



Improving Collective Bargaining in
European Union. Comparison of
Different Industrial Relations
Regimes – ImproCollBar 101052292

Italy final report

Massimiliano Andretta and Paola Imperatore, University of Pisa

IMPROCOLLBAR FINAL CONFERENCE
SOFIA, 15 July 2024



The state of collective bargaining in Italy

Collective bargaining in Italy: recent trends

Long tradition of CB, but also challenges linked to:

- ❖ Transformations in political and economic context
- ❖ multiplication of autonomous unions at both the industrial and company level



Trade unions membership and other characteristics

Table 1. Trends of the principal characteristics of the Italian main trade union landscape

	1980	2000	2010	2019
Total trade Union Membership (retired excluded)	7.189.000	5.194.500	5.920.900	6.488.400
Share of Women	35.0%	38.3%	n.a.	45.0%
Density	35.6%	34.8%	35.1%	32.5%
Number of confederations	5	7	?	8
Number of federations	82	52	?	47
Number of independent confederations	2	4	?	5
Collective bargaining coverage (Industry level)	80%	80%	80%	80%
CBP (decentralized agreements)		30%	30%	30%
Days not worked for strikes per 1,000 workers	1.135	58	68	n.s.

Source: Leonardi and Pedersini (forthcoming), integrated by Pedersini (2019) and ICTWSS

Database

The Impact of COVID-19 on Collective Bargaining in Italy

- ❖ During pandemic **collective bargaining reinforced** and trade union power increased in the management of the crisis
- ❖ Decentralized negotiation became more relevant
- ❖ Despite these developments, trade unions' involvement in the definition of the **National Recovery Plan** was disappointing.

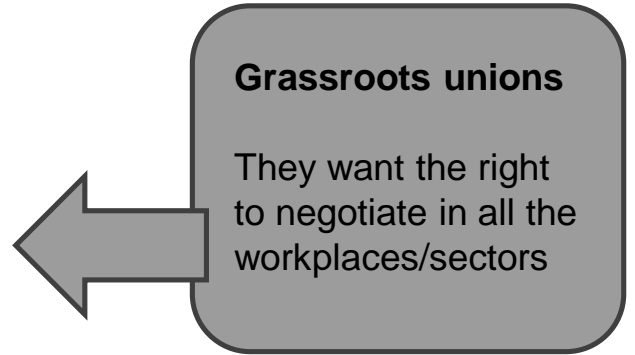
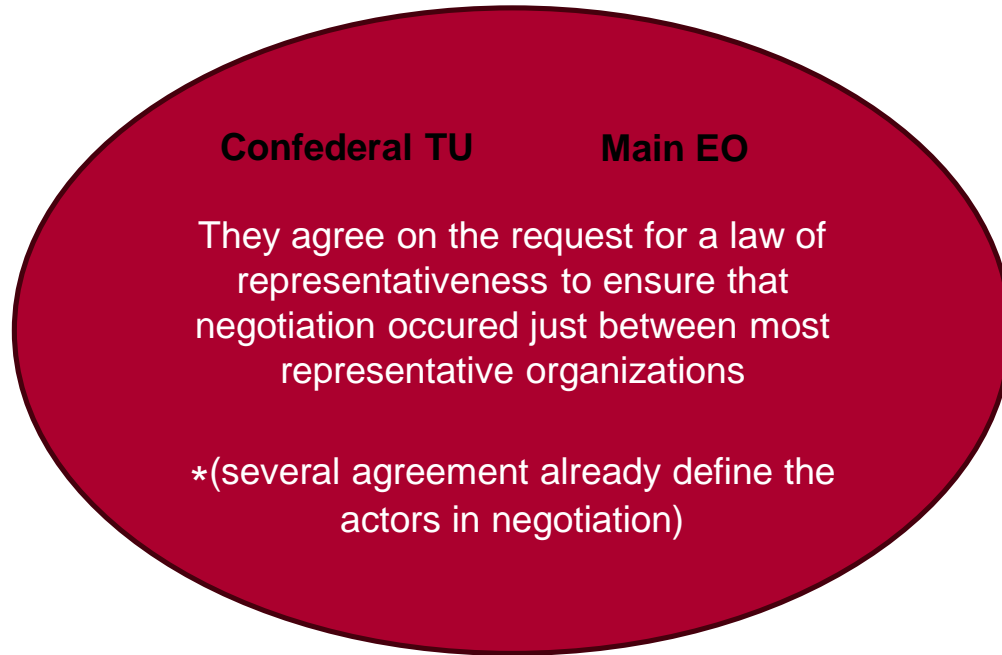


Qualitative analysis

problems and challenges related to CB in social partners
opinions

The representativeness

Who has the right to represent the workers or the employers and to sign the collective agreements?



