

## ITALY

### **CESCR E/1993/22**

155. The Committee considered the second periodic report of Italy concerning articles 1 to 15 of the Covenant (E/1990/6/Add.2) at its 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> meetings, held on 3, 4, and 10 December 1992 (E/C.12/1992/SR.13, 14 and 21).

156. Introducing the report, the representative of the State party pointed out that the report under consideration had been drafted nearly three years earlier when a positive economic and social situation had still prevailed. Today, however, the country was beset by grave economic problems because the international economic situation had imposed extraordinary financial burdens on the Government. There were also new problems regarding unemployment resulting from the changeover in management as national industry became privatized.

#### General matters

157. With regard to the general framework within which the Covenant was being implemented, members of the Committee wanted to know: if in preparing the report the Interministerial Committee of Human Rights had sought or received input from any sources outside the Government; what was the status of the Covenant in domestic law and whether the ratification of the Covenant had given rise to any modification of the relevant law; which of the rights stipulated in the Covenant and recognized by Italian law were subject to specific non-discrimination provisions in national law; the extent to and manner in which non-nationals were not guaranteed the rights recognized in the Covenant and how any such differences were justified; the limitations which might have been imposed upon the exercise of rights set forth in articles 6 and 15 of the Covenant, the reasons therefore and the safeguards against abuses in that regard; what was the demographic distribution of the migrant population and what recent changes might have taken place in that regard; and what developments there had been concerning the actual enjoyment of the rights stipulated in the Covenant, particularly in regard to vulnerable or disadvantaged regions or groups.

158. In his reply, the representative of the State party stated that the report under consideration, like other reports submitted by Italy under the various human rights conventions it had ratified, had been drafted by the Interministerial Committee of Human Rights which was composed of representatives of all the ministries concerned. The report had not been widely circulated to the public in advance although it had been given some publicity among specialized circles in the country. He also pointed out that, since the ratification of the Covenant, its standards had been applied frequently. Italian law had been brought into line with international standards in that respect, particularly by virtue of article 10 of the Constitution. As regards non-discrimination provisions of national law, it had not been necessary to introduce specific amendments since the principle of parity was proclaimed under all Italian legislation, starting with the Constitution. Regarding the limitations imposed on the exercise of rights set forth in articles 6 to 15 of the Covenant, those articles were covered by the Labour Act of 1970 and by articles 39 and 40 of the Constitution which affirmed the freedom of trade union organization and the right to strike, respectively. Limitations on the right to strike were

imposed with regard to essential public services and situations which might endanger public safety or threaten the basic rights of citizens.

159. Turning to questions concerning the migrant population, the representative stated that the Italian labour market had been substantially affected by increased immigration. At the end of 1991, there were 900,000 foreign workers in Italy, representing a 15 per cent increase over the corresponding figure from the previous year. The critical international situation had played a part in this trend as shown by the recent increase in immigrants from the former Yugoslavia and Albania. Immigrants to Italy had come from every region of the world: 34.4 per cent came from Europe, 30.7 per cent from Africa, 18 per cent from Asia, 16.4 per cent from America and 0.5 per cent from Oceania. Among the 169 countries involved, Tunisia, the Philippines, Germany, the former Yugoslavia, Senegal, Albania, Egypt and China were especially prominent. Given that clandestine immigration continued and that it was necessary to regulate the position of migrant workers arriving in Italy under the terms laid down by Act 943 of 1986, a new law had been passed, Act 39 of 1990. Additionally, interministerial decrees were published each year on issues of general policy relating to immigration and applications for refugee status. To assist prospective immigrants, an information handbook on the subject had been published in a variety of languages and widely disseminated abroad.

#### Article 6: Right to work

160. Members of the Committee requested information on: the situation and trends over the last 5 to 10 years concerning employment, unemployment and underemployment in Italy, particularly in regard to women, young persons, older workers, disabled workers and migrant workers; which group were considered especially vulnerable or disadvantaged with regard to employment and what measures had been taken in that regard; what proportion of the working population held more than one job in order to secure an adequate standard of living for themselves and their families; and how the term "unemployment" was defined in Italy.

