventions against gender stereotypes, the Anna Milanese Foundation was funded to assist poor and orphaned Ethiopian girls.

During 2021, guidelines for governments on the most effective strategies for achieving gender equality and anti-discrimination goals were approved at the European level, including the Regulation establishing the Recovery and Resilience Facility and requiring that interventions in individual states' National Plans be adopted with a gender mainstreaming approach. In fact, an explanation of each measure’s contribution to gender equality and equal opportunity and consistency with both Goal 5 of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and national gender equality strategies was required for approval of the NRP. A methodology for reporting on social spending under the Device, including on gender equality, was then defined.

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<th>Tax systems and tax policy decisions affect men's and women's choices differently on various issues such as: working careers, procreation choices, and the decision to purchase care and household management services in the market. Even in most European countries, where taxation is on an individual and progressive basis, with deductions for family burdens and thus regardless of the gender of the taxpayer, indirect gender effects are evident. The adoption of a gender mainstreaming approach in tax policy choices, as well as attention to the effects of tax provisions from a gender perspective, are still scarce. Taxation on second-income earners is an issue with a gender connotation: from this point of view, the Italian system would tend to be gender-neutral since it is based on a progressive tax, the Irpef, whose tax basis is constituted by the individual incomes of taxpayers, just as the main instruments for reducing the burden and/or supporting labor income are parameterized to the level of individual income.</th>
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<td><strong>Revenues in the 2021 State budget from a gender perspective</strong></td>
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For this reason, Italy's levy system implicitly favors working couples over single-income couples, at the same household income level and particularly those in which the two recipients have a similar income level. Some tax breaks can help minimize gender differences, for example, deductions of expenses for personal care attendants and daycare enrollment, but also deductions of contributions for domestic and family service attendants. Although the subsidized tax regime for the so-called "Brain Return" does not have among its purposes to directly affect gender differences, women would appear to have benefited proportionately more than men. 

In the 2020 tax year, 16,317 individuals benefited from the benefits, about 31 percent of them were women. The average employment income declared by women, although lower than that declared by men (68,110 euros versus 138,994 euros), was still much higher than the average income of Italian taxpayers. In fact, looking at all workers with medium-high incomes (above 55,000 euros), only 26.4 percent of the total were women, while for skilled workers who have returned from abroad thanks to the relief, the share of women rose to 31 percent of the total. An analysis of data referring to income subject to ordinary Irpef, tax years 2016-2020, based on the distribution by type of declared income, income classes, and gender of taxpayers was undertaken in the Report to the Gender Budget 2021. The data do not relate to the taxpayers' household but to the information contained in the tax return forms that the individual, a natural person, is required to submit. The number of returns may be greater than the number of taxpayers because a single taxpayer may have different sources of income and thus appear multiple times in the analysis by income type.

In 2020, the predominant type of income was employee and related income (459 billion euros), followed by pension income (271 billion euros), self-employment and related income (26 billion euros), income from buildings and related income (25 billion euros), and income due to the entrepreneur in ordinary accounting (4.3 billion euros). In 2020, the prevailing income of taxpayers corresponded to income from being an employee and assimilated work (respectively, the income mounts were: 174 billion euros for women and 286 billion euros for men) followed by retirement income (115 and 156 billion euros for women and men, respectively).

Per capita income from employment has tended to remain stable from 2016 to 2020 and has the highest value of the gender differential in the income bracket over 300,000 euros, with women having a per capita income of 385.7 thousand euros in 2020 and men 484.5 thousand euros. In contrast, the smallest gender gap is in the income bracket between 50 and 100,000 euros, where women have a per capita income of 55.3 thousand euros and men 56.4 thousand euros. For per capita retirement income, there has been stable growth over the five-year period for both men and women. The largest gender differential can be found in the income bracket above 300,000 euros, with women having a per capita retirement income of 47,000 euros in 2020 and men
75.5,000 euros. In contrast, the smaller differential is in the income bracket between 20 and 50 thousand euros, with women having a per capita retirement income of 24.4 thousand euros and men 26.4 thousand euros.

Per capita income from self-employment and assimilated work, between 2016 and 2020, appears to be increasing for both genders. This type of per capita income, in 2020, shows a gender gap to the disadvantage of men in the range of 100 thousand to 300 thousand euros: 109.7 thousand euros for women and 101.4 thousand euros for men. In contrast, the smaller gender gap is present in the income bracket between 0 and 5 thousand euros, as women have a per capita income of 1.9 thousand euros and men 1.8 thousand euros.

