

Project VS/2019/0007
**“Initiating of activities for implementation of the Autonomous Framework Agreement
on Active Ageing an Inter-Generational Approach”**

2nd National Workshop
22nd April 2021

Online –Zoom meeting

The 2nd National Workshop was held on 22nd April 2021 online.

The aim of the meeting was to present a draft document, elaborated by the CISL, on implementing the European Framework Agreement on Active Aging and Intergenerational Approach, to other Italian most representative Social Partners.

The CGIL and UIL confederal secretaries responsible for the matter of the project attended the meeting. While the employers’ organisation Confindustria was not present, even if it was invited.

Andrea Cuccello, the CISL Confederal Secretary in charge of the implementation of the European agreement, briefly introduced the meeting underlining the importance of the European Project on active ageing and intergeneration approach. He also highlighted the work done by CISL in opening an internal debate on the matter of the project, involving the Organisation at every level. That participative process led to the elaboration of the CISL draft document. The Confederal Secretary ended his speech inviting CGIL and UIL representatives to start a joint discussion based on the Cisl draft document, in order to finalize a unitary agreement for the implementation of the European Autonomous Framework Agreement in Italy.

Nino Sorgi, the Cisl Coordinator of International Activities, stressed how Active ageing policies and an intergenerational approach are relevant and worth to be taken in consideration in Italy, a country with the largest over-65 population share and a declining birth rate. In his opinion, the non-finalization of an official and joint translation of the European Autonomous Agreement in Italian is to be considered a very bad signal. And he expressed his hope that this workshop could be a starting point to create the condition to realize the first step for the implementation of the European Agreement represented by the Italian translation.

Francesco Lauria introduced the European autonomous agreement in the framework of the European Social Dialogue and of the Pandemic situation, pointed up that the European Parliament stressed the need for adequate social dialogue at all levels, in order to effectively implement the EU recovery plan (resolution 22 October 2020). Social dialogue and collective bargaining are key tools for setting fair wages and working conditions. Solid collective bargaining systems increase the resilience of member states in times of economic crisis. Parliament reiterated to the Commission and the Member States to support the capacity building of the social partners and to ensure that they participate in the policy making process, including the European Semester. Furthermore, Francesco Lauria stressed that lately the most representative Italian Federation of employers has been reluctant to participate in the process of the transposition of European Autonomous Framework agreements (e.g. on AAIA and on Digitalization). To conclude his speech, Lauria explained the main actions and goals of the Project.

Francesco Marcaletti, age management expert from the University of Zaragoza, offered an interpretation of the European Autonomous Agreement as an important achievement of the European Social Partners. The contents of the Agreement were already present in some important documents elaborated over the last 20 years, in particular in 1998 “Combating Age Barriers in Employment: A European Portfolio of Good Practice (A. Walker & P. Taylor (eds.). and in 2006 “A Guide to Good Practice in Age Management” (G. Naegele & A.

Walker (eds) by European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions. However, he consider very innovative the process that led to the Agreement and the form it has taken. He also highlighted the situation before and after the Covid-19 in order to set some future commitments. In particular, before the Covid, there were some social partner's initiatives on active ageing and intergenerational approach at European level, e.g.:

European Federation of Food, Agriculture and Tourism Trade Unions (EFFAT) e FoodDrinkEurope

- Toolbox : Good Practices and Tools from the Food and Drink Industry in Europe (2016) [PDF](#)

UNI Europa Commerce, Insurance Europe, BIPAR,

- The demographic challenge revisited : innovative measures in the European insurance sector (2016) [PDF](#)

UNI Europa Commerce e Eurocommerce

- Voluntary guidelines supporting age diversity in Commerce (2016) [PDF](#)

European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU) e European Hospital and healthcare Employers Association (HOSPEEM)

- EPSU HOSPEEM Guidelines and Examples of Good Practice to Address the Challenges of an Ageing Workforce (2013) Guidelines and Examples of Good Practice to Address the Challenges of an Ageing Workforce (2013), [PDF](#)

While, in the "post COVID" scenario, the focus of attention shifted: the impetus is given to the National Reform Programs (NRPs) / Country Specific Recommendations (CSRs):

- Eurofound (2021). Involvement of social partners in policymaking during the COVID 19 outbreak. [PDF](#)

During the Pandemic, attention towards active ageing almost disappeared in order to give priority to other issues.

Prof. Marcaletti described some European best practices supported by Social partners. In particular:

- Arbeit und Alter ([WEB](#)), an Austrian platform jointly managed by the Federation of Industry, the Chamber of Commerce, the Trade Union Federation and the Federal Chamber of Labour
- Senter for SeniorPolitikk ([WEB](#)), a Norwegian social partner resource centre dedicated to stimulating and developing policies regarding older workers participating in consultations on high-level issues with government, business, social partners and labour organizations.