161. In his reply, the representative stated that, in response to the worsening economic situation, the Government had undertaken a number of measures aimed at resolving the dilemma of ensuring recovery without compromising the functioning of the social State. In particular, the Act of 23 October 1992 had required the Government to promulgate standards for rationalization of public health, public sector employment and local finances. Trade unions understood the situation and had made a praiseworthy effort to narrow areas of confrontation.

162. With respect to those holding more than one job, the representative pointed out that it was difficult to establish statistics in that regard since second jobs were rarely declared to the authorities. However, the Government had decided to apply the conditions prevailing in the private sector to the public service, which hitherto had enjoyed shorter working hours and greater job security, in order to reduce opportunities for moonlighting. In Italy, unemployment was generally defined as a situation in which a person was either without a job or seeking one. Persons working less than 22 hours a week were also considered as unemployed. Because of the changes and new techniques in the way in which industry was organized, an increasing number of persons remain unemployed because they did not have the skills required to fill jobs that were available.

#### Article 7: Right to just and favourable conditions of work

163. Concerning these issues, members of the Committee wished to know: the situation of migrant workers regarding remuneration, safe and healthy working conditions, limitations of working hours and holidays; the Government's estimate of the number of non-European Community workers illegally present in Italy and irregularly employed both in the economy and in private households; the situation of foreigners illegally working in agriculture and as street vendors and the measures taken by the Government in that respect; whether there were wage earners remaining outside the protection of the system of minimum wages; how the system of the scala mobile ("sliding scale") worked; and statistical and other information concerning the number, nature, frequency and trends over time of occupational accidents and cases of occupational diseases.

164. In his reply, the representative reported that as at 30 September 1992, there had been 750,000 non-European Community workers in Italy. Some 34,000 of those had entered Italy between January and September 1992 and had regularized their situation. Of recent legal immigrants, 6,000 were asylum seekers from Eastern Europe, including displaced persons who wished eventually to return home. There were an estimated 400,000 non-Community illegal immigrants in the country, of which 220,000 had regularized their situation pursuant to Act 39 of 1990. The rest, who were principally street vendors or seasonal agricultural workers, had an obvious interest in remaining clandestine. As a step towards regularizing the position of non-Community nationals working as street vendors who had generally entered the country illegally, they had recently been permitted to become employers of a maximum of two helpers. The rights of migrant workers to equal treatment was guaranteed under the law.

165. The right to a minimum wage was guaranteed by article 26 of the Constitution. The sliding scale system, which had been a feature of Italian life for decades, would be coming to an end on 31 December 1992 under a protocol signed between the Government and trade unions. Henceforth, wage indexing would be replaced by a lump sum payment of 20,000 lira per month. In regard to industrial accidents, these occurred principally in the mining, metallurgical and building industries. There had been 4,000 such accidents, two per working day, over the past 10 years. The incidence of occupational diseases had decreased in the industrial section from 58, 212 and 1988 to 46,000 in 1991.

#### Article 8: Trade union rights

166. Members of the Committee wished to know: which were the most representative trade unions; whether trade union membership was rising or falling; whether military personnel and civil servants had the right to form and join trade unions; whether there was a strike law governing the private sector; what limitations there were on the right to strike; the procedures whereby strikes were declared illegal; and whether there was any legislation on lock-outs.

167. In his reply, the representative stated that more than 80 per cent of the economically active population was represented by a union. There were three main unions in Italy which at present had ceased fighting among themselves and had formed a coalition. Additionally, there were a large number of company unions, many of which opposed the three main unions and which sometimes had a very negative effect, as in the case of the public sector. The police force had created its own

trade union which represented its interests in negotiations with the State. Military personnel were served by a body similar to a union which defended their interests before the Ministry of Defence. With respect to lock-outs, there were no relevant regulations.