The per capita income earned by the entrepreneur in ordinary accounting and assimilated between 2016 and 2020 shows an increase in the gender gap. In 2020, the largest gender differential for this income type is found in the income bracket over 300 thousand euros, with women having a per capita income of 417 thousand euros and men 451.9 thousand euros. In contrast, the smallest gender differential is found in the income bracket between 0 and 5 thousand euros, as women have a per capita income of 891 and men 835 euros.

The State's gender budget provides a "reclassification" of expenditures in the Statement of Accounts in light of an assessment of their different impact on gender gaps. The reclassification categories are as follows:

- "direct to reduce gender inequalities" expenditures related to measures directly attributable to or aimed at reducing gender inequalities or promoting equal opportunities;
- "sensitive" expenditures related to measures that have or could have an impact, even indirectly, on gender inequalities;
- "neutral" expenditures related to measures that have no direct or indirect impact on gender.

The guidelines for the classification of the 2021 Financial Statement have maintained the method of reclassification of expenditures, and the criteria of the past edition are also used for the identification of personnel expenditures. Personnel expenditures are excluded from the classification exercise and are analyzed separately because they do not have a purpose of their own but are instrumental in the implementation of various state interventions. They may or may not have an impact on gender in relation to the mission, program or action within which they are placed. The total expenditure of the State budget, on balance, was about 1,060.0 billion in commitments (-1.5 percent compared to 2020, 1,076.1 billion). Net of personnel expenditures, committed spending in 2021 amounted to 953.2 billion (+1.7 percent compared to the previous fiscal year), of which about 83.5 percent (-2.4 percentage points compared to 2020) was classified as gender-neutral, 15.9 percent was recognized as gender-sensitive (+2, 3 percentage points compared to 2020, it was 13.6 percent), while that considered as directed at reducing
gender inequality made up just 0.57 percent of commitments (about 5.4 billion and +0.01 percentage points compared to 2020, it was 0.56 percent). Within the central government, expenditures directed at reducing gender inequality were mainly for corporate daycare centers, summer centers or after-school care for employees' children and, in a few cases, for training for a gender culture or for infrastructural adaptation of premises to better meet the different needs of men and women. Interventions aimed at reducing gender inequality were mainly concentrated in three missions of the State budget: "Social rights, social policies and family" (3.51 billion euros in terms of commitments), "Italy in Europe and in the world" (1.40 billion euros), and "Social security policies" (0.46 billion euros) and, looking at the economic categories of expenditure, consisted mainly of transfers to other public entities: social security agencies, the Presidency of the Council of Ministers and international organizations.

Expenditures classified as gender-sensitive also largely consist of transfers to other government entities to finance monetary contributions to individuals (and to a lesser extent to businesses) in the area of welfare and assistance and labor policies. Expenditures in the areas of education service delivery, reception of immigrants and asylum seekers, and justice are also considered sensitive. Gender-sensitive expenditures increase when labor costs are also considered. Indeed, a significant part of the productive factor represented by government personnel appears to be associated with activities that can have impacts, including indirect impacts on inequality.

In the gender budget, central state administrations and the Presidency of the Council of Ministers report on the actions taken and specific addresses issued to affect the reduction of gender inequality during the year 2021, through the special questionnaire.

Among the specific addresses promoted to reduce gender gaps, the Department of Equal Opportunity of the Prime Minister's Office highlighted a series of interventions and initiatives related to: combating human trafficking, business support, gender quotas and equal opportunities in PAs work-life balance, sexual and gender-based violence, genital mutilation and forced marriage, highlighting how the pandemic from COVID 19 has exacerbated social inequalities especially of women. In 2021, the new National Strategic Plan on Male Violence Against Women 2021-2023 was presented, which aims to combat different forms of violence against women through prevention measures, victim protection, information and community awareness.

The Ministry of Labor and Social Policy reported the issuance of the Policy Act 2021 for the Third Sector, with the identification of general objectives, priority areas of intervention and lines of activity - including the achievement of gender equality and empowerment (greater strength, self-esteem and awareness) of all women and girls. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, in its policy
acts, has confirmed the protection of the most vulnerable refugees (women and minors) among the objectives to be pursued and, within development aid, the enhancement of the role of women. Within its administrative action, work-life balance, organizational well-being and gender equality were also promoted. The Ministry of Education, in order to support the work of teachers, school staff and families engaged in equal opportunity education and training on issues related to all forms of discrimination, has continued its support action through the special web platform www.noisiamopari.it, where the experiences of schools on the issue of equal opportunities are collected and information, exchange and support tools are offered.

