61st Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women

#flexibleworking

"FLEXIBLE WORKING ARRANGEMENTS – sharing best practices in a changing world of work”

Thursday, 16 March 2017, 3:30 – 5:00 PM

Permanent Mission of Italy to the UN

Please RSVP HERE

Background

The promotion of women’s economic empowerment is a major goal of modern societies and should be enhanced by promoting deep cultural changes and a new flexible organization of work, more consistent with private life organization, allowing an increasing number of women to take leading positions and enter the labor market without choosing whether to use their talents in their job or devote their life to family. Besides, the introduction of new digital technologies is undergoing profound changes in the business world, generating new needs and opportunities for both men and women employees and companies. In this context, flexibility in working arrangements has become increasingly relevant for both employees - and their ability to reconcile work and family life - and employers, who are looking for new ways to increase productivity, adapt to new technologies and strengthen their capability to retain talents. “Agile” working represents a challenge, a new frontier of work: "smart", more flexible and more efficient in terms of costs and productivity. It brings a new approach, utilizing new technologies to redefine the organization of work by removing the traditional constraints related to physical space, working hours and tools. The goal is to establish a new balance based on greater freedom and workers’ responsibility, respect and consideration of the job objectives and the expected outcomes.

The Italian Government has already elaborated new actions to redesign the organization of work and experience flexible working arrangements that do not penalize the professional development of women and support work - family life balance. In particular, it has adopted organizational measures for the implementation of teleworking and for experimenting innovative ways of organizing work and time within public administrations (art.14 of Law No. 124/2015). A draft law that introduces new flexible working arrangements for employees of the public and private sectors is also currently being examined by the Parliament. It is important to highlight that flexible working arrangements are directed not only to female employees. In fact, encouraging man to greater sharing of family
responsibilities by larger use of reconciliation measures relieves women of part of their care responsibilities, helping them to succeed and to achieve equal job opportunities as their male colleagues.

According to recent data, Italy counts about 250,000 employees using flexible working arrangements and working in companies with over 10 employees. Besides, the percentage of large companies that adopt structured Smart Working projects has grown from 8% in 2014 to 30%. (Smart Working Observatory of the School of Management - Polytechnic University of Milan).

Within the 61st session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, Italy is organizing a side event on “Flexible working arrangements” in order to develop an international debate on the topic, also with the participation and involvement of stakeholders and relevant international partners.

**Agenda**

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<th>Time</th>
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| 3:30 – 3:50| Opening Remarks        | Ms. Monica Parrella  
Director General, Department for Equal Opportunities, Presidency of the Council of Ministers, Italy                               |
| 3:50 – 4:05| Speakers               | Mr. Niklas Buehren  
Economist - World Bank                                                                                                               |
| 4:05 – 4:20| Speakers               | Ms. Stéphanie Seydoux  
Head of Department, Directorate General for Social Cohesion, Ministry of Social Affairs, Health and Women’s Rights, France                |
| 4:20 – 4:35| Speakers               | Ms. Tanja Auvinen  
Secretary General at the Council for Gender Equality, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Finland                                      |
| 4:35 – 4:50| Speakers               | Mr Vinicius Pinheiro  
ILO Special Representative to the United Nations and Director of the International Labour Organisation, New York                           |
| 4:50 – 5:00| Comments and conclusions | Ms. Linda Laura Sabbadini  
Head of Research, ISTAT - Italian National Institute of Statistics                                                                         |