#### Article 9: Right to social security

168. Members of the Committee wanted to know: how the old-age pension system dealt with the problem of divorce, especially in cases where one spouse had not previously acquired the right to a pension; whether long-term unemployed women and other groups with difficult access to the labour market were disadvantaged by any rules requiring a minimum time for the right to social security; and whether there were any social security benefits available to non-citizens and, if not, what was the reason for their exclusion from such benefits as “social pensions”.

169. In his reply, the representative stated that under the legislation in force claimants to a surviving spouse’s pension would, in the case of divorce, be entitled to such a benefit provided that they had not subsequently married or were already receiving such a pension.

170. The representative also explained that, under article 11 of Decree No. 195 of 1992, citizens and foreigners legally residing in the country had equal access to social security benefits. Employers made equal contributions in both cases; in addition, foreigners were required to contribute to a special fund covering possible repatriation for indigent workers. Only the social pension was restricted to Italian citizens. This pension was aimed at assisting persons with insufficient incomes and was not financed from the contributions of either employers or employees. The social pension was recognized under the Treaty of Rome and conformed to the requirements of European Community directive No. 92 on social security.

#### Article 10: Protection of the family, mothers and children

171. Members of the Committee wished to know: how the concept of the “family” was recognized and applied in Italian law; what was the practical effect of the measures for the protection of children and young persons described in paragraphs 41 to 54 of the report; whether consideration had been given to raising the minimum working age from 15 to 16 years of age; whether wages received during maternity leave were paid by the employer or the State; whether there were any programmes for mothers who wished to interrupt their work for two to three years in order to raise their children or whether their job were guaranteed or their re-entry to employment supported; what the situation was in regard to day-care facilities and how far the need for such facilities had been satisfied; whether maternity-leave protection was enjoyed by all women and how levels of protection varied; what was the legislation concerning abortion; whether there were particular groups of children in Italy who were disadvantaged with respect to protection and assistance and what their situation was; and to what extent the laws and regulation described in paragraphs 41 to 114 of the report had been brought into conformity with the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

172. Members of the Committee also wished to know: what mechanisms there were to enforce the legislation on the employment of children; whether children born out of wedlock enjoyed the same rights as other children; whether all mothers who needed day-care facilities could find a place for their children and, if not, what percentage of them did not have access to such facilities.

173. In his reply, the representative explained that article 29 of the Constitution recognized the family founded on marriage as the natural unit of society. Although Italian legislation regarded as legitimate only those families founded on marriage, de facto families not founded on marriage were increasingly being recognized in Italian case law. A recent reform also introduced the concept of family enterprise, which provided for distribution of the benefits of such enterprises in proportion to the quality and quantity of work contributed. In Italy, the question of divorce had been a very complex and difficult issue. The Concordat between Italy and the Holy See gave religious marriage a status in Italian civil law and since canon law did not recognize divorce, the term could not be mentioned in legislation. None the less, divorce proceedings before a court had been established and recent case law upheld the constitutional legality of the procedure to bring the civil effects of a marriage to an end.

174. With respect to the illegal employment of minors, infringement on the relevant legislation carried heavy penalties. In the south of Italy, there were 4,000 workers under the age of 15, including children legally and illegally employed. Under the law of 1967 on the employment of adolescents and children, 15 years was the minimum age for entry into employment, except for agricultural workers, family workers and workers engaged in light work outside industry, in which case the starting age was 14 years. For work hazardous to the health, 16 was the minimum age.

175. In regard to the other questions that had been posed, there was no problem concerning the availability of day-care facilities. Abortion was legal during the first three months of pregnancy and medical services to this end were available at public hospitals and special clinics. Information on family planning was available at centres located in each city where doctors, social workers and psychologists provided services for this purpose free of charge. Lastly, legislative measures had been adopted in order to protect de facto families and children born out of wedlock, ensuring that the latter were accorded equal treatment with other children.

