Italy

Analysis of integration and anti-discrimination policies of public State-endorsed institutions in Italy

Simona Pagano

European University Viadrina (EUV)

Introduction

On September 4th, 2010, the Italian **National Anti-discrimination Committee**, (*Coordinamento Nazionale Antidiscriminazione*) consisting of approximately 100 associations, held a demonstration in front of the French Embassy in Rome against the "repatriation" of *Sinti* and Roma people in France. The demonstration targeted discriminatory practices of Italian policy as well, focusing on new forms of deportation and the confinement of *Sinti* and Roma people into camps mostly on the outskirts of big cities, as well as against their marginalization and abuse as scapegoats for political goals[1]. Among the associations present was the *Ufficio Nazionale Antidiscriminazione Razziale* (UNAR, **National Office against Racial Discrimination**), the official national antidiscrimination institution that addresses any form of "racial and ethnic discrimination". UNAR tries to tackle racist practices against the *Sinti* and Roma, stressing that their situation is precarious and that they suffer discrimination and unequal treatment, even from public institutions. However, UNAR seems to fail in launching efficacious initiatives and actions against *antiziganist* practices and attitudes.

In this paper I will present this institution, its historicity, and its ways of working. I will analyse their first report, published in 2005 after one year of activity, which offers a comprehensive presentation of the whole institution. The brief analysis should provide a first insight into the official discourse in Italy on (anti-)racism, tolerance, and immigration. The paper consists of three sections: In the first section, I describe the

---

[1] Federazione Rom e Sinti insieme, www.comitatoromsinti.blogspot.com

institution, its structure, its policies, and its formation. In the second part I focus on its working method and the projects the UNAR supports and has supported. Furthermore, I will analyse the discursive utilisation of certain categories in order to distill the construction of some relevant concepts in the discourses on immigration and racism. Finally, in the third part, I analyse the recent discourse of a politician, in this case the right-wing mayor of Rome, Gianni Alemanno, on the "nomad emergency" and his proposals to "solve" the question.

Section I: Description and historicity of the institution

UNAR was established in 2004 as a consequence of the Italian decree 9/07/2003, n. 215.[2] This decree in turn follows the **European directive (2000/43)**, which envisages the establishment of a national antidiscrimination office in every European member state as well as antidiscrimination legislation, because, as stated in the directive, racism has devastating effects not only on its victims, but also has destructive consequences for society and the economy. UNAR as an institution is located within the *Ministerio delle Pari Oppurtunità* (**Ministry for Equal Opportunities**), which focuses especially on *gender relations*. The establishment of UNAR in this ministry was justified by pointing to the differential effects racism has on the genders, as well as to the fact that the ministry is already specialised in questions concerning equal/unequal opportunities. It follows that **the ministry equates antidiscrimination with the promotion of equal opportunities**, which in fact misses the point of the actions and effects of racism.

UNAR considers itself an autonomous institution, which has to guarantee the equal treatment of every human independent of its origins, gender, religion, nationality, skin colour or "ethno-cultural" background (Report 2005: 17). For this reason, the institution tries to supervise the efficient utilization of existing protection mechanisms against discrimination due to "race" and "ethnic origin." This is to be provided with a gender specific analysis of racisms[3], since women suffer at least double discrimination (for their gender and their race). Furthermore, UNAR includes cultural and religious racism in its analyses:[4]

---

[2] Before the establishment of UNAR in 2004, Italy had no antidiscrimination institution.
[3] I prefer to speak of racisms, to highlight the plurality of different sorts of racism.
[4] "L'UNAR (Ufficio Nazionale Antidiscriminazioni Razziali) è stato costituito presso il Dipartimento per le Pari Opportunità della Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri con decreto legislativo 9 luglio 2003, n. 215 in attuazione della direttiva comunitaria 2000/43/CE. L'Ufficio è operativo dal novembre 2004, con il compito di promuovere la parità di trattamento e rimuovere ogni discriminazione fondata sulla razza o l'origine

UNAR (National Office Against Racial Discrimination) was established according to the legislative decree of the 9th of July, 2003, n.215, in the Ministry for Equal Opportunities of the Ministerial Council following the directive 2000/3/EU. The office's activity started in November 2004 with the main objective to promote equal treatment and to remove every kind of discrimination founded on race or ethnic origin, while considering the differential impact discrimination can have on men and women, as well as the relation with other forms of discrimination, like cultural and religious discrimination. The establishment of the office in the Ministry of Equal Opportunities is due to the great engagement of the latter in recent constitutional and legislative reforms countering domestic and sexual violence as well as trafficking, while considering in particular the gendered meanings and connotations of various forms of discrimination (Report 2005: 17; Translation S.P.).

The following duties fall within UNAR's remit:

1. Support for the victims of discrimination (Contact Centre)
2. Analysis of discrimination cases (in order to verify discriminatory practices)
3. Promotion of "positive discrimination" measures, especially in cooperation with national and local NGOs
4. Sensibilization and public awareness measures campaigns for the promotion of apposite suitable protection mechanisms against discriminatory practices
5. Recommendations and reports on the issue
6. Publication twice a year for the Parliament and the Government
7. Promotion of studies, research, and seminars
8. Exchange of experiences with civil society actors and antiracist organizations
9. Preparation of guidelines and codes for the fight against "racial and ethnic discrimination"

According to art. 7 D.Lgs 215/2003, UNAR is obliged to provide both the Parliament and the Government with annual reports, which are also made available on the institution's homepage. In these reports the institution gives an account of the application of the principle of equal treatment, as well as the *efficacy* of the antidiscrimination legislation. Efficacy is determined by analyzing statistical data gathered from inquiries and reports made to the Contact Center, the institution's database, as well as other information sources. The annual reports serve as sources for the evaluation of UNAR's work, for the further development of work against discrimination, as well as for observation of the status of racism in Italy on the whole.

