



XIX CGIL CONGRESS
MANIFESTO FOR WORK
FINAL DOCUMENT



19 CGIL CONGRESS **MANIFESTO** FOR WORK FINAL DOCUMENT



The 19th CGIL Congress held in Rimini on 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th March 2023 approved the report and conclusions of General Secretary Maurizio Landini and assumed the debate.

"Work Creates the Future" is an integral part of the following document.

■ **THE WAR.** The 19th CGIL Congress took place against a context of serious events and uncertainty, marked first by the pandemic, then by the war and the ensuing energy crisis. The war, in particular, has brought about a dramatic change of scenario, with long-term geopolitical consequences that are still difficult to imagine. The immediate consequences, however, are clear: thousands and thousands of victims, the destruction of a large part of Ukraine, a global arms race - including in our country - which we continue to reject, starting with the proliferation of military nuclear power. Every euro spent on new armaments is one euro less for the welfare state, health and education. Today, after thirteen months of war, the inescapable objective of the international institutions must be the search for a diplomatic and political solution to prevent the escalation of the imminent conflict and to create the conditions for peace. The Congress commits the whole Organisation, in continuity with the initiatives taken last year, to strengthen its commitment to "living and affirming peace".

■ **NEW GLOBALISATION.** A new order, or rather a geopolitical disorder, is emerging, characterised by a return to the past and structurally intertwined elements: the division of the world into blocs, the rise of nationalisms, deglobalisation. Liberalist globalisation, the limits of which have been revealed by the years of the pandemic, is in danger of being replaced, at least in intention, by a reverse process or, more likely, by a regional globalisation between similar countries, the result of international tensions and defined by trade wars and a new protectionism. The proof is in the measures adopted by the US in recent months. In particular, the *Inflation Reduction Act*, which provides for USD 700 billion of investment over 10 years, half of which is earmarked for energy security and climate change. The impact of the industrial policy is clear, including the reinstatement of tax breaks and rewards for vehicles produced or assembled in the United States, particularly in the automotive sector. On the economic side, there is an explicit and open trade war

affecting all technologically advanced sectors, starting with artificial intelligence: a race to dominate the economic future of the planet.

■ **EUROPE.** During the pandemic phase, Europe provided a strong and supportive response with the "Next Generation EU": a programme that combined industrial and development policy objectives with social objectives, and on the basis of which the National Recovery and Resilience Plan was defined. Just before the outbreak of Covid, Europe had outlined the foundations of the continent's future development on the digital and green pillars.

The test of the war in Ukraine and the energy crisis have exposed the Union's political and economic structural weaknesses. Europe is not playing a leading role in the bipolar competition and risks a deep crisis: the political and economic centre of gravity of the international system is elsewhere. The response to the energy, social and war crises has been very weak. And the European Union is lagging behind on the fundamental issues: the difficulties in responding to the new protectionist policies, the debate on state aid and economic governance, which has seen the re-emergence of individual countries on the one hand and the old austerity drive on the other. Progress has been too slow. We continue to call for a thorough reform of the Stability Pact and, more generally, of the European rules on economic governance in order to safeguard investment and social spending.

Not to mention migration policies, which have been characterised by a Union more inclined to build walls than to adopt reception policies. It is equally clear that the response to this new system can only be European. That is why our organisation needs to invest heavily in relations with European trade union organisations and in the European Trade Union Confederation. In fact, the risk is not only fragmentation, but also of reigniting internal competition, which can only lead to new inequalities, social gaps and a drift away from democracy. A new European model – economic, social and democratic - is possible and we have the responsibility to promote it. Finally, after years of monetary easing and near-zero interest rates, the European Central Bank's abrupt turnaround has created difficulties for many households and companies (even for those banks most loyal to the real economy), to the benefit of annuities and speculation, without addressing the need to curb inflation. There is no wage-price spiral that monetary policies can break, because the problem is on the supply and profit side. Rather, it is necessary to boost demand by supporting labour and increasing wages, consumption and investment. In this context, it is necessary to emphasise the need to regulate the credit and financial system.

■ **CLIMATE EMERGENCY.** The climate crisis did not stop when the Ukraine conflict began. It is still the great enemy we face today and which we must seek to mitigate and defeat. The year 2022 was the hottest year ever recorded in many European countries. A rise of one temperature degree Celsius in the global average temperature has now been exceeded. The Earth may have finally left the "climate safety" zone. It is a silent crisis, which is affecting to a greater extent the younger generations, both present and future, who certainly had no part in this creation. It is the deepest crisis, because it radically challenges the economic model and lifestyle, and for this reason it requires appropriate and adequate responses. The war threatens not only to halt but even to reverse the policies implemented so far, starting with the European ones. CGIL is also called upon to continue its support for the Youth Movement for the Environment, as well as in the contractual dimension, because since a concern for sustainability can contribute to the fight against climate change.

