

## Industrial Relations in Italy, Pre-COVID Key Facts

### Type of System:

- Private Sector: In the private sector, the IR regime is voluntaristic; while laws and the constitution guarantee specific rights to workers and unions, no law or article of the constitution defines a union, requires registration of unions, nor does any law or government regulation determine the model of industrial relations or collective bargaining, nor which unions may or may not participate in CB, sign contracts, participate in workplace-level representation etc.
- Public Sector: In the public sector, however, IR are highly regulated through specific legislation regarding representativeness, collective bargaining, workplace representation, etc.

### Regulation:

- Workers' Statute (Act 300/1970): Provides protections for specific rights of individual employees and unions; introduces a voluntary model for workplace representation (RSA)
- Act 146/1990: Regulates the strike in "essential public services." The model of regulation relies heavily on voluntary agreement among social partners.
- 1993 Tri-partite agreement, 2014 "Unified Text" (bipartite agreement), 2018 "Factory Pact" (bipartite agreement) are voluntary documents negotiated by the social partners for the purposes of self-regulation of IR. The agreements also address more general issues of common concern like inflation, investment, industrial development priorities, skills upgrading, etc.

### Main Actors:

- Labor:
  - Confederal: Cgil, Cisl, Uil
  - Independent: Numerous independent union associations exist, which in specific geographies, industries and workplaces play important roles
- Employers: Confindustria (large firms); Confartigianato, CNA, Casartigiani (artisanal firms); Confcommercio, Confesercenti (retail, tourism, hospitality); Legacoop, Confcooperative, AGCI (cooperatives); Confagricoltura, CIA, Coldiretti (agri-business).
- Union Density: 32.5% (excluding retirees)
- Employer association density: Confindustria represents roughly 70% of large firms in Italy, with levels lower among other associations (e.g., Confartigianato, CNA, Casartigiani represent 30% of artisanal firms).

### Workplace Representation: Single channel, based on two models, applied to workplaces with 15+ employees:

- RSA (introduced by 1970 Workers' Statute) which provides for appointment of delegates by unions which are signatories to CAs applied in the specific workplaces; possible to have multiple RSAs in a single workplace. May engage in collective bargaining.
- RSU (introduced by the 1993 agreement, further regulated by successive agreements): a unitary workplace representation structure, with election of delegates on the basis of lists proposed by unions, through universal suffrage. May engage in collective bargaining.

### Structure:

- Sector (industry) agreements at the national level negotiated first to define a common floor across occupations in a given industry; national agreements determine the boundaries of CB at the company level
- Company level: largely integrative with respect to sector CA, negotiated by RSA/RSU within boundaries defined by sector agreement; in rare cases (when specified by sectoral CA, company agreement may derogate)
- Contracts typically last 3 years
- Coverage: 80-90% of employees covered by CA