Prof. Marcaletti reported the following conclusion:

- Priorities and contents have not undergone an evolution in more than two decades. Why? Lack of awareness, denial, addiction, lack of foresight...?
- Consultation and bargaining continue to be ignored in comparative age management, despite representing fundamental prerequisites for the implementation of content
- The double face of good practices: often the same schemes are proposed, without considering the evolution of the concept of age management
- The promotion (and implementation) of priorities and actions at national level is compatible with relatively low investments as shown by the examples given

Cisl Project manager, **Ilaria Carlino**, provided a point-by-point analysis of the CISL draft document, underlining its connection with the 1st national workshop outcomes and with the areas of intervention foreseen in the Autonomous Framework Agreement on Active Ageing and an Inter-generational Approach.

Rosanna Dettori, Cgil Confederal Secretary, expressed the will of her Organisation to work together with the other Italian Social Partners and to put in place all necessary actions to implement the European agreement starting from the provision of the official translation. According to Dettori's opinion, the Autonomous agreement is a big opportunity for all the workers and Italian social partners can obtain big results working together as they did with the protocol on Safety at work signed in the April 2020 to let people get back to work in safe condition during the pandemic. The draft CISL document offers the chance to discuss on specific commitments related to Work organisation, Training, good and stable employment. They are all share goals for our Organisations. In particular, she remarked the importance of implementing actions aimed at reducing the intergenerational conflict in workplaces. She underlined the important role of ageing people experience and the necessity to share it with the younger workers. At the same time, it is important to consider that the youngest can transfer their new competences to the older colleagues. The second point The CGIL Confederal secretary underlined was about continuous training. It is import to consider the training in a life cycle perspective. That means to pay attention to the elder people even beyond the workplaces and promote their integration in the community.

Domenico Proietti - Uil Confederal Secretary thanked the CISL for the draft document that can be considered a base to develop the Italian Trade Unions document on active ageing. Italian Trade Unions have to foster the transposition of the European Framework Agreement. For this purpose, the Confederal Secretary proposed to fix a unitary event (CGIL, CISL, UIL) as soon as possible in order to firmly point out this issue. He remarked that active ageing could not be ignored especially in this critical moment while everybody is facing the consequences of pandemic and Trade Unions are called upon to contribute to the definition of recovery and resilience plan. Proietti reminded the crucial role of the bargaining in this process and the centrality of the continuous training. He reported that in the vision of the Italian Trade Unions there is no opposition between generations.

Discussion:

Vilma Rinolfi (CISL) asked a question about the transposition of the European Agreement. In particular, she wondered how it could be possible to involve the employers association since its unwilling attitude.

Andrea Cuccello admitted that this is a sensitive but pertinent issue, in fact, the involvement of the employers association is necessary to implement the agreement and to promote active ageing actions and policies in workplaces. He expressed his will to bring on the discussion with the CGIL and the UIL in order to give strength to the proposed agreement and to urge Confindustria to start a dialogue.

Rosanna La Placa (CISL Sicily) expressed his satisfaction over the document and over the chance to learn more about priorities and possible commitments of Italian Trade Unions on Active ageing and intergenerational approach. She was interested in having more information about the AAIA in Italian public services, since it is a sector with a great number of aged workers.

Francesco Marcaletti underlined that the concept of age management at first was born and developed in Public Services. The first researches on this field were made in UK studying the Civil Servants. The Public services are a more favourable context for the improvement of these policies because there are less obstacles than in the private sectors. Within the European project on Active ageing, the case of the mentoring and reverse mentoring actions implemented by the Trento Province was selected as a good practice.

Valentina Donno (CISL Puglia) reported that in her region (Puglia), in April 2019 a regional law on Active ageing was approved. The regional law provides funding to support active ageing actions all over the regional territory. The law does not refer specifically to the older workers.

Andrea Gandini (Cds Annual Report's Director) reported the experience of the petrochemical plant in Ferrara (Emilia Romagna) that in the 1980s emerged from the crisis not just by reducing "redundancies", but because the union negotiated the insertion of hundreds of young people. In fact, it was agreed to hire 300 young workers per year and to foresee the part-time for senior workers. A sort of intergenerational relay that helped the relaunch of the company. This project has continued over the years also involving the University of Ferrara that provided over 1500 recent graduates to the company. Starting from this experience the CDS group drafted a proposal to relaunch the Italian market of labour. It envisages to introduce part-time work for those who are just a few years from retirement (but paid in full also with the pension contributions accrued), in order to allow the company to maintain the entire professional and use the lower cost of work to hire a young in full time. The senior would be paid full (or almost) and could thus also work beyond retirement age (part-time), because many would do so willingly and the company itself wants them, but only with young people it is possible to go towards the future. It is therefore not an inter-generational relay but rather a "tandem". In terms of costs, Gandini highlighted that they would be lower than those of other measures currently implemented (e.g. minimum income guaranteed by the state, social safety net, policies for Neet). Gandini expressed the need for an involvement of the Trade Unions to foster this proposal not only through negotiation but also through pushing for a new related national law.

