MoreThanAJob

WP2 – Communication

Output 2.7 – Policy briefs

Policy Brief
Italy

Contents

Introduction

This policy brief is developed as part of the MoreThanAJob project funded by the EU under the ENI CBC MED programme.

The project aims at enhancing the development of cooperation mechanism between the Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) and the public administration to improve the social services for vulnerable groups in order to increase their opportunities of social and labour inclusion.

As part of the project, the consortium has developed a framework to support the Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) actors and the public administration (PA) in co-developing and implementing innovative social schemes to reach the project aim.

Based on the analysis of international and local best practices in services for the promotion of social and employment inclusion of vulnerable people, the MoreThanAJob framework identifies **three main priorities** that will support the development of welfare services:

1. Social service delivery is increasingly responsive, and generates greater social stability and livelihood outcomes, based on the needs of host, refugee and immigrants' populations.
2. Social and Solidarity Economy is progressively growing and provides greater local economic development opportunities for the most vulnerable community members.
3. Education System is dynamically adaptive to market needs and allows greater access to innovative and agile technical education and vocational training programmes targeting different levels of education including un-educated population.

This policy brief aims at providing an overview of the current context in Italy on the implementation and ongoing discussion on policy areas identified under each priority within the MoreThanAJob framework. Based on the current context, we have identified some policy recommendations that could support the actors involved, namely the PA and the SSE actors, in the development of policies and action plans aligned with the indications provided in the MoreThanAJob framework.

Italian Context

Taking into consideration the priorities identified in the MoreThanAJob framework, we have analysed the existing policies and ongoing discussion at national level on related fields. Indeed, this paragraph provides an overview of the current context in Italy for each of the policy areas identified in the framework.

Priority 1: Social service delivery is increasingly responsive and generates greater social stability and livelihood outcomes, based on the needs of the host, refugee and immigrants' populations

The main policy areas identified within this priority are:

1.1 <u>Promotion of social generativity</u> - currently, in Italy, there are not official policies in this field. However, it is worth mentioning the **community foundations** (in Italian, *fondazione di comunità*)

which are non-profit organisations that born and develop also under initiative of institutional, economic and third sector actors of a specific territory. Their main aim is to improve the quality of life of the community in which they operate. They usually work as financial and social mediators, resources' activators, promoters of community welfare, etc.

1.2 <u>Peer-to-peer counselling service</u> - currently, in Italy, there are **not official policies** or plans focused on the promotion of social peer counselling.

1.3 <u>Enhancing social integration through community service interventions</u> - *at local level*, *the municipalities*, in particular through their departments on social policies, are responsible for the implementation of social services and community service interventions, often in collaboration with and supported by volunteering and no profit organisations. While, *at national level, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies* provides the main guidelines and framework under which these organisations can work and do their activities. It is also responsible for the development and the monitoring of policies' implementation and of developing indications related to the third sector.

Among the **activities implemented by the PA** to enhance social integration through community services, it is worth mentioning:

- <u>Financial support</u> to volunteering and no profit organisations for the implementation of projects and activities aimed at fostering the social inclusion of vulnerable groups;
- <u>Cooperation with private organisations for the delivery of services</u> aimed at fostering social inclusion;
- <u>Promoting the development of networks</u> among different actors (e.g., schools, organisations, volunteers, etc.) for the enhancement of community wellbeing.

Priority 2: Social and Solidarity Economy is progressively growing and provides greater local economic development opportunities for the most vulnerable community members

The main policy areas identified within this priority are:

2.1 <u>Establishing and strengthening the capacity of social enterprises</u> - at national level, *the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies and the Ministry of Economic Development* collaborate on development of policies and guidelines for the promotion of social entrepreneurship. They promote the dissemination and strengthening of social economy by financially supporting the establishment and growth of companies that operate throughout the national territory for the pursuit of general interests and social utility.

Also *at regional level*, there are initiatives aimed at supporting the development of social enterprises. For instance, the Department for Family and Social Policies of the Region of Sicily, the responsible authority in this field, offers financial support for the development of as well as other kinds of support to the social enterprises.

2.2 <u>Support innovation and entrepreneurship</u> – also in this case, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies and the Ministry for Economic Development cooperate for the development of policies and actions in this field.

The *main activities implemented by the PA* in this field include:

- <u>Financial support</u> to research projects on innovation aiming at addressing social challenges;
- <u>Fostering cooperation</u> with the universities and research centres;
- <u>Capacity building</u> of social enterprises.

2.3 <u>Developing solidarity economy value chains</u> - the *Ministry of Labour and Social Policies* is the main responsible for the development of policies governing the third sectors, including the ones regulating the functioning of the different no profit organisations.

Also *at local level* there are initiatives and actions in this field. For instance, the Department of Solidarity Citizenship of the Municipality of Palermo works in fields of interest for third sector organisations and promotes activities aimed at supporting the social development of the territory.