---

etnica, anche considerando il diverso impatto che le stesse discriminazioni possono avere su uomini e donne, nonché il rapporto con altre discriminazioni a carattere culturale e religioso. L'inserimento dell'Ufficio all'interno del Dipartimento per le Pari Opportunità si deve all'importante impegno profuso da questo Dipartimento nelle recenti riforme costituzionali e legislative, sul fronte del contrasto alla violenza domestica e sessuale e della protezione delle vittime di tratta, valutando con particolare sensibilità le connotazioni di genere che possono accompagnare ogni forma di discriminazione."

As UNAR itself states, these reports represent both the end of the work of a year and at the same time, the starting point for a new cycle of action against the structural causes of "racial discrimination."

UNAR's main office is in Rome where the Contact Centre, UNAR's communication hub, is located. In addition, UNAR has established so-called "focal points" in five other Italian cities (Turin, Milan, Padua, Naples, and Catania). These local offices facilitate communication with local and regional antiracist organizations and other civil society actors. This "decentralised" model also guarantees faster treatment of cases in which the presence of a UNAR employee is needed. Furthermore, the focal points are important for the realization of public *awareness* and *sensibilisation* campaigns, where collaboration with an established network of civil society actors and antiracist institutions is crucial. Thus, UNAR works at a *meta* level, coordinating relevant handling of discrimination cases. Dr. Massimiliano Monnanni manages UNAR. He is a former journalist, and an expert on human rights and social policy (cp. www.unar.it). Since 2008 he has served in the Foreign Ministry as advisor for the promotion and protection of human rights. From 2003 to 2006 he was Secretary General of the **Inter-ministerial Committee for the Human Rights**, which communicates with the United Nations committee on this issue. He was also the representative for Italy at the EUMC from 2004 to 2007.

UNAR is structured into two departments: one is the department for the protection of equal treatment, where evidence of discrimination is gathered, where victims are offered a first support, and the like. The second department is a scientific one, where sensibilization, information, and communication campaigns are developed. The gender proportion seems to be balanced. Unfortunately the CVs of the employees are not available online. The employees are recruited from the *Presidenza del Consiglio* (Council of Ministers) office and other administrative institutions. Furthermore, UNAR employs civil servants from legal authorities, lawyers, as well as external consultants from social and socio-anthropological fields (cp. Report 2005: 20).

Section II: Analysis of a key document

In this section I provide an analysis of the first report, since it describes the main working method of UNAR, and offers a good overview of the official discourse on immigration and integration, tolerance and intolerance, and discrimination and racism in Italy. As UNAR states, its work is the first structural answer to racism. Racism is

characterized as being variable, depending on historic circumstances and the victims it chooses. It is understood as being nurtured at the same time by individual behaviour, as well as by cultural patterns, economic circumstances, propaganda, institutional responses, and the impact of Media coverage (Report 2005: 18).[5] The report is entitled *"Un anno di attività contro la discriminazione razziale"* (**One Year of Activites Against Racial Discrimination**) and was published in December 2005. It consists of five chapters, each of which describes one of the main working areas, the methods, and the results of the institution's work. In the annex to the report, the juridical foundation and agreements for the launched projects are attached. The first chapter presents UNAR as an institution, and describes its working areas. Together, the method and the working areas form a sort of 'tool kit' for the fight against racial discrimination, which consists of "positive discrimination," and sensibilisation and information campaigns. The last chapter offers information on the European and international juridical framework in which UNAR is embedded.

UNAR is active in some specific areas, such as: the support and promotion of antidiscrimination projects in Italian regions which are assisted by the European Structural Fund (Campania, Calabria, Basilicata, Puglia, and Sicily); participation in the EURoma Project ("*Network europeo per l'inclusione sociale dei Rom",* the **European Network on Social Inclusion of Roma** under the Structural Funds) which advocates for the inclusion or integration of Sinti and Roma in South and South-eastern European societies, as well as Sweden and Finland; participation in the Equinet Project (**European Network for Equality Bodies**) which promotes the creation of a network of antidiscrimination offices in the EU in order to guarantee the efficient cooperation of those offices; and finally, the participation in the NEAR Project *("Network Antidiscriminazione Razziale",* Network Against Racial Discrimination), a project for raising awareness about racism among youth. As the report says, UNAR's work has been broadly and positively accepted by "Italian citizens," the "immigrated population," "Sinti and Roma people," as well as by "other ethnic minorities". (Report 2005: 12).

UNAR itself considers its strategy a special one. Its work is unique because it consists in a combination of "taking action against discriminatory behaviour," implementing awareness measures and "intercultural communication," as well as taking "positive action" in order to eliminate the causes of "discriminatory behaviour." In

---

[5] "L'azione dell'UNAR rappresenta per l'Italia la prima risposta strutturata al razzismo, fenomeno che è stato definito a geometria variabile, cangiante a seconda delle congiunture storiche, mutevole nella scelta delle vittime e capace di alimentarsi contemporaneamente attraverso i comportamenti individuali del singolo, i modelli culturali di riferimento, le condizioni economiche, la propaganda, le risposte delle istituzioni e l'impatto dei media".

order to carry out this work, UNAR has developed various intervention plans, has brought together different institutional and civil society actors, and galvanised against attitudes and behaviours that lead to or justify – intentionally or not – concrete or symbolic marginalization, hierarchisation, inferiorisation, or unequal treatment due to one's "ethnic-racial" origins[6] (Report 2005: 18).