Tiziano Treu (President of CNEL- the Italian National Council of Economy and Labour - and former Ministry of Labour) started his speech reminding that 2012 was the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between generations. Since then he has followed the matter as researcher, studying good practices in Europe and in Italy and his impression is that there is still a lot of work to do. He remarked that Active Ageing requires a comprehensive approach involving different branches of knowledge, from medicine to labour policies, and the engagement of public policies, trade unions and employers' associations. Studies show that companies are often not very active and not very sensitive to the issue, even when the average age of their employees is very high. In Italy, we can find the same attitude in public services. Therefore, it is very important to raise awareness on these issues.

While the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan underlines that green and digital transition further amplifies the need for continuous training, in Italy there are still not many workers involved in it. This is also due to the stereotype according to which after a certain age, people do not learn anymore, so it is not worth investing in the training of older workers. However, it could not be enough to invest in training without providing changes in work organisation in order to comprise more flexibility.

According to Prof. Treu, in our country the career system needs to be changed (e.g.: toward a mixed form of work, half employed, half self-employed).

Furthermore, the President of CNEL remarked that early retirement policies could not be considered part of active ageing policies. They are very expensive for companies and contradict the promotion of active ageing intended as a way to enhance the experience and the active role of the aged people in workplaces. Early retirement policies do not foster the intergenerational solidarity either.

Another point worth of attention for Prof. Treu is the pay gap between younger and older workers. In his conclusion, Tiziano Treu encouraged CGIL, CISL and UIL to continue together the debate on the Active Ageing and an intergenerational approach and to urge employers' associations to be an active part in this discussion.

Girolamo Di Matteo (FNP CISL National Secretary) explained the CISL Federation of retired people point of view on the Active Ageing and an intergenerational approach extended the concept beyond the working life. In particular, he stressed the role of retired people trade unions in Italy as an important observatory and laboratory for active ageing. In fact, over the years they have combined social security and social health policies with active policies such as participation in public life, intergenerational relationships, education and lifelong training, environmental sustainability.

According to the World Health Organization WHO, health is "a state of total physical, mental and social well-being" and not simply "the absence of disease or infirmity".

For the elderly, the most important factors for maintaining well-being are not only a healthy diet, the safety of the home environment, a good control of metabolic diseases but also social, educational and employment opportunities that together with the physical activity increase the health of the elderly, their self-esteem and independence, as well as their active contribution to the society. Therefore, the main task of the Federation of retirees people, is to give back to the elderly a role and a social function.

Currently CISL FNP is part of the multilevel national coordination of policies on active ageing at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers - Department for family policies. This is a three-year project (2019-2022) aimed at developing guidelines to favour AI and the implementation of related policies in this context, identify good practices and monitor the evolution of the situation.

Political Conclusion by Andrea Cuccello, CISL Confederal Secretary

It is important that the Italian confederal trade unions take together the initiative to implement the transposition in Italy of an autonomous European agreement signed by the social partners. The debate on active ageing and the intergenerational approach is developed within a context of social dialogue at European level and we want to look at it in the same way in Italy.

We know that the agreements we are discussing today are general guidelines, but also that they can push the system of our country, which, as we know, has multiple delays, in the right direction.

Today, thanks also to the involvement of Cgil and Uil, we have set a common commitment on the following issues: promotion of health and safety, work life balance, skills development and maintenance, intergenerational transmission of knowledge, work organization and the management of turnover and generational relays in companies and territories. The whole debate took into account the overcoming of gender disparities, the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic and the territorial dimension, which represents a transversal field of action on the issue of active ageing, in particular for small and very small companies.

It will be very important to involve Confindustria in this process in order to move toward a more operational phase, also through bilateralism. The signal of today's absence, with all caution appropriate, cannot be considered as a positive fact.

What we have proposed today is the creation of an action of systematic networking and full citizenship through work and across generations.

Here lies the global challenge of active ageing beyond the perimeter of this European project. This is demonstrated by the various agreements, even at the regional level, often stipulated in tripartite form between the social partners and local institutions.

A participatory and proactive governance of active ageing can be an important part of those coherent actions that would help us to emerge, at national and European level, from the pandemic, not in the way we entered it, but, if not better, at least more equipped to manage the challenges and unforeseen events of the present and the future.

*In conclusion, a sentence gives us the sense of the path we have started and that we must continue to follow:
"The young man walks faster than the elderly, but the elderly know the way".*