#### Article 11: Right to an adequate standard of living

176. Members of the Committee wished to know: about the standard of living of particularly vulnerable and disadvantaged groups such as the rural and urban unemployed, migrant workers and pensioners; how the standard of living of these groups compared with that of 5 and 10 years ago; how many persons had been evicted over the last five years and what procedures and safeguards existed regarding the eviction of low-income families; how many persons were on waiting lists for obtaining accommodation, the average length of the waiting period and what measures had been undertaken to shorten the lists and reduce the waiting time; how many homeless persons there were in Italy and what proportion of them were non-European Community foreigners.

177. Members of the Committee also wished to know: whether recent changes in the legislation concerning rent had reduced the protection afforded to tenants and whether these changes had been introduced as part of the Government's privatization programme; what steps the Government had taken to protect non-nationals from discrimination in housing; how many migrant workers had been evicted; how many of the 60,000 to 100,000 persons reported to be homeless were non-nationals; and why the number of uninhabited housing units in cities such as Rome and Florence were increasing.

178. In his reply, the representative pointed out that 62 per cent of the flats in Italy were owned by the persons living in them. A total of 700,000 requests had been made for rent-controlled housing. As part of the Government's privatization programme, 200,000 State-owned flats had been offered for sale to their tenants. Many flats had remained unoccupied because the owners did not wish to rent them at very low controlled rates to persons whom it might be difficult to remove later on. In view of this situation, the authorities had decided to relax the laws regarding rents, permitting owners to set higher rates. There was a commission in each province which was responsible for reviewing each case of eviction in the light of the social situation of the persons concerned.

#### Article 12: Right to physical and mental health

179. Members of the Committee wanted to know: how the public health system coped with the problem of large increases in expenses in the medical sector; and what the policies were in regard to acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) and to drug abuse, the successes and failures of those policies and how they have developed over time. Members of the Committee also wished to know if measures had been taken to assist older persons requiring continuing care and those persons suffering from terminal illness.

180. In his reply, the representative stated that, owing to the current economic situation, it had been necessary to make a number of changes in Italy's very generous public health care system, especially as costs in that sector were the principle cause for the deficit in the national budget. Among the reforms introduced were provisions requiring persons in higher income brackets to bear part of the costs of their health care.

181. The representative noted that Italy had suffered greatly from the AIDS epidemic, as 80,000 persons had tested HIV-positive and 15,000 had shown symptoms of the disease. Legislative and other measures had been undertaken to enable those suffering from AIDS to receive professional therapy at home. There was concern that AIDS patients should not be isolated from the community and public education was felt to be especially important in that regard. Legislation concerning drug users had been modified so that criminal proceedings were not instituted if the drug user accepted treatment. A law adopted in 1990 had introduced various administrative stages to be followed before penal sanctions were applied. Thus, imprisonment was used only as a last resort in cases where treatment was refused or where a person was caught again in possession of drugs. The Government's goal was to rehabilitate drug users. However, penalties for drug dealing had been stiffened.

#### Article 13: Right to education

182. Members of the Committee wished to know: the meaning of the word "cultural homogenization" as it had been used in paragraphs 143 and 146 of the report; what was the situation regarding the avoidance of compulsory secondary schooling in the poorest areas of the country; what percentage of children completed their secondary education; what was the drop-out rate at the university level; what percentage of university graduates were not able to enter the career for which they have been trained and what measures had been undertaken or were foreseen by the Government to remedy that situation; how the children of migrant workers had been integrated into the educational system; what provision had been made to preserve the cultural or linguistic heritage of

immigrant children and the children of migrant workers; how linguistic minorities were dealt with in the educational system; and what measures had been undertaken to protect the rights of the German-speaking and French-speaking minorities in the border areas and how those measures accorded with the demands of the regional governments concerned. Members of the Committee also wished to know if older persons had access to education.

183. In his reply, the representative explained that the term “cultural homogenization” meant that all pupils were entitled to the same education without discrimination. The goal was not to do away with ethnic differences but, on the contrary, to stress the concept of intercultural education and the mutual enrichment resulting from the presence of foreign pupils in the schools. The social integration of foreigners was the aim of the Government, not the renunciation of their culture. However, since there were more than 130 different foreign ethnic groups in Italy, it was clearly impossible to teach children from all those groups their language and culture of origin.