According to UNAR, this method is special, since other European institutions focus mainly on juridical solutions and support, while UNAR offers preventative measures and eradication of the obstacles, which form the bedrock of "racial and ethnic discrimination" (Report 2005: 12).

The word *"razza"* (race) is used in the report and defined according to EU directives, which neither recognize the existence of races, nor accept theories that try to prove their existence. Rather, the report points out that race, like ethnicity is socially constructed. Nevertheless the concepts of race and ethnicity offer broader intervention opportunities against any form of discrimination based on phenotype, culture, language, religion, lifestyle, territorial origins, or belonging to specific communities, and are therefore used (*ibid.*).

• *Working areas of UNAR: the 'tool kit' against racial discrimination*

1) Awareness and prevention

The awareness of public opinion on issues of discrimination is a task to which UNAR has committed itself, and which it tries to fulfill through seminars, various education opportunities, as well as through proposals for legislative amendments. Mass media, schooling, and information tailored for the employment sectors are the channels for these awareness measures, since "equal treatment" should be considered a part of the "cultural heritage" of every single person in order to avoid the emergence of discriminatory behaviour in the whole society:

> It's important, in fact, that the idea of the equal treatment becomes an integral part of the educational and cultural heritage of every single individual, impeding discriminatory actions and behaviors from arising, forming, and diffusing themselves in the public opinion[7] (Report 2005: 22; Translation S.P.).

---

[6] "[...] l'UNAR ha scelto, attraverso un'equipe multidisciplinare, di operare con diversi piani di intervento ed il coinvolgimento di una molteplicità di attori istituzionali e della società civile, nonché di fornire una prima linea di azione contro quegli atteggiamenti e quei comportamenti che, volontariamente ma anche senza intenzione, concretamente o anche simbolicamente, producono o giustificano la marginalizzazione, inferiorizzazione, gerarchizzazione o disparità di trattamento, a causa di differenze etnico-razziali".

[7] "È importante, infatti, che l'idea stessa della parità di trattamento diventi parte integrante del patrimonio educativo e culturale di ogni singolo individuo, impedendo, in questo modo, che i comportamenti e gli atti discriminatori nascano, si formino e si diffondano nell'opinione pubblica".

The sensibilisation and prevention campaigns take place on a national scale. Publicity campaigns in the mass media, organization of conferences, and spreading of best practice solutions – these are some of the ways in which these measures are being concretized (cp. ib.: 23).

⇒ Example: *Settimana di azione contro il razzismo* (Week of Activities Against Racism)

In 2005, UNAR organised the awareness campaign *Week of Activities Against Racism in Rome*. One event consisted of a marathon run for pupils from different Roman schools, a visit to the former Jewish ghetto, and the museum of the Synagogue. The whole event concluded in a school in the Roman city centre, which is attended by pupils of different migration backgrounds ("*da tutte le parti del mondo,*" "from all parts of the world") with the presence of the former Minister for Equal Opportunities, Stefania Prestigiacomo, and a UNAR delegation. The Minister was welcomed with "music from the children's countries" *("musiche della loro terra")* and with various meals and sweets of different ethnic origins *("di varie provenienze etniche")*.

> After the event, the Minister stayed in the school to discuss the problems of integration with the teachers, who, day by day, with passion and commitment, help those children overcome the problems of integration/inclusion in the new country and the establishment of a relationship to it.[8] (Report 2005: 36; Translation S.P.).

The report praises the school's teachers for their great passion and effort, helping the children day by day in overcoming the problems of integration and insertion into the new society, and developing their relation to a new country. In this case the children are constructed as the problem, as the ones to be *lacking* of (e.g. language proficieny) – a *deficiency* – which the teachers ameliorate by helping them to "integrate". The problem is no longer one of racism and discrimination – which might be the suggestion of a project entitled Week of Activities Against Racism – but the deficit of the children, their "failure" to integrate, and in turn to *cause* problems and potential racist reactions. This shift from racism to "failed integration," and the externalization of the problem onto the immigrants, reveals an abdication of responsibility for racist actions and behaviours throughout the document.

⇒ Example: Publication of the vade mecum *"Integrazione e non discriminazione: panorama normativo e ruolo dell'UNAR"* ("Integration and Non-Discrimination: Normative Panorama and the Role of UNAR")

In this publication, thematic in-depth information is accompanied by recommendations

---

[8] "Il Ministro, al termine della visita, si è intrattenuta a discutere delle problematiche dell'integrazione con gli insegnanti che, con grande passione ed impegno, aiutano ogni giorno questi bambini a superare i problemi legati all'inserimento e al rapporto con un nuovo Paese".

and instruments for the implication of equal opportunity directives for "Italians," "immigrants," and "ethnic minorities." It delineates the current international and national valid norms, the duties of the judicial apparatus, and the tasks, objectives, and functions of UNAR. By publishing such brochures, and by participating in projects like *"Più Voci per una Società nuova"* (More Voices for a New Society) (Syracuse 2005), UNAR claims to support the creation of an "interculture" and "multiethnicity" in the "receiving society." This is also the aim of instruments such as informative brochures that claim to provide guidance for "successful integration" into the new society (Report 2005: 45).

