

5 – SOCIAL WELFARE AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Data regarding social welfare, social security and voluntary work, especially in times of economic crisis, interests a wide range of subjects (individuals, families, the worlds of education and training, the labour market, pension schemes); a detailed analysis thus consents an adequate and pertinent assessment of economic and social policies and the quality of social welfare in Italy.

With regard to the hours authorised by the Redundancy Fund (Cassa Integrazione Guadagni) for salary integration in the industry sector in Sicily, the data for 2009 confirms a rising trend similar to that for 2008. In fact in 2009 the hours authorised by the Redundancy Fund amounted to 10.528.832 (+122,9%), bringing them into line with figures for 2005, the year in which the hours authorised for industry by the Redundancy Fund had reached a total number of about 9,600,000. From 2006 to 2007 the total number of hours authorised by the Redundancy Fund had been falling, the trend being interrupted in 2008. The final balance for the last year shows an increase in routine interventions (+196.7%), which are linked to problems of a short-term nature, and a less marked increase in the number of extraordinary interventions (+35.3%). Because of a greater industrial presence, a little under 30% of the hours authorised and recorded in 2009 regarded the Province of Palermo, followed by Catania and Siracusa, with figures of 18.6% and 13.4% respectively. During the five-year period 2005-2009 the number of hours granted in the sector in question rose overall by 10.6%, and more specifically, by 37.9% for manual workers and by 143% for white-collar workers.

In the year 2009, there were all together 34,311 accidents reported, very much in line with the figure for 2008. As a consequence of population size and the respective economic vocations, data showed Ragusa (719) and Trapani (353) with the highest number of accidents in the agricultural sector, whilst in Palermo and Catania there was the highest incidence of reported accidents in

both industry (6,280 and 6,089 cases respectively) and in the State sector (654 and 528 respectively). Between 2005 and 2009 the number of reported accidents in industry rose by 1.9%, and by 23% in the State sector, whereas there was an appreciable fall in the agricultural sector (-17.9%).

The number of pensions paid out in Sicily in 2008 rose to over 1,713,000 units, an increase of 0.7% over the previous year, whilst overall expenditure amounted to 15,600 million Euros (+3.4%). The average pension recorded in Sicily, about 11,228 Euros annually, was over 690 Euros lower than the corresponding national figure. There were just over 1,182,000 IVS pensions, a lower figure than for 2007 in terms of numbers (-2,639 units, -0.2%); however the total sum paid out increased by 384 million Euros, equal to about +3%. Social welfare pensions, and civil and social disability pensions, also increased (+3.6%), whereas there was a slight drop in the number (-2.5% over 2007) of so-called indemnity allowances (resulting, above all, from accidents at work, occupational illnesses and war pensions etc.), but a 3.4% increase in monetary pay-outs. Between 2004 and 2008 the number of pensions paid out in Sicily rose by 3.5%, whilst there was a much greater rise of 18.8% in expenditure. Over the four-year period the unitary cost therefore registered an increase of about 1,100 Euros.

Examination of the data by type for the four-year period reveals a marked increase in social welfare pensions (both in number and total outlay), a more moderate advance for IVS pensions and a decline in indemnity allowances. With reference to the resident population in 2008, over 58% of pensions paid out in Sicily regarded the Provinces of Palermo (24.2%), Catania (18.6%) and Messina (15.4%), whereas the average unitary amount ranged from over 9,700 Euros in Palermo to 7,800 Euros in Agrigento. Several characteristic ratios might provide additional elements regarding the role of pensions in the economic and social context. Pension expenditure as a percentage of gross domestic product might have some significance, as might the retirement-rate and the relative benefit-index. In 2005, the total amount of expenditure as a percentage of the GDP was 14.3%, whilst the figure for Italy as a whole was a little lower (13.7%). At the Provincial level the indicator hovered between a maximum in Messina (16.4%) and a minimum in Trapani (12.5%). As for the retirement-rate (calculated from the ratio of the number of pensions to the population at the end of the year), the level remained steady in 2005, at around 24.8%, which was lower than the figure for the country as a whole (31.6%). The Provincial figures ranged from 21.3% in Catania to 31.1% in Messina. Lastly, the relative benefit-index (i.e. the relationship between the cost of the single pension and the GDP per inhabitant) in 2005, stood at 57.8%, as against a lower figure at the national level (43.2%). On the Provincial level Trapani (47.5%) had the minimum and Palermo (66%) the maximum.