184. With respect to the avoidance of compulsory secondary education, a programme had been launched to address that problem even though it did not affect a significant portion of the population. In regard to university education, Italian universities were open to all persons who had completed secondary school. However, only 30 percent of university students completed their programme and obtained a diploma. Only 37 per cent of university graduates found employment in line with their field of study. To remedy that situation, the Government had launched a programme to improve career orientation and to introduce a shorter course of university training that was better suited to the requirements of the labour market. The representative added that there were universities for older persons in the main cities such as Rome, Milan and Turin and that such programmes were well attended.

185. Concerning linguistic minorities, special legislation had been adopted on the teaching of languages additional to Italian that were spoken in the border regions of the country. A degree of autonomy in those regions had also been granted.

Article 15: Right of everyone to take part in cultural life and to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and to benefit from the protection of the interests of authors

186. Members of the Committee wished to know: how successful measures had been concerning the preservation of Italy’s archaeological heritage and the conservation and restoration of works of art; what was the situation with regard to theft of works of art and their illegal transfer abroad; whether the figure “5 million” in the report was correct; and what percentage of the government budget had been allocated for the preservation and conservation of the country’s cultural heritage.

Concluding observations

187. The Committee welcomed the continuation of its dialogue with Italy on the occasion of the submission of that country’s second periodic report on articles 1 to 15. It was gratified by the high level of the delegation selected to present the oral report and to reply to the questions raised by the written report.

188. The written report dealt very comprehensively with articles 13 to 15 and article 10 (3), but on

articles 6 to 9, 10 (1) and 10 (2) it was too sketchy and it did not cover at all the rights contained in article 11, concerning the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living. The oral presentation and the replies to the Committee's questions largely rectified that shortcoming.

189. The Committee noted that substantial efforts were being made by the Italian Government to reduce unemployment and integrate foreign workers, both from within and outside the European Community. The number of industrial accidents and occupational diseases was falling. Progress was also being made in the employment of women.

190. However, the policy of privatization and abolition of the sliding scale system entailed certain risks for the social protection of all the sectors of the population.

191. In the consideration of the report the Committee devoted particular attention to the right to housing. Although the steady increase in the number of home-owners (currently 62 per cent) was a source of satisfaction, the situation of tenants in the most disadvantaged social categories did not seem to be improving.

192. The Committee wished to draw the attention of the State party to a number of specific concerns resulting from the dialogue with its representatives. These concerns included the fact that:

(a) The adoption of Act L359/92 in August 1992 seemed likely to aggravate the situation of the most economically disadvantaged tenants. The Act partly goes back on Act L392/78 of 1978, which introduced the concept of a "fair rent" (equo canone);

(b) It has led to a certain paralysis in the rental market since about 5 million apartments are currently reported to be unoccupied. The scope of exceptions to the fair-rent rule has widened and freedom to set rents is contributing to rental increases;

(c) Given the shortage of low-income housing, which accounts for about 5 per cent of the total housing stock, and since no housing allowance system has been established or is envisaged, the situation of tenants is disturbing. The 10-year low-income housing construction plan, which was partly executed in 1988, has not been amended and remains insufficient;

(d) A further continuing source of concern is the precarious nature of leases, aggravated by the provisions of the Act of August 1992, given the fact that 74 per cent of evictions are based on termination of the lease and, since 1983, one family out of three has been evicted.

193. The Committee reiterated the importance the Covenant attaches to the right to housing, and recommends that the Italian Government should take all appropriate measures to improve the situation of tenants and to ensure that medium-term solutions are found in order to deal more satisfactorily with housing for the most disadvantaged social categories. It hopes to receive all relevant information on the occasion of Italy's submission of its third periodic report.