2) Support for the victims of "discrimination" and elimination of "discrimination"
Both the EU and national legislation require concrete support for the victims of discrimination. As the report describes it, this means that the "harmonious situation" that existed before the discriminatory action occurred, has to be restored. It also has to be guaranteed that the discriminatory behaviour and its effects on the victim cease, and finally that, if necessary, compensation be granted. Employees at the free Contact Centre, who are trained in intercultural mediation, provide a kind of 'first aid'. At the same time, the Contact Centre is the first and only way to get to the UNAR:

> One of the main objective of the EU Council and the national legislator is to assure a concrete assistance to the victims of discrimination. In case discriminatory actions are denounced/ the office becomes a notification of discriminatory acts or behaviors, the objective of the office is to rehabilitate the situation, to guarantee the discriminatory behavior to cease, to eliminate the harmful effects which possibly have already manifested itself and to assure the payment of a compensation[9] (Report 2005: 23; Translation S.P.).

The aid consists of three elements: supporting and escorting throughout the judicial process, including attendance by a UNAR employee if needed; independent UNAR examination of the reported cases; contacts to relevant state-authorized organizations and NGOs. The reported cases are distinguished into "relevant" and "non-relevant" ones. Relevant are those cases in which the discrimination is "obviously" racist. The non-relevant cases are those in which discrimination is perceived, but which might also be motivated by age, gender, sexual orientation, and so forth. In non-relevant cases, the victims are assigned to other institutions (Report 2005: 59). The relevant cases are again differentiated into those that occurred in a housing area and those that occurred in the employment sector. Furthermore, they are qualitatively distinguished into

---

[9] "Uno degli obiettivi principali del Consiglio UE e del legislatore nazionale è quello di assicurare un'assistenza concreta alle vittime delle discriminazioni. Nel caso in cui giunga notizia di atti o comportamenti discriminatori, infatti, l'obiettivo dell'Ufficio è quello di contribuire a sanare la situazione, con la garanzia della cessazione della condotta discriminatoria, della rimozione degli effetti pregiudizievoli già eventualmente realizzatisi e della corresponsione di un risarcimento dei danni".

harassment and *discrimination*. Finally, the anti-discrimination legislation makes it possible, as the report points out, to distinguish between direct and indirect discrimination. The former includes discrimination based on phenotype and origin, while the latter results from apparently neutral criteria and practices – hence structural and institutional discrimination. It is worth noting that the "direct" sort is considered a form of "discrimination" and not racism. The procedure in the "relevant cases" consists of the following steps: analysis and documentation of the case; research in the victim's environment (school, work); contact with the victim (in case the victim has not reported the fact him/herself); contact with the perpetrator of the discriminatory behaviour; arrival at a solution; conclusion of the case; and notification to the user of the service. In case the procedure does not lead to a satisfactory conclusion, the case will continue to be treated on a "secondary level," including ongoing research.

The conflict's solution consists of mediation between the two parties and, if the discrimination occurred at work, seminars and training in "intercultural coexistence" for the employees and management. If these measures prove to be ineffective, UNAR supports the victim in an action for an injunction, but, as the report states, UNAR prefers the "soft" solution, hence the mediation, and recommends it to the victim.

3) Promotion of positive discrimination and trainings

The third and last element of UNAR's work involves prompting private and public actors to introduce "positive discrimination" measures in order to compensate for or, as the case may be, to avoid discriminatory situations motivated by "race" and "ethnic origin." UNAR works in this area on a meta level and tries to cooperate with regional and local actors to establish guidelines in order to define discriminatory behaviour in different sectors and, if necessary, to eliminate it with apposite measures. The different actors are motivated to submit relevant proposals for such guidelines and positive discrimination initiatives.

In the practice of UNAR "Positive discrimination" seems to target not the victim of the discriminatory behaviour but instead its potential perpetrator (cp. Report 2005: 122). Accordingly, UNAR organizes seminars and trainings on diversity competence in the workplace and education arena. These measures too can be traced back to EU directives, which encourage a step-by-step approach to changing attitudes through participation in such "positive discrimination" initiatives. These include also trainings on knowledge about racisms, as well as the development of best practice solutions. This approach is described as a "systemic" approach, that is, an approach with respect to

the system as a whole; the hope is that starting from an individual case will lead to the development of an action onto the whole system, which, in the long run, will lead to structural changes.

- *'Target population' and construction of relevant categories*

"Donne e razzismo"/ Women and racism
Two circumstances of this report are remarkable: the first one concerns the location of UNAR within the Ministry for Equal Opportunities which, it is pointed out several times, is concerned primarily with gender equality. The report also remarks that racisms have different effects on both genders and therefore have to be analyzed through a gendered gaze. But neither in the reported cases nor in the description of the institution's work itself are the gender category and the effects of racisms on women taken into account. None of the cases and measures is characterized by a gender-specific approach, and the analysis of the reported examples lacks a gender-specific focus on the problem. The promised emphasis on the gender problem seems to be a mere application of EU demands, rather than a profound approach to the elimination and fight against racist attacks on women.

This lack is partially mitigated in the 2009 annual report. There the focus is on - as already announced in the first document - gendered racism, that is, racism against women. The women in the report are subjected to a victimization discourse as well as to a constant 'othering' process. Migrant women are often described as being "invisible," therefore the aim of antidiscrimination measures should be to make these women "visible" again:

> Women of foreign origin are often invisible. Their invisibility should not impede our taking the existing differences between these women into account, in terms of class, legal status as migrants, different religions, ethnic origins, and economic and social reality. Although women represent a major percentage of the immigrated population, they have always been treated as secondary subjects of migratory processes. The differential participation of women in the new migratory fluxes depends both on the reality of their situation at departure and upon arrival. In each developing country, modernization processes entangle the feminine universe more and more, transforming female roles, and creating poverty. The augmentation of the female migration depends after all on a great demand for domestic service and private nursing in European countries[10] (Report 2009: 72; Translation S.P.).

