



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL
JUSTICE FREEDOM AND SECURITY

Minutes of the First Italian Advisory Committee Meeting

Date: 18 March 2008

Location: Ministry of Social Solidarity – Via Fornovo 8, 00192 Rome

Participants:

- Claudio Canetri (Chairman of the Committee) – Ministry of Social Solidarity - Directorate General for Immigration
- Anna Maria Miraglia (Member) – Ministry of Labour and Social Security – Provincial Labour Office of Rome
- Maria Assunta Rosa (Member) – Ministry of Interior – Department for Citizens' Freedom and immigration
- Raffaele di Palma (Member) – Ministry of the Health – National Institute for the promotion of Migrant's health and a response to the health consequences of Poverty (INMP)
- Daniela Di Capua (Member) – National Associations of Municipalities of Italy (ANCI) – Department on Immigration and Asylum
- Le Quyen Ngo Dinh (Member) – Caritas Diocesana – Vicariato di Roma – Immigration Area
- Francesca Nicodemi (Member) – Association for Legal Studies on Immigration (ASGI)
- Massimo Spaggiari (Member) – ARCI: Immigration Area
- Anita Ceraso (Member) – Centre for development information and education (CIES)
- Maria Quinto (Substituted) – Comunità di Sant'Egidio
- Alessia Montuori (Country Researcher) – IPRS
- Gloria Carroccio (Project Assistant) – Ministry of Social Solidarity – Directorate General for Immigration

Italian Partner:



Ministero del Lavoro, della Salute e delle Politiche Sociali

I. TOPIC FOR DISCUSSION:

Presentation of the project – Discussion and evaluation of the draft country report.

II. AGENDA OF THE MEETING

- Presentation of the INTI Project “*One Stop Shop: a new answer for immigrant integration*” and of the Lisbon National Immigrant Support Centre (the DVD on 1st anniversary of CNAI had been showed to participants and they were provided with a copy of it).
- Presentation and discussion of the draft Country Report for Italy;
- First discussion on Portuguese model of One-Stop Shop and on the necessary adaptation for the application of this model in Italy
- Time schedule of the next meetings

III. MAIN OUTCOMES AND CONCLUSIONS

1. The meeting was chaired by Claudio Canetri who welcomed the meeting participants and outlined the themes of the meeting and some of the key issues which may be covered.
2. Gloria Carroccio presented the project and provided information of all activities that will be undertaken in the course of it. She also explained the role of the Advisory Committee and the expected results of the discussion that will be held during the five meetings provided. Participants were presented with the video of CNAI in Lisbon as an example of a One Stop Shop, in order to support the description of the Centre.
3. Alessia Montuori presented the draft country report, providing relevant information on population, percentage of immigrants, country of origin, legal framework of immigration, services and assistance for integration. She explained as the research points out as Italy does not have a structure that has all the characteristics of a One Stop Shop. The only attempt to establish such a body can be found in the Immigration Office (*Sportello Unico per l’Immigrazione*), which was established by art. 22 law no. 286/98 at any Office of Territorial Government (formerly Prefecture).

4. The AC members discussed the draft country report and held an exchange of views on the main topics included. The committee gave a positive evaluation on the research even if some members noticed as, because of the concise format of it, some procedures, as for instance the procedure to entry in Italy for work reasons, the family reunification procedure or the procedure to obtain a residence permit for study reason, have been too summarised and, as the result, some procedural stages missed. It was also highlighted as regarding the data on foreign presence in Italy, the report included only stock data, while flow projections would allow to have a better understanding of the recent changing in the composition of the immigration flows.

5. At the end of the discussion on the report, the associations that participated in the Advisory Committee were requested to provide further feedback on immigrant's experience of Government services. It was agreed that the researcher would send the result of the opinions provided from five different NGOs and immigrant associations operating in three different towns (Milan, Rome and Palermo) on immigrants' experience of two particular Government services (Sportello Unico and Registry). The association were requested to submit their comments on the result of these interviews and on the quality of the public services provided to immigrants by 28 March 2008. Furthermore, always by 28 March 2008, all the Advisory Committee members were request to submit their comments on the discussion points listened in the section 4 of the approved format of the country report in order to provide extra inputs for the final chapter of the country report.

6. The *tour-de-table* that followed highlighted the general support by the Advisory Committee members for the Portuguese One-Stop-Shop model, with however several more or less detailed reservation and doubts on the feasibility on the OSS model implementation in Italy. The main points raised by AC members were the following:

- In Italy there is not – as in other European countries – a single public authority that deals with immigration and integration. The fragmentation of responsibility within public administration at national level makes it difficult to combine the different sectors to bring about the implementation of a comprehensive office like the One-Stop Shop to address all of the procedures related to immigrants.

