

## SAADY - OBES - ENGLISH

Hi everybody and thank you for giving me the floor. Today we are gathered to present various trade union federations and especially to discuss the challenges and the effects of the pandemic on the labour market and economy in general. As you know, the project aims to start discussions on how to address the new information and consultation challenges posed by new conditions in global economies with the final goal of developing new skills for workers representation to address these challenges. As you know the pandemic has caused serious global health issues that had many effects on the economy system. And if we want to compare it with the financial crisis of 2008, the economic shock of this pandemic was similar to that of the 2008 global financial crisis.

Even today as then, governments have intervened with monetary and fiscal policies to counter the recession and provide temporary income to businesses and families. The nature of the crisis is different. While at that time the economic shock caused a drop in both supply and demand, which was accompanied by tensions on prices also linked to speculative movements, today it was above all the lockdown measures that affected the economy. Apparently, the agri-food sector was not among those most affected, at least directly, by these measures, even if several factors intervened to modify the market equilibrium. Despite the wounds caused by the virus on the entire national production fabric, the agri-food sector has been assessed, given its important numbers, as the key to overcoming the crisis itself. And the supply chain has in fact always been considered in the various law decrees in Italy as an anti-pandemic function, with reasons in addition to economic ones, also social and to the support of the population. According to new reports from the International Labour Organisation, several crises globally are deteriorating the recovery of the labour market and causing an increase in inequalities within and between countries. The agri-food sector, however, has registered a slow growth in 2021, this is the cross section that emerges from the report on agricultural economy and legislation prepared by the National Statistics Institute, published on April 26, 2022. During the lockdown, the agri-food sector had to contend with difficulties on the logistic chain, with restrictions on freedom of movements and the general drop in consumers' income. The sector had losses in 2020, 1.8% of production and 4.7% of value added. In volume, a 8% decline recorded by the national economy as a whole. The crisis has damaged, however, above all secondary agriculture activities, such as agri-tourism activities. Efficiency has also been penalised with heavy downsizes: - 19.9% of production and less than 26.8% in value added, due to diverse climatic factors. And production volumes in 2021 fell to 0.4% and the increase in production costs caused a new cut of 0.8% in value added. In the 2-year period, 2020-2021, according to the reports, agriculture has maintained its contribution to the formation of national wealth unchanged. Above all secondary activities, and support services, paid the price of the prices, but the resilience capacities of the sector made it possible to contain the loss of added value which in 2020 decreased in volume by 4.7% stopping just above 33 billion Euro. In 2020, employment in agriculture, forestry and fishery sector decreased by 2%, with 1.3% drop in dependent work and 3.4% in self employment. Even more decisive was the decline in employment in the food industry: - 5.2% which introduced an overall decline of 2.8% in labour input in the food sector. A reversal trend was recorded in 2021. In agriculture there was an increase of 5.5% in dependent work and +1.7% in self employment work and 5.4% in the food industry, recovering what was lost from the agri-food sector in the previous year in term of employment, +3.6%. Statistics

have shown that while the pandemic was rampant routine workplace injuries were mitigated by forced closures and the slowdown of many production activities, and above all, by the use of smart working and the application of safety protocols with the use of devices for safety. Now we are witnessing a dramatic resurgence of accidents at work in Italy. It is enough to mention the working and housing conditions in which many agricultural migrant workers find themselves, without tools to guarantee elementary safety at work. By the way, our Federation, FAI, submitted a petition in which we ask the Parliament and the Government to commit them to protect and guarantee the dignity of migrants, in particular to complete the mapping of informal settlements. And our trade union, CISL, together with other organisations presented a national platform in which they indicated some of the main principles of preventive actions that our country can no longer postpone, especially to create a national coordination between the various institutions to carry out control and supervision action in the different working realities. Finally I think that the interconnections of the new global crises aggravated by the war in Ukraine, including that relating to the growth of inflation in particular of energy and food prices, financial turbulence and the interaction of global supply chains are rising the risk of a further deterioration in terms of hours worked in 2022 with a major magnitude on the labour market. We must strengthen our collaboration and draw up guidance so that I think the world of workers will be well aware of the challenges and changes that we are experiencing and find the appropriate solutions to workers' problems. Thank you for your attention