At the end of 2006, in Sicily there were 457 residential-care homes (-6.3% over 2005) with a total of 13,910 beds; these were occupied by 10,578 persons, more than 57% of whom were elderly. The residential structures in the Region

represent almost 5.1% of the total in the country as a whole, which, with 330,898 beds, provided accommodation in 2006 for 294,961 persons.

As regards voluntary organisations registered in the Region in 2003, there were almost 642 structures, with an average number of 32 registered members per structure (39 volunteers per organisation at the national level).

Glossary

IVS pension – pension for invalids, old-age and war-veterans

Pension: a periodic and continuous benefit paid out individually by public and private companies after: reaching a specific age, annuity maturing following payment of contributions for a set period of time, failed or reduced working capacity due to congenital and subsequent infirmities, death of a protected person and special merit for services to the nation.

Provincial administrations: local bodies whose functions consist in looking after the interests and promoting development over a large inter-Communal area or the whole Province.

Redundancy fund: an instrument through which the Government can intervene in support of businesses, which, finding themselves in difficult straits, have been forced to cut down or temporarily suspend their operations. This intervention consists in INPS allocating benefits (as substitute for salary) to workers suspended from work, or subject to a reduced work-load in terms of hours. The Redundancy Fund interventions are of two kinds:

1) Ordinary management

- *ordinary interventions*, i.e. those linked to a company's temporary difficulties
- *extra-ordinary interventions*, i.e. those arising from the temporary suspension of business activity owing to re-structuring, re-organisation or re-conversion of the company or when there is a state of crisis, which might be of social relevance for the employment situation;

2) Special management

- special management for the building sector, pertaining to construction and Stone-working enterprises (including craftsmen). Extra-ordinary interventions include the number of hours authorised to those working in commercial outlets of industrial companies in a state of difficulty.

Social assistance: sector in which social benefits are linked to inadequacy of economic resources or to situations of hardship (disability, neglect) and are financed through general taxation.

Social benefits (European system of accounts, SEC 95): current transfers, in money or in kind, allocated to households to provide benefits covering costs of unexpected, specific events (illness, old-age, death, invalidity, unemployment).

Voluntary organisation: organisation which (in accordance with law no. 266 of 1991):

- to a great and decisive extent, avails itself of the voluntary and unpaid work of its adherents.
- uses paid workers or autonomous services “exclusively within the necessary limits for regular functioning, or where an activity that has already been completed needs to be qualified and specialised”.
- in any agreements between adherents, in its company act or statute, stipulates clearly “its non-profit making nature, the democracy of the structure, official posts being up for election and unpaid, as well as the free voluntary help of adherents, the criteria for admission and exclusion of adherents and their duties and rights.
- complies with the obligation of having a regular balance-sheet showing assets, contributions, bequests received, as well as the modality for approving the budget by the general assembly of all adherents.

Further reading

Publications

Italian Statistical Yearbook 2010- ISTAT

Social security and social assistance statistics– Pension payments – 2007 – ISTAT

Social security and social assistance statistics – Recipients of pension benefits – 2007 - ISTAT

Final balances of Social Security companies– 1999-2007 - ISTAT

Organisation of voluntary work in Italy– year 2003 – ISTAT

Internet

www.istat.it

Residential welfare and social security in Italy - 2006

Italian Statistical Yearbook 2010 – Chapter 4 “Social security and social assistance”

Second census and survey on social operations and services in town councils – 2004

Work, social security and social welfare causes – 2000-2004

www.inps.it

Statistics data-banks– Pensions: general statistics

www.fivol.it

Data-banks about voluntary organisations in Sicily

www.lavoro.gov.it

Longitudinal sample of activities and pensioners (CLAP): updating of data-base and future developments

www.disabilitaincifre.it

Statistical informational system regarding disabilities