

CHARTER FOR SEX EQUITY IN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PROCESSES

Considering:

- that the Fourth United Nations World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995) produced a Declaration and a Platform for Action, approved by Italy, in which governments, international organisations and civil society were invited to adopt strategic measures aimed at eliminating all forms of discrimination against women and barriers to the equality of men and women, identifying **twelve critical areas**: *poverty, education and training, health, violence against women, armed conflict, economy, power and decision making, institutional mechanisms, human rights, media, environment and the girl-child*;
- that the 23rd Special Session of the UN General Assembly ("Beijing + 5"), held in June 1999 in New York, adopted a Policy Declaration and an Agreement on Actions and further initiatives, with which governments reaffirmed their commitment.

Having seen:

- The **Treaty of Amsterdam**, entering into force on 1st May 1999, which establishes the objective of "eliminating inequality and promoting parity between men and women" (art. 3) and commits Member States to combat sex discrimination (art. 13); it affirms that the EC supports and completes the actions of the Member States in the area of equality between men and women with regard to "labour market opportunities and treatment at work" (art. 137); it ratifies the principle of *equal pay* for male and female workers for equal work or work of equal value and also specifies that the Council, acting in accordance with the joint decision procedure, shall adopt measures to ensure the application of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation, permitting Member States to adopt or maintain measures providing for specific actions in favour of the under-represented sex in professional careers (art. 141).
- The **European Union Charter of Fundamental Rights**, proclaimed in Nice on 7.12.2002, which ratifies the principle of equality of men and women in all areas, including employment, work and pay, without prejudice to the legitimacy of maintaining and adopting positive actions (art. 23).
- The **Fifth Community Action Programme concerning community strategy on equality between men and women** (2001-2006) and the **European Employment Strategy** (EES – 1997), which indicate among their fundamental objectives the promotion of Equal Opportunities for men and women (hereinafter EO) and specify specific strategies and actions in the areas of *economic life, equal participation and representation, equality of social rights; civil life; changing gender roles and overcoming gender stereotypes*.

- The **Italian Constitution**, which ratifies that the Republic, with the purpose of ensuring equal access of all citizens to public offices and elective positions, promotes EO with appropriate measures (art. 51, paragraph 1).
- The **Italian Constitution**, which confers to regional laws the task of removing all obstacles impeding full equality of men and women in social, cultural and economic life, as well as promoting equal access of men and women to elective positions (art. 117, paragraph 6).
- The **Law of 10th April 1991 no. 125** “Positive actions to achieve the equality of men and women in work”.
- The **Law of 25th September 1992 no. 215** “Positive actions for female entrepreneurs”
- The **Law of 8th March 2000 no. 53** “Provisions to support maternity and paternity, the right to medical treatment and education and coordination of city times”.
- The **Prodi-Finocchiaro Directive** (1997) “Actions aimed at promoting the attribution of power and responsibility to women, to recognise and guarantee free choice and social equality of women and men”, which, implementing the results of the Beijing Conference, indicated ten fundamental objectives for Public Administration: *acquisition of power and responsibility (empowerment); integration in government policies (mainstreaming); data analysis and impact evaluation; training of a culture of gender difference; employment development and promotion policies; female professionalism and entrepreneurship; working time, hours and organisation policies; prevention and repression of violence; international cooperation and relations.*

Having seen:

- European Council Regulation no. 1260/99 of 21.6.99 bearing General Measures on Structural Funds, which establishes that the Community, through these Funds, contributes to the promotion of equality of men and women, and the Regulations of the European Council and Parliament no. 1783/1999 of 12.7.99 relative to ERDF and no. 1784/1999 of 12.7.99 relative to EDF, which assume the principle of EO, including it among the programme’s transversal objectives;
- The European Council’s Conclusions of March 2000 in Lisbon, which invite the Commission and Member States to favour all aspects related to EO in employment policies
- the Communication of the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the Economic Committee and the Committee of the Regions “Actuation of gender mainstreaming in Structural Fund programming documents 2000-2006”, of December 2002;
- the Community Support Framework 2000-2006 for Italian Ob. 1 regions, approved by the European Commission with Decision C(2000) 2050 of 1.8.00, where the principle of EO is integrated in all strands and referred to the methodological system to evaluate the impact of equal opportunities actions defined in the VISPO guidelines – June 1999 and July 2000 – prepared by the Department for Equal Opportunities of the Council of Ministers.