■ **DEMOGRAPHIC CRISIS.** Demographic change is the other silent crisis that particularly affects our country. Tackling this phenomenon means, first and foremost, guaranteeing adequate employment and income prospects, structural measures to promote parental equality and the development of an inclusive migration policy. It also means, in view of the progressive ageing of the population, a new welfare system that responds to new needs. In other words, we must treat this issue as a real emergency, with serious implications not only on the social side but also on the economic side.

■ **RETURN TO THE PAST.** The war and the ensuing energy crisis led to a record rise in inflation. The national response (first by the Draghi Government and then by the Meloni Government) was very weak and inadequate. Especially for workers, in a context of precariousness and discontinuity of employment, the rise in prices had a strong impact. Faced with the increase in the number of people living in poverty, the growing impoverishment of the working population and the risk of social exclusion, affecting 25% of the population (a stable figure since 2019), the responses have been inadequate or even worse, if we consider the decision to replace the citizenship income, a measure to combat poverty of a universal nature, with an instrument that selects, even in the same economic situation, who should be supported and who should not. The most serious aspect, however, is that the most vulnerable economic groups, workers and pensioners, have been generously allowed to bear the costs. The most serious aspect, however, was that the most vulnerable economic classes, workers and pensioners, were generously allowed to pay the cost. That because there was no desire to restore the minimum conditions of justice and fairness by demanding that those who have accumulated enormous extra profits in recent years thanks to the health crisis and the energy crisis pay what was owed to them.

The protection of shareholders' profits has taken precedence over the material condition of the people. A material condition that is even worse in terms of the defunding of networks and essential services of citizenship: health, education, all the elements that protect the condition of the people, from housing policy to social support.

■ **ESCAPE FROM PARTICIPATION AND CRISIS OF DEMOCRACY.** The 2022 general election in September saw the victory of the right-wing coalition, but also the highest level of abstention ever recorded. This is a sign of the growing disengagement of Italians from democratic processes, due to a widespread perception of the inevitability of their situation, on the one hand, and a growing mistrust of the institutions, on the other. This is a deep democratic crisis that our organisation must also address, because it concerns us. The weakening of participatory processes is contributing to an increasingly dramatic crisis of our democracy. It also concerns us because this process particularly affects the most economically vulnerable social groups and young people. That is why democratic practices in workers' representation must be strengthened and extended, starting with the election of delegates, which is very well attended. This is also a positive contribution to democratic practices in the country.

■ **THE NEW GOVERNMENT.** The first six months of Giorgia Meloni's Government have shown that there has been a return to the traditional and outdated references that have characterised the coalitions of the last quarter of a century: flat taxes and "fiscal truces", compression of social spending and precariousness of the labour market. And it is precisely in the area of social and economic rights that the most regressive prescriptions have been confirmed. The same goes for the differentiated autonomy of the regions, the presidential system, the criminalisation of migration, the attacks on civil rights, including

women's and LGBT rights, and in particular the recognition of rainbow families, etc. The substantial continuity with the past of the government lines does not take into account that, in times of transition, economic policies aimed at short-term consensus risk plunging the country into crisis. The other element to emphasise is historical revisionism and the cultural and ideological counteroffensive, which manifests itself in measures such as the ultra-securitarian measures against migrants, inadequate to deal with the humanitarian emergency, and the transformation of the social and conflict issue into a public order issue. The tragedy of the Steccato di Cutro could and should have been avoided, and the the Government's subsequent decree is a clear example of the cynicism and the propaganda that characterise the Government's approach to these issues.

CGIL strongly rejects the government's measures on immigration, the criminalisation of NGOs and the dehumanisation of migrants, who are even considered as "residual load". We also denounce the silence that has fallen on the interruption of the parliamentary procedure for the approval of the *Ius Soli/Scholae*. In addition to repealing of all the measures that have supported and implemented this regression, we need policies that promote and develop regular flows, humanitarian corridors and a new reception system, also by promoting coordination on our territory, following the example of the Eucare network. Furthermore, in the field of education, after the great demonstration in Florence, CGIL commits itself to continue the fight against any form of authoritarian backlash, to spread an authentic democratic culture in the country and among the new generations, to defend and strengthen the school of the Constitution - as an alternative to the corporate school based on the ideology of merit - as a guardian of the fundamental of the fundamental values of anti-fascism, secularism, freedom of expression and freedom of teaching. Finally, a neo-corporatist model is being imposed on the trade union representative organisations, leading to a real new disintermediation and thus reducing the space for negotiation and confrontation.