The *main actions implemented by the PA* in this field include:

- <u>Promoting, developing and supporting</u> the activities implemented by third sector organisations in fostering social entrepreneurship;
- <u>Collaborating with third sectors organisations</u> in the development and implementation of services and activities in the field of social entrepreneurship;
- Promoting activities to <u>support the social development of the territory.</u>

Priority 3: Education system is dynamically adaptive to market needs and allows greater access to innovative and agile technical education and vocational training programmes targeting different levels of education including uneducated population

The main policy areas identified within this priority are:

3.1 <u>Recognitions of competences acquired outside hosting country</u> - at national level, the *Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion and the Ministry of Education* collaborate in the definition of the national framework for the recognition of competences and work in close collaboration with the regional authorities. Indeed, within the national framework, each region establishes the procedure and the process for the certification of competences.

Up to date, there are *not official procedures and programmes* for the recognition of knowledge and competences acquired previously in other countries and for which it is not possible to provide a certificate of acquired qualifications.

Therefore, due to the lack of a central deliberative body, it is difficult to prove it and the definitive decision is often left to individual universities. Over the years, there have been initiatives promoted by universities for the development of practices for the recognition of

competences where the qualification is missing. Furthermore, the CIMEA (the Italian Information Centre on Academic Mobility and Equivalence) has sponsored and activated the National Coordination for the Evaluation of Refugee Qualifications (CNVQR). It is an informal network of experts from the administrative sector dealing with recognition of qualifications, sharing evaluation procedures, problem cases, sources of information and methodological practices in cases of evaluation of qualifications held by refugees, even in cases of little or no documentation.

3.2 <u>Labour market integration through language education</u> - the following three ministries work in close collaboration for the development of literacy and learning pathways of the Italian language as well as the definition of a common standard of language knowledge certification:

- The *Ministry of Education* defines the guidelines for pathways to literacy and learning of the Italian language as well as for the tests that should be done to certify this knowledge;
- The *Ministry of Internal Affairs* defines the criteria for the evaluation and the contents that should be on the test for the validation of language knowledge;
- The *Ministry of Labour and Social Policies* provides indications and it is consulted in the definition of the content and criteria for the evaluation of language competences.

3.3 <u>Labour market integration through skills matching and youth empowerment</u> - currently, in Italy, *there are not official policies* focused on the development of skills matching programmes. However, among the services provided by the public employment centres, there are the profiling candidates and the development of targeted guidance following an analysis of skills and related training needs for the skills that the candidate should develop.

3.4 <u>Labour market integration through education bridging programmes</u> - currently, in Italy, there are *not policies specifically addressed on bridging programmes to foster social integration*. The Ministry of Education recognises to the universities the possibility of providing educational bridging programmes (foundation programmes) for foreigner students who have not complete the mandatory 12 years of education foreseen in our system for accessing the university. However, they require the students to have a certificate of previous studies. This doesn't allow refugees or migrants who do not have these certificates to enrol in foundation programmes.

Recommendations

Following the overview of the current landscape as regards the policy areas identified in the MoreThanAJob framework, we have developed the following recommendations to support their inclusion and development:

- **Promotion of social generativity –** <u>raising awareness on it among PA</u> representatives and <u>creating moments of encountering between them and the SSE actors</u> in order to foster their

cooperation in developing recommendations and action plans for the development of future initiatives and policies in this field.

It would be also important to actively involve the community foundations in this process as they are an interesting example of social generativity and they could be considered as a starting point for the development of private-public cooperation.

- **Enhancing social integration through community service interventions** – involving volunteering and no profit organisations in the planning of social policies in their area of competence and developing clearer guidelines and approaches on third sector organisations in the delivery of social services.

- **Establishing and strengthening the capacity of social enterprises** - improving the cooperation with social enterprises for the development of a strategy for investments and actions in capacity building of social enterprises as well as developing effective cooperation mechanisms among PA and social enterprises for the delivering of some services and/or activities addressed to the community.

- **Support innovation and entrepreneurship** - strengthening the cooperation between research centres, social enterprises and PA in the field to foster the development of innovative projects aimed at addressing social challenges.

- **Developing solidarity economy value chains** - promoting and strengthening the cooperation between SSE actors and PA in order to reach more effectively the final beneficiaries.

- **Recognitions of competences acquired outside hosting country** - promoting the development of a common framework and procedure for the recognition of prior qualifications in absence of a certificate. To do so, it would be important to foster the dialogue between PA and universities for the development of common standards.

- **Labour market integration through skills matching and youth empowerment** - capitalising on best practices, namely projects and programmes already existing and focused on facilitating the matching of demand and supply by involving both higher education institutes and potential employers. This will foster the capacity of developing career guidance services that are aware of the labour market needs and can more effectively support young people in finding employment.

- **Labour market integration through education bridging programmes** - promoting the development of bridging programmes that could be accessed even without a certificate of acquired qualification.