- Italy does not have an example of a One-Stop-Shop as in the Portuguese model: the *Sportello Unico per l'Immigrazione*, established by law 189/2002 and implemented in 2005 at the provincial level (Prefecture), can be something similar or comparable to it. The *Sportello Unico per l'Immigrazione* was an attempt by the legislator to bring together officials from all the administrations involved in the procedures regarding legal entry from abroad (either with a commitment for a contract by an employer in Italy, or for family reunification). However, all AC members agreed that there have been relevant problems in terms of effectiveness and “performances” of this administrative body. At the present, the *Sportello Unico* operates only as a “front office” (where to send the application forms for an entry clearance – *nulla osta* – for work and family reunification or for changes in the reason of the residence permits or where to go to sign the first contract to stay).
- As it is now, furthermore, the *Sportello Unico* cannot be described as an “Integration Desk”, because it basically deals with the immigrant only as a worker or as a relative of a worker. Amongst other functions, it is not supposed to give information about health, school, social benefits or to give information and advice to undocumented migrants (who seek help from NGOs or other volunteer organisations).
- In the light of the past experience, the idea to attempt again to bring together officials from different administrations looks to be very difficult to implement. Some AC members proposed to be more realistic and stressed that it could be much easier to work for a strong “virtual” connection and cooperation between different offices involved in the administrative procedures.
- The AC members agreed that a further issue worth to be considered: in Italy there is a fragmentation of nationalities among immigrants residing in the country, and their distribution throughout the territory is widespread, with a majority in the North and particularly in peripheral urban settings; the only exception being the capital city, Rome, in which immigrants have a high presence both within the city

and in its suburbs. As a result, the presence of immigrants does not have the same effect throughout the country.

The placement of immigrants also needs to be considered in terms of mobility as cities and the surrounding areas have different levels of accessibility and transportation infrastructure. Therefore, one or two central national Offices (like in Portugal) may not be the proper answer in terms of providing immigrants with easy access. In the Italian context could be more useful to increase the effort to use technology to improve a virtual connection between public officials that goes beyond their physical concentration in the same place. In the other words, technology could be used to support integration services, allowing migrants to submit applications or to obtain any information they need from a personal computer (directly, or with the support or technical assistance from Ministries, experts/consultants from NGOs, etc.), as recently tested in occasion of the last annual flow decree.

- Some AC members also suggested reflection on the possibility to improve already existing and widespread local services rather than create new centralised structures. Representative of ARCI association pointed out that in Emilia Romagna the Region is testing a model for an antidiscrimination network at the local level. This Regional Centre on Discrimination is supposed to empower and coordinate a network of existing offices (either public or third sector) not in order to create new and unnecessary structures, but to improve services that are widespread within the territory and close to the potential beneficiary of the intervention.

The representative of the Ministry of Interior proposed to lean on the *Consigli Territoriali per l'Immigrazione*, the consultative body that operates at the provincial level, based on a spirit of cooperation between the various institutions (Regional and Local Administrations, trade unions and employers organizations; migrants' associations and local groups and associations active in assisting and supporting immigrants). However she suggested to take note that if the AC members managed to make a good proposal on how to implement in Italy a One-Stop Shop (real or virtual) for immigrant integration, it could be the chance to finance the project within the financial resources of the European Fund for the Integration of third-

country nationals for the period 2007-2013. It may start testing the model that would be proposed in some selected territories and then, eventually, broaden the results to the other areas.

The discussion upon the possible implementation of a One Stop Shop for immigrant integration in Italy will continue at the next meetings.

7. The committee approved its calendar of meetings for 2008. Dates and times were set as follows:

- II Advisory Committee Meeting: 21 April (14:00)
- III Advisory Committee Meeting: 13 June (11:00)
- IV Advisory Committee Meeting: 15 September (11:00)
- V Advisory Committee Meeting: 14 November (11:00)

8. The AC members were provided details on the next steering committee meeting and the second Transnational workshop that will take place in Athens on 4-6 June 2008. They were requested to take note that an AC member should attend the meetings. They had an exchange of views about this point and agreed that members wishing to participate at the above mentioned meetings would have communicated by e-mail their willingness by the end of March.

IV. AGENDA FOR NEXT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

- Discussion of the Final Country Report;
- Discussion on the services that support immigrant integration in Italy and on how to improve them through the implementation of a One-Stop Shop model (real and/or virtual).