---

[10] "Le donne di origine straniera spesso sono invisibili. La loro invisibilità non deve però impedire una presa di coscienza delle differenze significative esistenti fra loro, in termini di classe, status giuridico in quanto migranti, di diverse religioni, provenienza etnica e realtà economica e sociale. Anche se le donne sono ormai una percentuale sempre più significativa della popolazione immigrata, sono, da sempre, state trattate come soggetti secondari nel processo migratorio. La diversa partecipazione delle donne ai nuovi flussi migratori è dipesa sia dalle realtà di partenza, che quelle di arrivo. In tutti i Paesi in via di sviluppo i processi di modernizzazione coinvolgono sempre più l'universo femminile, trasformando i ruoli femminili e creando povertà. L'incremento delle migrazioni femminili dipende quindi da una grande domanda nei Paesi europei di servizi domestici e di cura alla persona".

Visibility should be achieved by considering differences in terms of "class," "legal status," "ethnic origin," "economic status," "religion," and "social reality" among the various migrant women. Furthermore, the report underlines the necessity to consider women an integral part of migration processes and no longer as "secondary subjects." According to the report, female migration is motivated by modernization processes in "developing countries" *("paesi in via di sviluppo")*. But this migration leads to changes in gender role models and in turn, to the existence of poverty.

Finally, **the report interprets the increasing female migration as a response to increasing demand in European countries for caretakers, nurses, and other domestic helpers.** Furthermore, the report points out that, by migrating, women have undertaken a first step towards their own emancipation – which answers partially the question of the *role model* the authors refer to – because, as the report goes on, these women have "surmounted their domestic walls." **This is an occidentalist discourse, which inferiorises and generalises *tout court* all migrating women as being suppressed, backwards, and not emancipated. Emancipation becomes the boundary drawer between "us" and "them" in which the Western self represents itself as superior.** In migrating, the 'other' women are able to emancipate themselves, too, and to develop some sorts of "self affirmation," and become visible – this at last seems to be the conclusion the report draws. Migrant women, the report offers, should be considered a resource in the migration context, seen as a "propelling force of development."

> It would be useful to know, for example, that many women who have arrived in Italy have already begun an emancipation process from a closed and isolated situation inside domestic walls, and who leave in order to get self affirmation and find a way towards the future. Our future, as well, depends on our ability to valorize the resources we are offered, which can bring an enormous human and cognitive contribution, as well as a contribution in terms of experiences. The migrant women, therefore – new and antique – figure within the migratory universe, can take the role they are entitled to as a propelling force of development[11] (Report 2009: 73; Translation S.P.).

Visibility and valorisation of this "resource" should take place through a "massive" public awareness campaign. In this campaign, the situation of women "of foreign origins" (*"di origine straniera"*) should be communicated and demonstrated. Therefore, UNAR plans to establish and coordinate an apposite working group. The objective of

---

[11] "Sarebbe utile sapere, ad esempio, che molte donne immigrate che arrivano in Italia, hanno già avviato un processo di emancipazione da situazioni di chiusura e di isolamento entro le mura domestiche, che quindi partono per ottenere una propria affermazione e per poter trovare una via verso il futuro. Il nostro futuro dipende anche dalla nostra capacità di valorizzare le risorse che ci vengono offerte e che possono portare un enorme contributo umano, conoscitivo e di esperienze. La donna migrante, allora, nuova e antica figura all'interno dell'universo migratorio, potrà ricoprire il ruolo che le compete, di forza trainante dello sviluppo".

this working group would be to strengthen the rights of women since they are subjected to a double discrimination: as women and as "foreigners". In this context, the report speaks of the intersection of "racial/ethnic" and gendered discrimination.

> The intersection of gendered and racial/ethnic discrimination will be considered as central in every communication campaign envisaged in the project, on the basis of an approach, which will take into account multiple discrimination, which still fails to be understood and fully acknowledged[12] (*ibid.*; Translation S.P.).

As the report remarks, this double discrimination has been neglected, which is the reason why UNAR now targets multiple discriminations. How does UNAR want to remove multiple discrimination and the ostensible invisibility of immigrant women? Like in the other cases, the tools UNAR applies are prevention and sensibilisation campaigns. Knowledge of the living conditions of these women, and of tendencies towards their marginalization, should be circulated. Meetings between "women of foreign origins" and "Italian" women should be promoted, in order to support their "cultural growth," and to enable the women to acquire a system of rights and duties. Finally, the communication between immigrant women and UNAR has to be made easier, so that more women report incidents of discrimination. One last proposal is to support the creation of networks of migrant women to enable an "intercultural coexistence" which should prevent further discrimination.

"Razza" e "origine etnica"/ Race and ethnic origin

Discrimination is constantly described as directed at race ("*razza*") or ethnic origin. The concept of race has been problematized by the UNAR, as shown above. Also, the concept of ethnicity is explained following Anthony Smith. Smith defines an ethnic group as a group sharing "one or more characteristics," such as a "common history, language or origin, common myths, common territory and/or common cultural traditions" (Report 2005: 67). Though UNAR problematises the concept of race insofar as EU-guidelines do so, it does not problematise the utilization of the term in the Italian context. Similarly, UNAR fails to adequately discuss the term ethnicity. Ethnicity and racism, although the latter being defined and differing from race, seem to be interchangeable.

---

[12] "L'intersezione di discriminazione di genere con l'origine etnica e razziale sarà considerata centrale all'interno di ogni azione di comunicazione prevista nel progetto, sulla base di un approccio che tratterà in modo ampio la discriminazione multipla che ancora incontra difficoltà ad essere compresa e pienamente riconosciuta".