## **CESCR E/2001/22**

107. The Committee considered the third periodic report of Italy on the implementation of the Covenant (E/1994/104/Add.19) at its 6th to 8th meetings, held on 27 and 28 April 2000, and adopted, at its 23rd and 24th meetings, held on 10 and 11 May 2000, the following concluding observations.

### **A. Introduction**

108. The Committee welcomes the submission of the third periodic report of the State party as well as its written replies to the list of issues that were presented by a high-level delegation comprised of officials of various ministries. However, it notes with regret the late submission of the report as well as of the written replies to the list of questions. The Committee welcomes the constructive dialogue with the delegation.

### **B. Positive aspects**

109. The Committee notes with appreciation the measures taken by the State party to combat organized crime. The Committee also welcomes the adoption of the immigration bill of 1998, granting one-year residence/work permits to women who have been the victims of trafficking and who denounce their exploiters, and the criminalization of trafficking of migrants under the Penal Code.

110. The Committee also notes with appreciation the approval of the *Texto Unico 286/98*, which gives foreigners regularly present on the national territory equal standing with Italian citizens regarding access to residential and public housing, and credit on favourable terms for building, acquiring or renting their first home.

111. The Committee notes with appreciation the approval of law No. 53 of 8 March 2000 which recognizes the right of the father, as well as the mother, to take leave from work to care for a child during early infancy.

112. With regard to the problem of domestic violence against women, the Committee welcomes the approval of law No. 66 of 1996, characterizing sexual violence as “a crime against the person” punishable by imprisonment.

### **C. Factors and difficulties impeding the implementation of the Covenant**

113. The Committee notes the socio-economic problems arising from the increase in immigration to Italy caused by the tragic events in the Balkans and the influx of persons from other regions.

### **D. Principal subjects of concern**

114. The Committee regrets that some of the written replies to the list of issues were insufficient, and that some oral statements made during the dialogue were too vague and general.

115. The Committee notes with concern the statement made by the State party in its written replies to the list of issues, confirmed by the delegation during its dialogue with the Committee, that only very few court rulings refer explicitly to the Covenant.

116. The Committee notes with concern that a large number of the Roma population live in camps lacking basic sanitary facilities on the outskirts of major Italian cities. The Roma on the whole live below the poverty line and are discriminated against, especially in the workplace, if and when they find work, and in the housing sector. Life in the camps has had a major negative impact on the Roma children, many of whom abandon primary and secondary schooling in order to look after their younger siblings or to go out begging in the streets in order to help increase their family income.

117. The Committee draws the attention of the State party to the concern expressed by the Committee of Experts on the Application of ILO Conventions and Recommendations regarding the transfer to local health units of the functions of the labour inspectorate with regard to prevention and occupational safety and health. The Committee is concerned that such transfer may create a problem of coordination. The Committee also regrets that the delegation did not answer the question put to it on this matter.

118. The Committee is alarmed by the high rate of accidents in the workplace and draws the attention of the State party to the concern expressed by the Committee of Experts on the Application of ILO Conventions and Recommendations, which has repeatedly drawn the Government's attention to the need to adopt legal regulations and policies on the prevention of accidents in the workplace, and in particular in the ports.

119. The Committee regrets the insufficiency of the information provided by the State party concerning the social security system, especially considering that the Committee's previous concluding observations<sup>6</sup> on Italy had signalled a lack of information on article 9 of the Covenant in the State party's second periodic report.

120. While commending the State party for its efforts to combat violence against women, the Committee remains concerned that the Government has not yet devised a comprehensive, coordinated and concerted strategy to address this serious problem.

121. While also commending the State party for the many initiatives taken to combat organized crime, the Committee remains concerned at the extent of trafficking of women and children, sexual abuse of minors and child pornography in Italy.

122. The Committee notes with concern that there are still substantial economic and social inequalities between the northern and southern parts of the country, which impact negatively on the situations of women, young people, children and disadvantaged and marginalized groups.

123. The Committee notes with regret that in Italy, asylum-seekers have access to subsidized health care only in emergency situations. The Committee points out that this policy is not in compliance with the provisions of the Covenant.