A number of administrations have identified actions directed at reducing gender inequality in 2021, however, only a few of them have provided monitoring systems accompanied by data and indicators by gender, and even fewer have carried out gender analyses of context and/or potential impact of policies. Most of the interventions carried on actions already reported in 2020, while only the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, the Ministry of Economy and Finance, the Ministry of Justice, and the Ministry of Health indicated actions that were not reported in the previous edition of the Gender Balance. The largest number of these actions are the responsibility of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, in particular they concern: projects to encourage greater reconciliation of work and family spheres (including the nationwide dissemination of Family Audit certification); the adoption of the decree for the allocation of the Family Policies Fund 2021 for the transfer of resources to local authorities for the continuation of initiatives in favor of the birth rate; corporate welfare projects and for the fight against educational poverty and the support of cultural and educational opportunities for people under the age of 18; funding to the “Istituto degli Innocenti” (it is one of Italy's oldest public institutions dedicated to the care of children, their education and protection) in Florence for the activities of the National Center for Documentation and Analysis for Childhood and Adolescence; the presentation of the first National Strategy on Gender Equality 2021-2026; and the project to promote women’s leadership in businesses in G20 countries (as part of the Italian G20 Presidency). The Ministry of Economy and Finance reported for the first-time initiatives for the implementation of projects and activities aimed at reducing gender inequality in the context of cooperation and support for the social and economic development of low- and middle-income countries that are members of International Organizations and Multilateral Development Banks and Funds in which Italy participates as a shareholder or donor. The Ministry of Justice pointed to an intervention aimed at improving the reception of mother and child in facilities outside the detention circuit (foster homes and residential homes) and also a procedure for the selection of psychological professionals who are experts in the intensified cognitive behavioral treatment of perpetrators of crimes against women. The Ministry of Health indicated a Distance Learning Program (FAD) aimed at social and health workers in emergency rooms, to enable intercepting
and bringing out cases of violence and implementing more timely and timely management of the victim of gender-based violence.

Examining the actions that continued, and that were already reported in previous years, for the Presidency of the Council of Ministers we recall: the unique fund in support of the Italian sports movement for female athletes for economic support for maternity, which allowed them to benefit from a contribution for 10 months during pregnancy; the funding of EduCare project proposals for non-formal and informal education projects and playful activities for the empowerment of children and adolescents; the Voluntary Contribution of the Mednet Network - Pompidou Group of the Council of Europe; the promotion of information and training aimed at all civil servants, including through the involvement of administrations, on combating violence and gender discrimination, together with the strengthening of the role of the Guarantee Committees (CUGs) establishing a special national network; "STEM2020: Educational pathways in the subjects of the future with the aim of bridging the gender gap in science topics also to counter the under-representation of women in strategic sectors for economic growth; the Freedom Income Fund (May 2020 Relaunch Decree) as a response to the economic effects of the pandemic for women in the most vulnerable condition and to foster, through economic independence, pathways of autonomy and empowerment of women victims of violence in poverty; Fund aimed at promoting personal training and increasing cultural and participatory opportunities, of women who carry out activities performed in the domestic sphere, without subordination and free of charge, aimed at caring for people and the domestic environment; application of the legislation on gender quotas and implementation of related monitoring tools, aimed at reducing the existing gap between the representation of men and women in the administrative bodies to control public companies; Special Section "Presidency of the Council of Ministers - Department for Equal Opportunities" within the Central Guarantee Fund for Small and Medium Enterprises, aimed at facilitating women's access to credit through the provision of a public guarantee; Project CL. E.A.R. (Closing the gEndeR penSiOn gAp by increasing women's awaReness) for the improvement of knowledge, particularly on the part of women, of the consequencesin terms of pension levels of the choices made during their career and provide the appropriate cognitive tools to support the determination of these consequences; public utility number 1522 to provide an initial response to the needs of victims of gender-based violence and stalking; allocation of resources from the "Fund for policies related to rights and equal opportunities" 2021, to "strengthen the forms of assistance and support for women victims of violence and their children through homogeneous ways of strengthening the network of territorial services, anti-violence centers and support services for women victims of violence; Funding of urgent interventions to support the measures taken by Shelters and Anti-Violence Centers in relation to the health emergency