"Discriminazione"/ Discrimination

The report uses 'racism' in the beginning as an abstract concept, and the term appears in some projects supported by UNAR, such as *"Fai un goal al Razzismo"* ("Goals Against Racism", a project against racism in football), and the like. When approaching racism in Italian society and naming concrete cases, however, it seems to become more and more difficult to speak of racism at school or at work. UNAR sees itself as an institution fighting racism, and supporting projects that fight racism, but then it speaks only of discrimination (as the institution's name already suggests). When reporting cases and projects, the term used in the report is not "racism" but "discrimination due to race or ethnic origin."

Discrimination is understood both as "negative labelling" from the "Italian population" and as the personal sensation of being rejected – this perceived and felt discrimination can lead to, as the UNAR report states, the alleged victim's reliance on certain protection mechanisms, even if there is no "real motive" (Report 2005: 97). **The upshot of this is that racist insults have to be objective and verifiable, which, to put it bluntly, makes the victim a potential liar. Questioning the existence of a "real motive" is not only a bagatellisation of racist violence and discriminatory practices, but it also turns the relation between victim and perpetrator upside down: the insulter becomes the victim of the 'paranoid illusions' of the insulted.** Seeking a "real motive" for racism is always in vain – racist insults very often operate on a subtle level and then seldom rise to the status of the verifiable or objectifiable.

The report explicitly distinguishes discrimination from harassment. The latter is defined in the decree of 2003 as behaviour targeted at violating the dignity of a person with intimidating, hostile, degrading and humiliating behaviour (Report 2005: 92). The distinction helps to distinguish unequal treatment – which is structural, like access to housing and employment, hence "discriminations" – from behaviour that violates human dignity, like verbal violence, insults, and the like (cp. ib.).

"Eguaglianza"/ Equality

The report states that discrimination violates equality. UNAR sees equal treatment as a crucial element of European societies. "Racial" equality, as well as equality in the employment sector, together are but one element in the fight against discrimination, states the EU Commission. Equality is understood as equality of rights. Equality is not contrasted with diversity, rather the report emphasizes that diversity is to be recognized and valorised. This emphasis on diversity in turn leads to a veritable construction of

difference, which constitutes the basis of the discrimination discourse. The 'diverse' one is the one who has a 'deficit' and for whom projects have to be implemented. The 'diverse' and 'deficient' one is in the end the one who has the responsibility to alleviate the consequences of his/her diversity by integrating him/herself into the host society. Equality and discrimination, therefore, have to be analysed simultaneously since they are complementary.

"Integrazione"/ Integration

In order to alleviate the immigrant deficits, they are requested to "integrate" themselves. "Integration" is metaphorically described as the "target line" (Report 2005: 31). UNAR does not define the concept of "integration" but one can render a meaning by scrutinizing its application. "Integration," "a culture of integration," "respect for human dignity and diversity" (Report 2005: 127) are seen as substantial for economic success, both on a small scale in a company, as well as on a large scale like at the national level. Disrespectful behavior, discriminatory practices and the like are considered harmful because they can, for example, lead to compensation complaints. "Integration," "mutual respect," "exchange of opportunities," "participatory migratory politics," and "interaction," are some of the key concepts named in this context (ib.: 49).

"Integration" can also be facilitated by assuring equal treatment, for example in terms of banking services, access to credit, and the like, since immigrants suffer discrimination in these areas (ib: 79). "Integration" then becomes the counterpart of discrimination; integration assures equal treatment and equal treatment means absence of racist practices. Since discrimination is understood as hindering and endangering social peace and economic development, "integration" has to be achieved. In other words, integration of different "ethnicities" should be valorized for the way it enriches the host society, the report points out.

The target group of such integration measures are "immigrants," "strangers," "Sinti and Roma people," and "other ethnic minorities," who are "guided" towards their integration. Remarkably "integration" is mostly to be performed by the immigrants themselves. **They have to integrate themselves into the host society, and their "failing" to do so is seen as a "problem". "Integration" is understood as a sort of "cultural compatibility" between different "ethnic groups"** (Report 2005: 69). In this context UNAR reports the case of an Italian Sinto who asserted "the will of his community to integrate into the Italian society", but seems to have failed, since, as UNAR notes, Italian society shows "typical behaviour of identity closure"(ib.). This

apparent contradiction fits UNAR's "integration" discourse: the man is an Italian citizen and shouldn't have a reason to complain about his and his community's difficulties to "integrate" into Italian society, since he is an Italian. But even if he is not considered as a full member, it is at least the report's duty to put this circumstance right. [13]

The "integration" projects focus especially on the employment and education sectors. Projects are launched in schools for "intercultural" education, emphasizing presumed ethno-cultural diversities. At the same time "cultural diversities" seem to be considered problematic for "integration." The discourse gradually shifts in the report, where the victims of racist behavior become the ones who have the responsibility for their own integration. For UNAR, therefore, antiracist measures are measures targeting the integration of immigrants more than their protection.

"Tolleranza"/ Tolerance

As in the case of "integration," **the report does not define the term "tolerance," nor does it speak of tolerance, but instead of *"intolleranza razziale"* ("racial intolerance"),** which is considered to have negative effects on the integration of immigrants. Thus, tolerance is indirectly defined, insofar as discrimination and harassment are subsumed under the concept of "racial intolerance":

> Finally a last distinction concerns the difference between discrimination and harassment, which is a significant divide for the interpretation of the 'variants' of behaviors of racial intolerance[14] (Report 2005: 60; Translation S.P.).

Being tolerant is therefore crucial for the successful integration of immigrants into the host society. Furthermore, the concept of intolerance seems to be interchangeable with xenophobia, discrimination, and racism. It is notable that the report lacks a definition of all these concepts, including 'tolerance'. Furthermore, it is remarkable that the report speaks primarily of "intolerance" and only once of "tolerance", when it mentions tolerance for diversity.