Main TU & EO opinion

- that **fragmentation** on both the union and employer sides “has led the number of national contracts from a total of about 300 to about 1,000 in just 10 years, of which only 280 bear the initials of the three sectoral confederations. This is the main problem today [...] in the absence of laws regulating representation and representativeness, the question arises of downward competition from contracts signed by associations of little or no representativeness” (CGIL).
- “**pirate trade unions** that profit from the possibility of signing agreements where there is no difference between employer and union organisations and that are bordering on fraud” (UIL).

Grassroots TU opinions


- The problem with bargaining in Italy is who does it, and therefore how the choice of bargaining actors is articulated. For us it is the biggest problem, in the sense that in the absolute absence of effective and functioning legislation to identify union representation, and therefore who has the right to sit at the negotiating tables, we are absolutely at the mercy of the counterparts, who choose the actors to sit at the table [...] today the situation is that the confederal organisations make an effort to exclude an organisation like ours even from the various tables (USB)
- Although in practice we represent the largest presence in the various logistics warehouses, we are outside the national contract while the confederal unions, which no longer count for anything within these sectors, can bargain (SI.Cobas).

The minimum wage

- ❖ In Italy no minimum wage
- ❖ In 2023 the topic became pivotal in public debate but at the end it has been rejected by public institutions
- ❖ Trade unions support minimum wage, with different levels of engagement
- ❖ Confederal TU and the main EO support that the **extension of collective bargaining is the main tool** to fight poor work

Other topics:

wage dumping, renewal times, new forms of labour, innovation

- ❖ wage dumping, that is reconducted to the issue of representation: non-relevant trade unions sign agreement that are pejorative in terms of wage, rights and integrative treatments
 - ❖ long renewal times (until 36 months) and the delay in collective agreements renewal: this impact on the wage adjustment in line with inflation, by eroding the purchasing power of workers
 - ❖ extension of collective bargaining to old and new sectors taking into account different context in the country
 - ❖ scarce level of innovation and backwardness of human resources in the Italian labour market
- 

Some general remark about collective agreement in Italy

- ❖ Consolidation of a bilateral pattern of bargaining
- ❖ Marginal role of State (with some exceptions such as during the Conte bis government or for what concerns law on representation)

Potential risks:

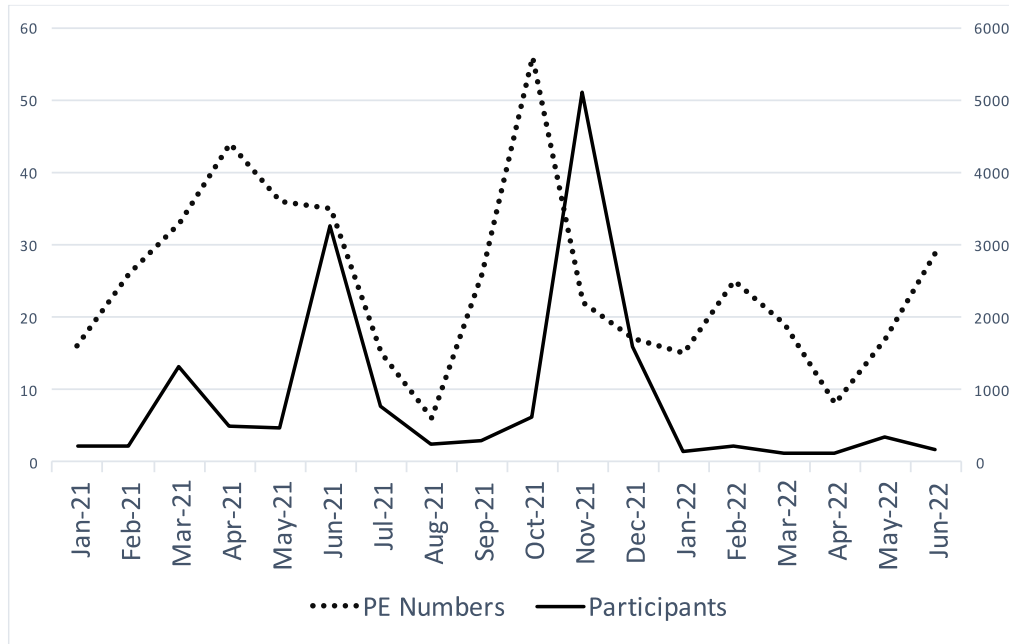
“the bargaining is the product of a confrontation between two private parties. Each with its own powers of persuasion. But since there is no public regulator in this area to guarantee certain aspects of bargaining, it remains an instrument entirely in the hands of private organisations.”