Whereas:

- under the process of reformulation of the Community Regulations on Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund and the definition of new national and regional programming documents for the period 2007-2013, it is declared that as development and cohesion

support one another reciprocally, only reduction in inequality can ensure that all regions and social categories can take part in and benefit from development;

- under said Regulations, a consistent importance and a determining role is given to the Partnerships, compulsorily activated at various national, regional and local levels to prepare, enact, survey and evaluate both the national strategic reference Framework and the national and regional Operational Programmes in the promotion of equal opportunities of men and women;

Considering:

- that the Campania 2000-2006 REO has taken exactly this approach, providing for a specific measure to promote female participation in the labour market (Measure 3.14), a multi-level government system under the regional Authority for gender policies, and the
- progressive activation of a vast network of institutional, socio-economic, thematic, local and sectorial partnerships;
- that the first triennium of the Campania 2000-2006 REO enactment was a fertile experimental “laboratory”, both in actions promoting and supporting the presence of women in the labour market and their participation in local government, and with respect to institutional cooperation;
- that in contrast with the dynamism of public intervention expressed in government processes, there still remains a local problematic situation with the results gained and the transformations triggered in organisational systems;
- that although the position and condition of women in the local economy and society has improved overall, in Campania, as in fact throughout Europe, there is still a worrying level of female inactivity and unemployment, as well as persistent forms of discrimination against women in both access to work and their professional progress and career.

Having evaluated that:

An extraordinary and widespread *commitment* is needed to bring the inequality challenge and stake of equal development back to the centre of choices made by local, even before central, government.

A process needs to be activated in which all institutional and non-institutional bodies work towards a great change of perspective and are able to look beyond contingency and truly converge efforts towards the construction of a more equal society, in the fullest awareness that the application of the principle of equal opportunities for women and men does not represent a constraint to be respected “formally”, but a real occasion to improve the performance of any action for local development.

A symbolic and political *place* is needed to share principles, conditions, priorities, procedures, operating tools, validation and monitoring systems, leading to the assumption of commitments and responsibilities shared and distributed by competence, a real pact which involves all the protagonists of socio-economic and local development in the region of Campania.

The Region of Campania (or other interested local authority) declares

Art.1 Founding principles

Sustainable, quality development must be founded on participation, solidarity and equity.

A *society* based on democratic principles confronts the issue of equality, appreciation of gender differences (and of all types), and balanced distribution of power and responsibility.

A just, dynamic *economy* appreciates and utilises its human and social capital in the best way; in all its components and relational networks it confronts injustice, inequality, marginalization and disequilibrium, and concerns itself with the fate of future generations.

Equity in a development process means taking account of the needs, desires and interests of all members of the population, giving a voice and power to those without them, enabling widespread access to the expected opportunities and benefits, preventing the costs of the innovations from falling on the weakest, and not losing sight of the fate of future generations.

A *government system* which does not strive to construct gender awareness, widespread accessibility to rights and opportunities, participation in decision making processes, balance of power and widespread wellbeing can never achieve lasting, sustainable results.

Art. 2 Aim

The local authorities plan, define and ratify:

1. the key questions and areas in which to concentrate local equal opportunity actions, bearing in mind the future European Union structural policies centred on themes/objectives of convergence, regional competitiveness and local employment and cooperation;
2. the specific tasks and functions that each institutional, socio-economic player in an area may assume, in relation to said questions/contexts.

The aim is to strengthen and develop a concerted process, integrated with the process already activated at regional, provincial and local level, among the different bodies which were established in the framework of structural policy enactment. The process is aimed at the permanent adoption of a gender-oriented point of view in collective choices and the guarantee of a council which operates in respect of the rights as citizens of men and women who, in fact, have an impact on the quality of development and the equity of the process begun to determine such choices.

Art. 3 Action areas and tasks

The aim stated in the previous article can be pursued through the assumption of tasks and responsibilities in the following priority areas:

Information and education: guaranteeing the production and diffusion of information and socio-economic data differentiated by sex, as well as promoting the culture and education of difference (of gender and of all types), in all areas of community life (education, training, research, sport, art, entertainment, religion, etc)

Female representation: contributing to the development of conditions favouring the widespread presence of women in places where important decisions are made on collective life, with the aim of guaranteeing gender integration in development policies (*gender mainstreaming*), and ensuring that the various components of the population have equal power and responsibility (*empowerment*), risks and opportunities (*equality*);

Labour: appreciation of women's potential for innovation in terms of social responsibility, diligence, determination, creativity and enterprise (*active citizenship*), guaranteeing time and life cycle policies enabling women and men to manage the various aspects of their lives in the diverse phases of their existence (*conciliation*) and also promoting labour organisations which appreciate gender differences and do not discriminate on the basis of sex, whether in access to work or in career development (*equal opportunities*).