> Culture, as acquisition and sedimentation of multiple knowledges, leads naturally to the development of a sensitivity based on respect and tolerance for diversities[15] (Report 2005: 198; Translation S.P.).

Tolerance and respect are qualities, which are learnt naturally and therefore do not

---

[13] In this case, the report asserts that Italians are often released from the responsibility of a successful „integration" regarding „immigrants" and Sinti and Roma, who are „considered as problematic for integration due to their specificities as ethnic group" from the Italians (ib.). The report as whole adopts an apologetic and ambigous attitude towards racist or discriminatory practices of the „Italian population".

[14] "Infine, un'ultima distinzione verterà sulla differenza tra discriminazione e molestia, uno spartiacque significativo nell'interpretare le "varianti" dei comportamenti di intolleranza razziale".

[15] "La cultura, in quanto acquisizione e sedimentazione di conoscenze e saperi molteplici, induce naturalmente allo sviluppo di una sensibilità basata sul rispetto e sulla tolleranza delle diversità".

need further explanations, since they come 'by nature' and are self-evident – the aberration is intolerance, which has to be opposed through various measures.

"Italiani e non" / Italians and none

In this last short section I want to give a brief overview on who is – and who is *not* – considered as belonging to Italy, to the Italian people, and hence is regarded as "Italian." The concept seems to be derived from the principle *ius sanguinis*, which attributes belonging to a people (and in some cases citizenship in a State) through parentage. Interestingly, the report distinguishes for example between Sinti and Roma, even if the majority of them possess Italian citizenship. **"Italians" or "autochthons"** **are distinguished from both** *"immigrati"* **(immigrants),** *"stranieri"* **(strangers),** **and** *"minoranze etniche"* **(ethnic minorities)** (Report 2005: 47).

When referring to Italy as a country, the report often adds the possessive pronoun "our" that underlines the nexus between people and territory, and this unity is justified, even strengthened, by 'blood'.[16] **The second-generation children of immigrants,** *"seconde generazioni di immigrati,"* **are distinguished from "Italian children".** **They are not Italians and Italy will not be *their* country.** The report does not discuss the situation of the "second generation", most of whom possess Italian citizenship, even if it might be interesting to see how they are discursively treated and categorised.

Section IV: Brief analysis of key discourses from political elites regarding the main issues addressed by the institution/policy:

On August 31st Rome's right-wing mayor Gianni Alemanno convened a meeting of Police, Municipal Police and Carabinieri (the national gendarmerie) to discuss the *"emergenza nomadi"* (nomad emergency). He wanted to close the unauthorized settlements of Sinti and Roma and also to "ameliorate" their living conditions. The meeting and the mayor's activity on the issue came about after a fire in a settlement in a Roman periphery in which a three-year-old child died, while his little brother remained hospitalized. All the "illegal camps" the mayor says, have to be evacuated, since the safety of both the inhabitants around and in the "camps" is compromised.

Alemanno states that especially the "dangerous" ones, where "disasters" often happen and where the sanitary conditions are also precarious– those "camps,"

---

[16] *"Nostra penisola"* ("Our Peninsula") (Report 2005: 95), *"nostro Paese"* and *"nostro territorio,"* ,(*"our country,","our territory"*) (ib.: 61).

estimated to number between 150 and 200, are not acceptable and have to be evacuated and closed. Housing should be provided for those in need. Within one week the eviction of the "most dangerous" camps will be provided in cooperation with Police and Carabinieri. In order to impede the creation of new spontaneous settlements, the owners of those properties should be obliged to protect the areas where "illegal" (*"abusivi"*) settlements have been established in order to impede their reformation after eviction. As Alemanno added, it is not possible to prevent the creation of spontaneous settlements, but with constant pressure the "phenomenon" will gradually be reduced[17].

Even if this is a "first step" to handle "the problem," Alemanno points out that "the nomad question" needs a "European strategy". Alemanno underlines that he will encourage the Italian Home Secretary, Roberto Maroni, who in turn will meet with his French colleague, to propose to the European Union the creation of a united plan on "the nomads," regulating their influx and ameliorating their living conditions (ib.)[18]. The great influxes are a consequence of the economic crisis and the great changes Romania faces, Alemanno adds. Italy, he continues, could become one of the preferred destinations for the new "exodus" (*"esodi"*) and especially Rome, since it has a big territory which is difficult to control and could easily be "assaulted," especially given that France has cracked down on the Sinti and Roma in their country (cp. Il Messagero, 29.08.2010). In order to guarantee "security" for all, Alemanno is convinced that the Home Secretary will present the argument on the issue. The latter expressed himself on Sinti and Roma people saying *"li mandiamo via"* ("we're sending them away"). Alemanno as well allegedly proposed to send them away – but only "the delinquents" who commit illegal activities (*"delinquenti"* and *"chi commette illegalità"*) have to "be sent away," the others may stay, as Alemanno finally stated, shifting his discourse on "safety" into a discourse on "security."