■ **REPRESENTATION AND CONFEDERALITY IN TIMES OF MULTICRISES.** We are facing several crises at the same time, some of which are potentially very negative for our very existence as human beings: war and the climate crisis, for example. In addition, a very ordinary democratic crisis is developing alongside the social crisis. In addition, a very ordinary democratic crisis is advancing alongside the social one. Perhaps for the first time in our history, we have to deal with all these processes at the same time, with major implications for working and retired people and their material conditions. But something more radical is at stake: the concept of work and the production model, given the enormous acceleration brought about by digital transformation. The very real danger is that these processes will crystallise inequalities and create new polarisations. It is a time of boundary, a time of transition, which we will not be able to manage in the usual way, without changing ourselves. This is the greatest challenge. The new confederalism we need will be achieved by investing in delegates, in activists, in the relationship with the territory and the communities, in associations, and by implementing our openness to the forms of work we are still struggling to involve and represent. It means implementing the decisions of the 2022 Organising Assembly: membership, training, resources for Chambers of Labour and territorial structures, territorial assemblies, extension of RSU elections, coordination of delegates and representatives, integration of the individual protection system - Inca, Caaf, Uvl and Sol - with the categories and the SPI, also in the light of digitalisation, new communication systems and social and territorial consultation. In addition, in order to increase the participation of members, a reflection on the most effective ways of organising the Congress must be launched.

■ **THE MANIFESTO.** If this updated and re-contextualised framework is correct, and if the objectives of the “*Work Creates the Future*” statement are shared, it is no longer enough to think of our collective action in its usual dimension. We are faced with a structural change that brings with it a complex set of problems. At the same time, there is a present that requires responses, given the increase in inequalities and gaps, from the centre of the country to the situation of women and young people. It is this real situation that lacks the right answers, and it will take a lot of courage and organisational unity to get through this phase.

And above all, extraordinary action. That is why we propose to identify priorities for action that must become our "mission" in the coming years. It is not by chance that we use the word "mission". In its secular meaning, it refers both to the idea of a journey towards a goal and to a task of moral value to be carried out with a spirit of sacrifice and total dedication, all of which fits well with the idea of a Union on the move, making the great constitutional values the matrix of its action and commitment.

These priorities for action constitute a genuine "Manifesto for Work". They must be translated into trade union struggle and political action on the ground.

■ **WAGES, SALARIES AND BARGAINING.** It is necessary to open a general dispute of the entire CGIL and its categories in order to increase real salaries. The aim is to recover the purchasing power eroded by inflation, by overcoming the Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices - HICP – which excludes energy products as a benchmark, and by providing for reviews shorter than the normal duration of contracts. It is a common struggle of the whole organisation to ensure the maximum commitment for the renewal of long expired national contracts and for the financing of public contracts, starting with the next budget law (for the period 22/24), in a way that guarantees an effective recovery of the purchasing power of the remunerations, thus restoring the authority of collective bargaining. It is also necessary to launch, within the framework of national contracts, large-scale experiments to reduce working time or to redesign it in the direction of a different work-life balance for the same salary and a shorter working week. In some sectors this may lead to a redistribution of working time. It is also necessary to extend and qualify second-level bargaining. The minimum wage, based on the economic treatment defined in the most representative national agreements, is a useful and positive instrument to overcome bad work and low pay.

■ **TAXATION.** CGIL considers that the enabling law the tax reform (approved by the Council of Ministers on 16 March) is wrong and harmful to our country. It is wrong in method because it was deliberately chosen to avoid confrontation with the trade union organisations. It is wrong in substance because it reduces progressivity, favours high and very high incomes by reducing tax rates, and the ultimate objective of a flat tax jeopardises - through a general reduction in tax revenue - the resources needed to finance public health, public services, public education, public transport, public welfare and public investment. CGIL considers it a priority to fight for a progressive tax reform, applied to the widest possible tax base, by reorganising the taxation of income, wealth, annuities, consumption, capital gains and wealth transfers, and by organically reviewing tax expenditure and therefore deductions. A relentless fight against tax evasion must be pursued through the digitalisation and cross-referencing of databases. Other objectives of our struggle are to increase the reduction of the tax wedge by five points and to restore the "fiscal drag" by taxing extra profits, to be used to reduce the tax burden and for social welfare.