Health: operating to protect the health and wellbeing of women and men and promoting initiatives aimed at supporting the realisation of the desire for/right to mother/fatherhood;

Safety: activating initiatives and tools to confront commercialisation of the body and violence against women in personal relationships in and outside of living and work places.

Art. 4

Bodies and Responsibilities

Institutional bodies - whether public or involving public participation - which manage socio-economic and local development processes and projects in the Region of Campania, sharing principles and aims, assume the responsibility of guaranteeing equity in their development process and undertake to promote the progressive specification and formalisation, in "cascade", of operating agreements with the various bodies involved, becoming part of the concertation method and promoting partnership opportunities.

Art. 5

Equality protocols

The commitment taken on in adopting this Charter is materialised with the support of equality and equal opportunities organisations, through specific **equality protocols** (local, sectorial or thematic) or other formalised cooperation types, with the most representative, diverse key players in socio-economic development and cultural and civil growth in the region, such as:

- ❖ Universities, research and training bodies
- ❖ Credit and finance companies
- ❖ Chambers of Commerce and organisms supporting business internationalisation
- ❖ Public and private services for employment and temporary work
- ❖ Judicial, armed forces, and public security organisations
- ❖ Employer organisations, unions and mediator organisations
- ❖ Radio, television, and newspaper information organs
- ❖ Non-governmental organisations for human rights
- ❖ Third Sector organisations (Cooperatives, Foundations, Voluntary Associations and all forms of cultural, religious, environmental, etc. associations in civil society)
- ❖ Local health units and facilities representative of the social health system

The equality protocols, which can thus be underwritten among local authorities adopting the Charter and the said types of body in their local configurations, provide for the definition of specific roles, functions and tasks, to be assumed in order to activate gender mainstreaming and the equal opportunities principle in their areas of action.

Additional protocols can also be signed, through a concerted procedure with a *letter of intent* (demonstration of interest) with regional, national and international institutions interested in strengthening gender equality in development processes with the Region of Campania and/or adopting and adapting this Charter to other local contexts.

Art.6

Organisational system and process management organs

The Charter of Equity's enactment process in the Region of Campania is directed by the Regional Authority for Gender Policies, part of the Regional Department for Equal Opportunities (with the roles of management, vigilance, and validation of gender policies and actions in the Region of Campania), supported by the technical and scientific staff of the Regional Monitoring Centre for Equal Opportunities (already identified as the support facility/service for monitoring, study, research, evaluation, control and quality certification of development projects and actions in the region), which provides sensitisation activities and technical assistance to local authorities adopting the Charter, as well as identification of potential critical areas for specific tasks to be undertaken in concert with the relevant interested socio-economic players through the Equality protocols.

The Regional Authority shall be responsible for gender policies, provide for equity certification for the development projects/actions involved, and award the anticipated incentives on the basis of the Monitoring Centre's preliminary mechanism.

Art. 7

Equity evaluation and certification

A development action/project's equity should be evaluated with regard to European Community guidelines, the VISPO model and the Region of Campania guidelines, implemented by the Surveillance Committee of the Campania REO, on the basis of the consideration of at least 5 fundamental elements/aspects:

Awareness: it must guarantee the enactment of all actions necessary to make women aware of their value and rights;

Access to information and opportunities: it must block unequal use of opportunities and resources;

Wellbeing: it must aim to improve the material status of women, including by changing the inequality of indicators measuring quality of life;

Participation: it must facilitate the participation and integration of women into policy, economy, and public and private sector decision making sites;

Balance of powers: it must guarantee balance of powers between men and women - beginning from the family - in the economy and society.

Art.8

Incentive mechanisms

The Region of Campania, on the proposal of the Councillor for Equal Opportunities supplied with a preliminary investigation prepared by the Authority for Gender Policies, may arrange the institution of incentive mechanisms aimed at institutional bodies that have certified the equity of their content/work and are distinguished not only by their number of activated equality Protocols, but also for their ability to construct cooperative networks with other bodies/development projects, including outside the region.