The 'good immigrant', the 'good rom', and the 'good Muslim' are to be distinguished from their 'bad' counterparts, who in turn must be sent away. But the line between both categories is thin and easily begins to blur, **since 'goodness' and 'badness' of persons are attributed by the host society and are ultimately constructed categories – the 'good/bad' discourse is often coupled with a**

---

[17] "Faremo delle ordinanze per obbligare i privati a mettere in sicurezza le aree occupate da insediamenti abusivi - ha annunciato il sindaco - per evitare che si ricreino dopo uno sgombero. Non è possibile impedire la riformazione spontanea di nuovi campi - ha aggiunto il sindaco - ma è importante creare una pressione costante in modo che progressivamente il fenomeno si riduca" (la repubblica, 31.08.2010).
[18] "La settimana prossima - ha spiegato - so che il ministro degli Interni, Roberto Maroni, incontrerà il suo collega francese e io lo solleciterò a mettere sul tavolo dell'Unione Europea la creazione di un piano complessivo sui nomadi che regoli i flussi favorendo condizioni di vita migliori. Sono convinto che Maroni, anche su nostra insistenza, farà in questo senso una richiesta forte a Bruxelles" (ib.).

discourse on integration, which gradually then moves to a discourse on criminalization and security. 'Failed integration' *pushes* immigrants into illegality and crime, and as a consequence, and in order to guarantee "security", they have to be sent away. Sinti and Roma represent but a very small portion of the entire Italian population, nevertheless they are constructed as an enormous emergency endangering the social security of the Italian society. The belligerent rhetoric as well as the biblical terminology underline the "danger" of Sinti and Roma people coming to Italy and "assaulting" the Italian territory.

Conclusion

Following European directive 2000/43, Italy has established a national antidiscrimination institution, UNAR (*Uffcio nazionale antidiscriminazione razziale*). This institution is the first of its kind in Italy and has existed since 2004. In this paper, I have analyzed the first annual report, which came out in 2005, and supplemented the analysis with further informations from the recent 2009 report. This brief analysis provides initial insight into the official national (anti-) discrimination discourse and helps to understand the construction of differences by analyzing difference-generating categories.

I have shown that the UNAR report emphasizes gendered racism. This is in part due to the fact that the institution is affiliated with the Ministry of Equal Opportunities, which especially works on gender equality. UNAR points out that racism has different effects on women since they are subjected to at least double discrimination based on their gender and their origin. Even though UNAR discusses the impact of gendered racism on women, the report shows no specific measures in order to prevent it. In the 2009 report does UNAR focus more on women. Nevertheless, no specific actions are initialized, only plans on how to better protect women from the effects of discriminatory and racist actions. Immigrant women are victimized and othered, they are considered "invisible" and not "emancipated." This is an occidentalist discourse where the 'other' women are interiorized while the occidentalist Self experiences self-affirmation in leading these women to emancipation and freedom - this the report clearly states when talking of immigrant women overcoming their domestic walls through migration, and experiencing new role models. The invisibility of the 'other' women can be overcome through their emancipation and incorporation into the host society, in particular, by adopting western emancipation standards (which are not exemplified in the report) and

by "integrating" themselves. Invisibility is hence a deficit of immigrated women and not of those who do not want to see, namely the host society.

In addition to focusing on immigrant women, UNAR also looks at the Sinti and Roma population. As both reports underline, they suffer discrimination and marginalization. Even if they have Italian citizenship they are subjected to discriminatory practices especially in the housing and employment sectors. Although UNAR refers to their precarious legal status, the institution has not launched any specific initiatives, like sensibilization campaigns in schools, for the protection of Sinti and Roma.

The report stresses that the responsibility for successful integration of the different "cultures" lies with both the "Italian" and "immigrant" populations, but then the report often shifts towards a benevolent, paternalistic – and racist – discourse on immigrants. Immigrants are considered as being different. They are said to have a different culture, different costumes, and religious beliefs. This is why UNAR's mission is to mediate in cases of discrimination. UNAR also distinguishes between discrimination and harassment. Discrimination is defined as the unequal treatment of people, in this case because of their race or ethnic origin. Discrimination is considered a structural problem, which needs a structural answer in form of this national institution. Harassment, on the other hand, refers to actions aiming at harming one's dignity and is more likely to be called racist.

The report avoids speaking of racism, preferring instead to speak of discrimination. This may be in part because articulating a problem in terms of discrimination, in terms of unequal treatment, seems to offer more possibilities for its elimination. To speak of racism, then, becomes difficult because racism is considered a personal attitude that cannot be removed through the mere sensibilization and prevention campaigns UNAR offers. As Hesse justly notes:

> Hence, the moralising depictions of racism(s) as disease (usually a cancer) or evil (with all its theological connotations) or extremism (typically right-wing nationalism). Even in those publicly exposed social institutions, like police forces, where routinely something called racism is castigated as prejudice, discrimination, exclusion, hate or violence (the vaunted tropes of the hegemonic conceptual heritage), it is pointedly associated with excesses, lapses, distortions and derelictions (Hesse, 2004: 10).

Talking in terms of discrimination seems easier and more acceptable, since the term racism evokes, in the context of this report, Nazi racism and, ultimately, the Holocaust (a word which is not used). Nevertheless, as I have shown in this analysis, **this distinction between racism and discrimination is a trap for UNAR, inducing itself to reiterate racist discourses.**

Bibliography

http://www.ilmessaggero.it/articolo.php?id=116763
4.9.2010

http://roma.repubblica.it/cronaca/2010/08/30/news/nomadi_sgomberi-6624231
4.9.2010

www.unar.it
4.9.2010

www.euromanet.eu
4.9.2010

www.comitatoromsinti.blogspot.com
4.9.2010

Legge n.40, 6.3.1998:
http://www.camera.it/parlam/leggi/98040l.htm
15.9.2010

UNAR Report (2005): Un anno di attività contro la discriminazione razziale

UNAR Report (2009): Relazione al Presidente del Consiglio dei Ministri sull'Attività svolta nel 2009

Hesse, Barnor (2004): Im/Plausible Deniability: Racism's conceptual double bind. Social Identities, 10 (1) : 10-29.