| Still on sectoral policies: continuation of actions from previous years |
deriving from COVID 19; funding of projects implemented at the territorial level aimed at ensuring, on a transitional basis, adequate housing, food and health care conditions for the recipients and, subsequently, the continuation of assistance and social integration; Service connected to the toll-free number "800. 290.290" (Anti-Trafficking toll-free number) for the benefit of victims of trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation, forced labor, begging and more generally in the context of illegal economies; interventions aimed at the recovery of men perpetrators of violence. With regard to other administrations, the continuation by the Ministry of Economic Development of interventions in favor of female entrepreneurship should be highlighted, as well as that of the Ministry of Agricultural Food and Forestry Policies; the Ministry of Labor and Social Policies continued with interventions related to the activity of the National Equality Council and the network of territorial equality councilors to reduce gender inequalities; the Ministry of Justice continued with initiatives aimed at maternity protection for women prisoners who are mothers and the protection of minors present in Penitentiary Institutions; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs reported interventions for the implementation of initiatives related to Resolution no. 1325 of 2000 of the United Nations Security Council on "women, peace and security," and subsequent resolutions, including actions to promote, monitor and evaluate the plan, training in mediation and conflict prevention. The Ministry of Health continued with actions to promote sexual health and prevent the transmission of sexually transmitted infections in young people through the development of a model of educational intervention for secondary schools; transfers to the regions of funds needed for training activities for health personnel in the prevention, care and rehabilitation of women and girls subject to or at risk of female genital mutilation practices continued.

The 2021 initiatives reported by central governments as gender-sensitive, although on the rise from the previous year, continued to be relatively few. The largest number of measures were indicated by the Presidency of the Council of Ministers. As for other administrations, it should be noted that in 2021 the Department of Prison Administration of the Ministry of Justice also continued the organization of paid work activities and cultural, recreational and sports activities for the inmate population in prisons. In 2021, the questionnaire on the survey of sectoral policies of the Administrations was supplemented with a final section, with the aim of pointing out some sectoral interventions carried out and services provided that are more characteristic of the sectoral action of the Administration that the latter consider gender-neutral. Recalling the aspects to be taken into consideration for the verification of whether the interventions are actually gender neutral, the analysis of some of these measures confirms a sort of difficulty of the Administrations in identifying their best classification.

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<th>Still on sectoral policies: difficulty identifying gender-sensitive initiatives</th>
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Public policies aimed at promoting gender equality are also financed outside the State budget. The gender dimension in the planning of policies financed by community funds has been integrated since the 1990s. Gender equality is a cross-cutting principle taken into account in the programming, implementation and evaluation of interventions, as well as a specific intervention axis, in the European Structural Funds cycle from 1994-1999. The European Strategy for Gender Equality 2020-2025, presented in March 2020 by the European Commission, confirms the Commission’s desire to ensure gender mainstreaming within the instruments provided for in the multiannual financial framework. In Italy, according to data from the National Monitoring System (published on the OpenCohesion portal), updated as of December 31, 2021, in the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund of the 2014-2020 cycle, there are more than 106 thousand projects directed to the promotion of gender equality, for a total public cost of about 555.6 million euros, compared to a total of 534 thousand projects and a total cost of 60.1 billion euros. Compared to last year’s analysis, referring to December 31, 2020, nearly 4 thousand new projects have entered the monitoring phase with a total public cost of 72.9 million euros and more than 27.7 million euros spent. The resources were mainly focused on four areas: access to employment, training, creation or improvement of services for the reconciliation of family lifetime and work time, and finally, care services and social inclusion of at-risk groups.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation supports lots of interventions in third countries for gender equality and women’s empowerment that are implemented by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS). In 2021, among the resources available to AICS, the percentage of resources considered to be directed at reducing gender inequality was 41.8 percent (just under 307.9 million euros) of the total resources committed (about 737.0 million euros). Compared with the previous year, this share remained almost constant (41.6 percent in 2020). In continuity with previous years, also in 2021 more than half of the total resources committed to gender inequality reduction initiatives were earmarked for voluntary contributions, to numerous UN agencies, the Global Fund to Fight HIV, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and the GAVI Alliance. In addition, many development and humanitarian aid interventions were funded in several partner countries. In terms of amounts committed, the largest handouts went to Afghanistan, followed by Syria and Iraq. Activities initiated with these resources ranged from combating sexual and gender-based violence, which is particularly prevalent in fragile and crisis contexts, to promoting maternal and child health, women’s education, creating a sociopolitical environment conducive to women’s economic empowerment, financial inclusion and access to credit.