



## European network of legal experts in gender equality and non-discrimination

### NEWS REPORT

**Country:** Italy  
**Title:** Equality Body - UNAR  
**Date:** 5 October 2015  
**Expert:** Chiara Favilli  
**Context**  
**Issue at stake:** Independence and resources  
**Ground of discrimination:** All Field  
**Source:** Policy development  
**Field:** General application  
**Applicable law:** Decree 215/2003

### Content

**Policy development:** The Director of Italian Equality Office (Marco De Giorgi) sent on 30 September 2015 a letter to a Member of Parliament, Giorgia Meloni, targeting her exhortations to close borders to aliens from Muslim countries. According to her comments, people from those countries are more violent and linked to terrorism acts than others.

The letter closed with a very soft invitation to the MP Giorgia Meloni to consider in future speeches the opportunity to give to the people different messages, not based on stereotypes. The MP Giorgia Meloni reacted very badly to the letter, invoking freedom of speech and the immunity of all the Members of Parliament. He wrote to the Prime Minister and to the Chamber of deputies President. A request of clarifications from the Secretary General of the Prime minister to the Director De Giorgi followed. The internal procedure is still on-going and is likely to be concluded by mid of October.

Meanwhile, a vacancy has been published for the post of Director and the deadline is October 9. It is likely that De Giorgi will not be able to apply for that post because of the disciplinary procedure. Moreover the contracts with the 15 external experts of the Equality Body have not been renewed and the majority of the staff left in UNAR is devoted to administrative issues.

**Key points of analysis:** The recent developments are clear evidences of the lack of independence of UNAR. A similar disciplinary action against Director De Giorgi was taken last year regarding a project on education in the field of sexual orientation (see the flash report of 2014, IT-30-UNAR sexual orientation). What seems most serious is the progressive weakening of UNAR, with few staff left in the Office, before the starting of the 'EU Structural Funds Programs' 2014-2020. UNAR is the national body devoted to the promotion and implementation of several activities planned within the Structural Funds Programs 2014-2020, sometimes in partnership agreement with the European Commission. This is the case, for instance, of the projects related to the fight against social exclusion and the implementation of the Italian Strategy Against Roma Discrimination. Moreover, External experts were the staff with specific knowledge on

antidiscrimination issues within UNAR, while it appears that the majority of those left in the Office are devoted to administrative issues. The uncertainty about the future of this Office is likely to cast a shadow over the implementation of the several projects already agreed upon, whose implementation should have been already started.

**Internet link source:**

Letter from Unar to Giorgia Meloni MP:

<http://www.giorgiameloni.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Lettera-UNAR.pdf>

Question time on the Meloni case:

<http://aic.camera.it/aic/scheda.html?numero=3/01687&ramo=CAMERA&leg=17>

Written question by Senate to the Government on the Meloni case:

[http://www.senato.it/japp/bgt/showdoc/frame.jsp?tipodoc=Resaula&leg=17&id=00939694&part=doc\\_dc-allegatob\\_ab-sezionetit\\_icdrs-atto\\_404517&parse=no](http://www.senato.it/japp/bgt/showdoc/frame.jsp?tipodoc=Resaula&leg=17&id=00939694&part=doc_dc-allegatob_ab-sezionetit_icdrs-atto_404517&parse=no)

Vacancy for the post of Director of UNAR:

<http://www.governo.it/AmministrazioneTrasparente/Personale/Dirigenti/PostiFunzioneDisponibili/2015/290-DPO-UNAR.pdf>

UNAR's staff:

[http://www.unar.it/unar/portal/?page\\_id=229](http://www.unar.it/unar/portal/?page_id=229)

All last accessed 02 October 2015