

Online consultation with Member States

Survey response 1

Information details

Name of the State:
Italy
The institution responding to the survey:
Inter-ministerial Committee for Human Rights - Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

Questions

1. What innovative practices did authorities in your state adopt to facilitate civil society's input to decision-making during the COVID-19 crisis, including through online channels? (Maximum limit: approximately 5,000 characters with spaces)
<p>Constant dialogue and interaction with civil society organisations has been maintained and strengthened through traditional contact channels, defined on the basis of the creation of a mailing list open to all associations actively involved in the promotion and protection of human rights.</p> <p>In the health sector, in general, the National Prevention Plan 2020-2025 intends to strengthen the intersectoral approach, also within the National Health Service structures and recognising the need to involve civil society and the private sector to mobilise all available resources, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda.</p> <p>This approach, adapted to the COVID-19 experience, highlighted the importance of cross-sectoral collaboration to address the complex non-health consequences of the epidemic (e.g. economic, social and psychological impact of the crisis and lockdown) and of scientific cooperation through data sharing for both epidemiological assessments and the search for effective drugs and vaccine development. The pandemic and its consequences have imposed not only a radical change in the way normal social relations are carried out, but above all the urgency of a change in the health system and its organisational set-up. Therefore, it was deemed necessary to rethink the territorial prevention networks and patient care pathways that, guaranteeing the centrality of the person, are strongly oriented towards the needs of the community, through the involvement of several health actors (Prevention Departments, special units of care continuity, intermediate territorial structures, laboratories, hospitals, university clinics, etc.) and non-health actors (mayors, health authorities, hospitals, etc.) and non-healthcare players (mayors, prefects and police officers, civil protection/CROSS, associations/volunteers, civil society, businesses, industrial relations, etc.).</p>
2. Are there innovative practices that authorities in your country used to enable safe and inclusive online participation, which encourages a diversity of participation, with a particular emphasis on underrepresented parts of civil society? (Maximum limit: approximately 5,000 characters with spaces)
<p>Considering the peculiar experience of civil society organisations in some relevant sectors today, in which the commitment of the Italian Government has been ensured through the compilation, adoption and implementation of dedicated action plans (Women, Peace and Security; Business and Human Rights), innovative practices are represented by the active involvement of civil society organisations guaranteed through both the involvement and direct participation in working sessions and the request and receipt of targeted contributions in the context of online consultation processes.</p>
3. Do you have examples of good practice in including civil society in designing and implementing strategies to respond to the pandemic? (Maximum limit: approximately 5,000 characters with spaces)
<p>In the two-pronged exercise reported in question 2, which included addressing the pandemic impact in thematic areas concerned, civil society organisations took an active part in the processes of monitoring and verifying existing policy instruments as well as in those of debating, negotiating and compiling the same policy instruments in their most recent editions.</p>
4. Do you have examples of innovative steps taken to minimise the impact of measures imposed during the pandemic, including emergency measures, on the free and safe functioning of civil society and on public freedoms (of expression, access to information, assembly, and association) as well as on the protection of personal data and privacy? (Maximum limit: approximately 5,000 characters with spaces)
<p>This aspect was duly taken into account in the continuous and regularly updated dialogue managed by the Inter-ministerial Committee for Human Rights with the entity part of the Platform of Civil Society Organisations created and managed by the European Agency for Fundamental Rights. In this exercise, information was collected on the impact of the pandemic in all relevant areas to ensuring adequate protection of human rights: the FRA Covid-19 Bulletins were shared with the Administrations that are members of the Committee itself for adequate attention with respect to concrete measures taken during the health emergency.</p>

5. Did authorities in your state implement any innovative measures to protect and facilitate civil society access to resources in the COVID-19 context? (Maximum limit: approximately 5,000 characters with spaces)

As described in the previous reply, the human rights dimension of central and local institutions was ensured through direct contact and exchange of information during the pandemic emergency.

Within the national health system, the possibility of accessing through the institutional website to the minutes of the meetings of the Technical and Scientific Committee, composed of experts and qualified representatives of the State Bodies and Administrations with the task of advising and supporting the coordination activities for overcoming the epidemiological emergency due to the spread of the Coronavirus, may represent a valid example to ensure the transparency of constantly updated data and information and to facilitate its access and reading. This information is completed by a Faq webpage, a webpage on monitoring the progress of the pandemic, and a webpage dedicated to fake news.

6. Has your state identified any good practices to identify, and protect civil society from, online intimidation and attacks (e.g. online threats, harassment, organized smear campaigns etc.)? (Maximum limit: approximately 5,000 characters with spaces)

Italy actively participates in the Council of Europe Platform for the Protection of Journalists, being fully committed to protect human rights defenders in all circumstances. This engagement will be further strengthened during the Italian Presidency of the Organisation 2021-2022.