

COUNTRY BACKGROUND: ITALY

> National Context

> Legal and Industrial Relations Context

Industrial relations in Italy are regulated by social partners who address representation and coordination of collective bargaining. Legislative provisions promote their autonomy to introduce flexibility in employment regulations, including non-standard contracts and working time. This allows tailored agreements while protecting workers' rights and creating a responsive labour market. The Italian industrial relations framework has changed, emphasizing decentralization and linking wages to productivity. However, these changes have led to union divisions, raising concerns about eroding collectively agreed rules. National-level agreements remain the primary regulation source. Joint bodies comprising union and employer representatives support workers and employers during production declines, focusing on skill enhancement. In 2014, the 2014 Single Text on Representation (TU 2014) was signed, governing representativeness, collective bargaining, and effectiveness of national and decentralized agreements. In 2017, a procedural agreement assigned representativeness indicators to the National social security institute, but progress details are limited. A health and safety protocol was signed during the pandemic, with government collaboration and consideration of social partners' input, though formal social concertation was absent.

> Legal Acts

Minimum wage	no
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Contr. requirements	yes
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Working time	yes
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Leave provisions	yes
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Health & welfare	yes
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Pensions/ Old-age	yes
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> National Legislation

Italian law and the National Collective Bargaining Agreement (NCBA) regulate the relationships between employers and employees with detailed provisions. The Workers' Statute, also known as Act no. 300/1970, plays a significant role in safeguarding workers' freedom and dignity. It achieves this through comprehensive regulations, the promotion of in-shop union activities, the prohibition of anti-union behaviour, and anti-discrimination clauses in hiring and dismissal practices. Special provisions protect trade union representatives. To ensure efficient legal protection of workers' rights, simplified procedures were introduced in the Italian Civil Procedure Code through Law no. 533/1973. However, there is a substantial backlog of cases in the courts, affecting the timely resolution of disputes.

Maternity, paternity	yes
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Sick leave	yes
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Vocational training	yes
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COUNTRY BACKGROUND: ITALY

> Actors

> Trade Unions

- > The Italian Constitution guarantees the right to establish trade unions, with registration requirements and a democratic internal organization. Trade unions can enter into collective labour agreements that apply to all members. Workers have the freedom to join a union, and if they do, they must affiliate with the union's national federation and pay either a percentage of their monthly salary or a membership fee. In Italian enterprises, there are two types of workers' representatives: trade union representations at the enterprise level (RSA) and single trade union representations (RSU). RSAs are elected by workers affiliated with a specific trade union, while RSUs are elected by all workers, regardless of union affiliation. The representativeness of trade unions is determined based on factors such as membership numbers, presence in different sectors, participation in collective bargaining, and handling of labour disputes. To be considered representative at the industry level, a trade union must have the support of at least 5% of employees in the industry. Negotiations typically take place through RSUs, but RSAs can also be established.

- > The most representative confederations in Italy are CGIL, CISL, and UIL. In addition to collective agreements, trade unions provide services such as legal assistance, social security assistance, and tax assistance. In companies with more than 15 employees, a workplace RSU is appointed through democratic voting and has the authority to negotiate working conditions and engage in joint management-worker committees.

> Coverage

Number of members (in 1000s)	110.2
Density (%)	35.5

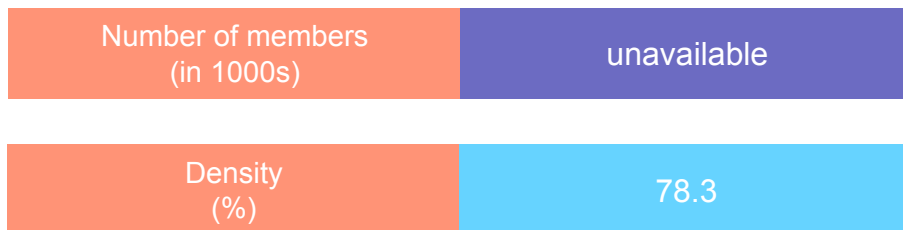
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> Actors

> Employer Organizations

- > There is no explicit provision on the right to establish employers' organizations; however, Art.39 of the Italian Constitution, which states that the organization of trade unions shall be free, is applied to employers' organizations as well.

> Coverage



> Workplace-Level Employee Representation

- > In Italy, there are two main types of workplace-level representation: RSA (Rappresentanza Sindacale Aziendale) and RSU (Rappresentanza Sindacale Unitaria). Both RSA and RSU are established to represent the interests of workers and engage in negotiations with employers.
- > RSA is established at the company level based on the initiative of workers belonging to trade unions that have signed the National Collective Bargaining Agreement (NCBA) applicable to the company. The establishment of RSA is governed by the Workers' Statute. RSA members are chosen by the workers themselves and they have the authority to negotiate company-level collective agreements and participate in information and consultation processes.
- > RSU, on the other hand, is established by trade unions that have signed the cross-sectoral agreements dated 28 June 2011 and 31 May 2013, as well as trade unions that have signed the NCBA applicable to the company. Like RSA, RSU members are elected by workers through a democratic election process. RSU members also have the same responsibilities and powers as RSA members, including negotiating company-level collective agreements and participating in information and consultation practices.
- > In terms of activities and powers, RSA and RSU do not have significant differences. Both types of representation aim to protect workers' rights and interests in the workplace and play a role in negotiating and maintaining collective agreements with employers.

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> Collective Bargaining

> Nature of Collective Bargaining Laws

In Italy, National Collective Bargaining Agreements (NCBAs) are binding only for employers and employees who are part of the signing organizations or choose to adopt them. The collective bargaining system in Italy operates at two levels. Sectoral NCBAs cover entire sectors and apply to all employees in the same sector, establishing key elements of the employment contract such as minimum wage, working time, job classification, and working conditions. Certain specific aspects of work, such as incentive schemes, performance bonuses, productivity standards, and special indemnities, are regulated at the decentralized level, either at the territorial (regional or provincial) or company level. Legislation has been introduced to promote the adoption of workplace performance-related schemes and company welfare schemes, aiming to increase the number of workers benefiting from these programs and extend productivity bonuses.

> Levels of Collective Bargaining

National	No
Sectoral	Yes, dominant
Company	Yes, important

> Involved Parties

Tripartite

> Coverage



> Duration

NCBAs in Italy are typically renewed every three years, while decentralised collective agreements at the firm-level or regional level have varying durations that align with sectoral agreements to avoid overlapping negotiations. Agreements related to productivity standards and bonuses are often renewed annually to revise variable objectives. If a collective agreement is not renewed on time, workers are entitled to receive a specific economic bonus. Sectoral collective agreements may involve cross-sectoral social partners in cases where sectoral partners fail to reach a renewal agreement. Collective agreements cease to be effective upon termination, but parties have the option to continue applying them without obligation unless the agreement explicitly states the continued validity of specific provisions. Clauses with indefinite duration can be terminated by either party with proper notice, resulting in the agreement no longer being effective after the specified termination date. However, individual employment contracts governed by the terminated agreement remain unaffected, and newly established contracts are not covered by the terminated agreement.



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> Data Sources

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