Quantitative report: the Protest Events Analysis

445 Protest Events



Two peaks:

- ❖ The end of the employment termination freeze (July-21)
- ❖ The discussion of the Draghi's budget law (October- December 2021)

Level

	Frequency	Percentage
Neighbourhood	12	2,7
City	200	44,9
Province	32	7,2
Region	76	17,1
Country	124	27,9
EU level	1	0,2

Target

National or Local Governments	387	87
Police or Judiciary	18	4
Economic Actors	126	28,3
International Institutions	3	0,7

Sector

	Frequency	Percentage
Public Sector	95	21,4
- Welfare	55	12,4
-Public Order	19	4,3
-Other Public	21	4,7
Private Sector	308	69,4
-Metalworking	32	7,2
-Other Industry	57	12,8
- Transports	109	24,5
- Other Private	110	24,8

Trade unions frequency in PEs

CGIL	182	40,9	Workers' Informal Org.	70	15,7
CiSL	153	34,4	Political Parties	6	1,2
UIL	157	35,3	CSOs-SMOs	35	7,9
Leftist Grass-roots Unions	78	17,5			
Rightwing Unions	14	3,1			
A-political Unions	43	9,7			

Role

	Frequency	Percentage
Participants	19	4,3
Co-Initiators	33	7,4
Initiators	271	60,9
No Involvement	122	27,4
Totale	445	100

Repertoire

Strike	152	34,2
March/Rally	203	45,6
Other Demonstrative	267	60
Perturbative	40	9
Violent	5	0,1
Police	16	3,6

Claims

Economic Claims	404	90,8
Democracy Claims	21	4,7
Cultural Claims	60	13,5

The protest as a resource in collective bargaining

- ❖ The field of protest is also important for building **alliances** capable of providing trade unions with **societal power** and **resources aimed at improving collective bargaining**, as our map of good practices in collective bargaining revealed



Case title	Mondo Convenienza	CCNL for riders	Smartworking	Workers safety protection	GKN closure
Time frame	May 2023 – January 2024	2018 – ongoing	2021	2021	2021 - ongoing
Actors	Si.Cobas Prato e Firenze + other SMOs, ANPI, local institutions	Riders Union Bologna; other riders organizations; NIdiL CGIL, CISL and UIL	CGIL, UIL, USB, CISL, UGL; Confindustria, Confartigianato, etc. Minister of Labour	USB Education sector	GKN Factory Collective + Si.Cobas Prato e Firenze, associations (Arci, Anpi, etc.), local institutions and SMOs
Scope	Company level	Sector level – Delivery services	National level	Sector level (nursery and elementary school)	First factory level, then sector level
Repertoire	Strike, mobilization, permanent presidium, legal action CCNL signed by confederal	Strike, legal action, legislative purpose «Digital Workers' Bill of Rights”	Social dialogue	Informative action; pressure on institution	Demonstrations, symbolic actions, appeals, festivals, cultural productions, crowdfunding, mutualism practices..
Results	Application Logistics and Transport CCNL to workers in furniture chain Mondo Convenienza (6.000 workers)	CCNL UGL – Assoldelivery (2021) contested by riders New CCNL Just Eat - NIdiL CGIL, UIL and CISL (goal is the extension to all the	Signature of the “National Protocol containing the guidelines for collective bargaining on agile work in the private sector”	Introduction of FFP2 masks for personnel working with children between 0 and 6 years.	Not yet definitive . 3-year redundancy freeze Probable creation of a regional consortium

Thank you!