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<sup>6</sup> See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1993, Supplement No. 2* (E/1993/22-E/C.12/1992/2), chap. VI, para. 188.

124. With respect to education, the Committee notes with concern the high rate of young people dropping out of secondary education. In addition, the Committee is concerned about the phenomenon of functional illiteracy. The Committee regrets not having had a clear answer to its question on this issue during the dialogue.

125. The Committee is concerned about the controversial proposal in the State party's school education reform programme to give private schools some public funding.

## **E. Suggestions and recommendations**

126. The Committee encourages the Government of Italy, as a member of international organizations, in particular IMF and the World Bank, to do all it can to ensure that the policies and decisions of those organizations are in conformity with the obligations of States parties to the Covenant, in particular the obligations contained in article 2, paragraph 1, concerning international assistance and cooperation.

127. The Committee recommends that the State party organize briefings for judges to familiarize them with the provisions of the Covenant and the general comments adopted by the Committee.

128. The Committee recommends that the State party ratify the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.

129. The Committee recommends that the State party step up its efforts to improve the situation of the Roma population, *inter alia* by replacing camps with low-cost houses; by legalizing the status of Roma immigrants; by setting up employment and educational programmes for parents; by giving support to Roma families with children at school; by providing better education for Roma children; and by strengthening and implementing anti-discrimination legislation, especially in the employment and housing sectors.

130. The Committee calls upon the State party to implement the recommendations made by the Committee of Experts on the Application of ILO Conventions and Recommendations concerning the decentralization of labour inspection. The Committee would appreciate detailed information about the system of labour inspections in the next periodic report.

131. The Committee calls upon the State party to take effective measures to ensure that workers enjoy safe working conditions. In particular, the Committee recommends that the State party adopt measures, including legislation, on the prevention of accidents, particularly in the ports, and ratify ILO Convention No. 152 (1979) concerning occupational safety and health in dock work. The Committee also recommends that the State party ratify ILO Conventions No. 174 (1993) concerning the prevention of major industrial accidents and No. 175 (1994) concerning part-time work.

132. The Committee encourages the State party to ratify, as planned, ILO Convention No. 159 (1983) concerning vocational rehabilitation and employment (disabled persons). The Committee would appreciate information from the Ministry of Labour in the next periodic report on the number of cases dealt with by the courts under the legislation on disability.

133. The Committee recommends that the State party devise a national strategy to combat violence against women, the elements of which should include data collection, enactment of relevant legislation, training courses for and sensitizing of the police forces and the judiciary, establishment of refuges for battered women and public awareness-raising campaigns.

134. The Committee recommends that the State party devise a comprehensive, coordinated and concerted national strategy to combat trafficking in women and children, sexual abuse of minors and child pornography by organized crime.

135. The Committee recommends that the State party seriously address the persistent problem of economic and social disparities existing between the northern and southern parts of Italy, which have a negative effect on the situations of women, young persons, children and disadvantaged and marginalized groups.

136. The Committee recommends that the State party step up its efforts to assist those living under the poverty line, the majority of whom are women.

137. The Committee invites the State party to address, in its next periodic report, the issue of the cost of medication under the privatized system and the measures the State party is taking to combat the negative effects this may have on the health of vulnerable groups. The Committee would also like more information about the results of the latest completed National Health Plan, especially with regard to older persons and other vulnerable groups.

138. The Committee urges the State party to extend the subsidized health-care system to asylum-seekers without discrimination.

139. The Committee recommends that the State party draw up a national strategy and plan of action to address the significant problems relating to school drop-outs and youth unemployment.

140. The Committee would like to receive information on the extent of the phenomenon of functional illiteracy in Italy.

141. With regard to the public funding of private schools, the Committee reminds the State party that any such funding must be without discrimination on any of the prohibited grounds.

142. The Committee recommends that the State party distribute these concluding observations widely. The Committee invites the State party to inform the Committee about the implementation of these concluding observations in Italy's next periodic report.