■ **PREARIOUSNESS, PROCUREMENT, HEALTH AND SAFETY.** We must use all means of initiative and mobilisation to make stable employment, workers' rights and full and good employment a clear and achievable goal. In particular, precarious and discontinuous forms of work must be drastically reduced, involuntary part-time work must be combated, and rights and protection must be extended to self-employed and parasubordinate workers. To this end, all contractual and legal instruments must be used to stabilise and reduce precarious work. This objective is also, and above all, crucial for the fight against bad work, for giving prospects to young generations and women, and for the quality of our country's development. In this sense, we reaffirm our opposition to the reintroduction of vouchers and the liberalisation of temporary work, and the commitment of the whole CGIL to the cancellation of the regressive and dangerous measures contained in the Procurement Code, starting with the so-called cascade subcontracting and the cancellation of equal economic and regulatory conditions for subcontracted workers, to whom the same national collective agreement of the workers concerned must be applied. **The rules that are in force for public contracts need to be extended to private contracts as well. It is necessary to call for rules that make the issue of subcontracting an organisational issue and not just a matter of reducing labour costs, and for a contractual strategy to protect subcontracted workers and target internalisation.** The national and territorial health and safety campaign must be continued and expanded. Deaths, accidents and occupational diseases remain an unacceptable emergency that requires a significant change of pace in terms of prevention, control and suppression, through greater investment by companies and public services. To this end, contractual and legal action must also be stepped up and the RLS/RLST must be strengthened and extended.

■ **HEALTHCARE.** We must immediately relaunch a great national struggle, articulated on a territorial basis, for the defence, strengthening and development of public health and social and health integration, including through an extraordinary recruitment plan, to guarantee the universal right to health of people and communities. We need a radical change of direction, launching a large-scale general mobilisation, involving workers, pensioners, citizens and local communities, to reaffirm the centrality of health in all political choices. And this in the belief that the National Health Service, in addition to guaranteeing the constitutional right to health, is a factor for well-being and good jobs, for the economic growth of communities and for overcoming social and territorial inequalities.

■ **EDUCATION.** The education and training system must be improved and strengthened with the necessary investments to guarantee the right of all citizens to lifelong learning, recognising it as the basis for human development and emancipation, a prerequisite for democratic citizenship and a necessary condition to enable the population to face the challenges posed by the transformations taking place in society. This is why it is necessary to build a national struggle for public schools, universities and research, as a confederal challenge, to free the relationship between education and work from subordination to the logic of the market, and to free children's education from the logic of mere assistance.

■ **MODEL OF DEVELOPMENT (ENVIRONMENTAL AND DIGITAL) - INDUSTRIAL POLICIES.** The green and digital transformations require governance of industrial and development policies. It is essential to reconcile decarbonisation commitments with the protection and maintenance of jobs and industrial supply chains. This is why we are calling for a fair transition that, also in the light of European regulations (RepowerEU, Fitfor55,

Green Homes Directive), provides for a comprehensive system of measures, policies and incentives, for example on energy efficiency and renewable energies, as requested by the construction sector federation. In addition, instruments to combat relocation and to manage and deal with business crises are essential. Finally, there is an urgent need to define a new economic policy strategy in which public intervention, including through instruments such as the Development Agency, assumes the role of guiding and coordinating the various institutional actors, and in which large participatory companies can play a leading role. The aim is to support both conversion and reinvestment processes, particularly in the south of the country, where a process of de-industrialisation has been underway for some time. Furthermore, there can be no sustainable economic and social development without legality. CGIL reaffirms its strong commitment to the fight against mafias, illegal work, gangmasters and all forms of exploitation.

■ **DIFFERENTIATED AUTONOMY AND PRESIDENZIALISM.** The CGIL reaffirms its absolute opposition to the path of differentiated autonomy and to the hypotheses of constitutional reforms aimed at overcoming the centrality of Parliament in favour of a presidential, semi-presidential or prime ministerial system. Differentiated autonomy and presidentialism are two faces of the same national idea: individualism and competitiveness. CGIL will continue to fight for a radically alternative idea based on representation, participation, solidarity and cohesion. An alternative idea that also requires the redefinition of an organic design of territorial administrations to create an integrated system of institutional levels (municipalities, metropolitan cities, provinces and regions) capable of guaranteeing social rights and promoting local development. This would entail rethinking the respective systems of government in order to restore the centrality of the assembly bodies, which are the direct expression of the citizens.

■ **WELFARE.** Finally, a structural reform of the social security system is needed, based on the long-standing demands of the joint platform of CGIL, CISL and UIL, with priority given to the situation of young people and women.

On the basis of these objectives and contents, the Congress commits the Confederation and all the trade union categories to the developing and strengthening of the mobilisation initiative with CISL and UIL, without excluding any form of category and general trade union struggle.

The Congress also commits the whole organisation to an extraordinary campaign in the workplaces, in the pensioners' leagues, in the territories, through public meetings and initiatives, creating synergies and involving civil society, students, associations and volunteer organisations, with the aim of building and extending mobilisation.

Finally, the Congress commits the organisation to promote a delegates' assembly on contractual politics in the coming weeks.