



Country : ITALIA

Organization : FENEAL UIL-FILCA CISL-FILLEA CGIL

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1/ What is the current situation of economic activity in the construction/construction material and wood/forestry/furniture sectors?

From today, 27 April, only public building sites (for the construction of schools, hospitals, prisons, ext..) have resumed their activities while private building sites only from 4 May, while the other sectors, wood/forestry/furniture, cement and construction materials, have almost completely reduced or temporary suspended their activities due to COVID 19. They will probably resume on May 4.

2/ What are the specific agreements, measures or regulations that were adopted to fight the COVID-19 situation in our sectors; Related to what topics?

In the months of March and April the building sector continued its production activity only under urgency and necessity conditions such as building new structures pre-triage for COVID-19 and only a big and strategic site for the country, the reconstruction of the bridge in Genoa, where H&S provisions for COVID-19 could be assured. Now the whole building sector can resume its activities but with a specific regulation issued by the government with the participation of the social partners, as regards specific anti-contagion measures to protect the health and safety of workers.

3/ What is the current situation of migrant and mobile workers in the construction and wood/forestry/furniture sectors? Is it possible for you to monitor the situation effectively?

The situation for migrant workers is very difficult. Many of them have returned to their countries of origin, migrants who regularly work have access to social security measures, while irregular foreign workers are unlikely to have access to these income support measures. Posted migrant workers also have many problems because it will be impossible to verify whether their employers will give them the compensation provided by the social safety nets.

4/ Is there an exit strategy plan on sectoral level? Are sectoral trade unions involved in the discussions and /or implementation of the exit strategy plan (sectoral level)?

The construction sector is considered an important driver for the post-Covid 19 recovery. The trade union federations, together with the employers' associations, have been involved by the ministries to carry out a recovery plan. Many infrastructural works, stopped before Covid-19, have been unlocked and many economic resources are expected to be invested in the sector.

The trade union federations are very concerned about the workers' health and safety in this delicate phase of return to production. Our first priority is workers' health and for this reason we will be very committed to verify the effective compliance with all the anti-contagion measures provided by the protocols.

5/ What are your ideas / proposals to fight the COVID-19 crisis and its effects

- Related to Health and Safety for specific occupations/work processes and conditions

Covid-19 has demonstrated the fragility of protection systems especially in the workplace. The Covid-19 crisis has shown that the issue of workers' health comes first, the market and profit do not exist if the people who produce are not in good health. For this reason, we will have to re-think our safety and protection devices, making them more structured for all workers. We will have to ask for their effective use in every phase of production, as we will have to demand better working times and working conditions and routine.

- Related to income protection

Support to salary. The possibility to put workers in layoffs for a duration of a maximum of 9 weeks has been given to all employers, of all productive sectors, even with less than 6 workers who cannot access to other social safety nets. We will have to think about support to salary that can grant the dignity of work in any other future moments of crisis as well. Workers cannot pay the consequences of any crisis of any nature. Furthermore, we will have to find solutions to the economic coverage of the incomes of all workers, including irregular and migrant workers, who usually do not benefit from social safety nets.

- Related to an economic relaunch of the construction and wood/forestry/furniture sectors

The Covid-19 crisis, especially for the countries most affected by infections and deaths, represents a very serious moment for everyone and its economic and social effects will be long and difficult to resolve. A relaunch of the activities of our sectors must take into account the difficulties and problems that the Covid crisis has highlighted. It will be

necessary to observe carefully the possible changes in the markets and to study stronger and more effective strategies capable of resisting other possible moments of crisis.

- **Related to better protection of workers in our industries**

We will have to think about a better protection of our workers starting from the specific needs and problems of each sector. Evaluating which are the best protection tools that should not be an obstacle to processing; also taking into consideration the age problems of workers and provide for preventive measures of any occupational diseases related to the production sector.

- **Related to specific protection of posted and migrant workers in our sectors**

Starting from our principle that all workers have the same rights, we must pay attention that in any situation, and therefore even now that we will have to resume activities after Covid-19, migrant and posted workers have the same treatment and the same information as the national workers, helping them in translating into their languages laws, decrees and employment contracts and being always available to represent and protect them, even in situations of legal dispute.

- **Finally...**

The meaning of crisis in old Greek is “choice”.

Covid-19, like all crises, should be a time of growth and solution of problems that evidently existed before that crisis. The global economic system has shown all its fragility and we will have to take it into account and learn when the Covid-19 crisis is over.