**BRIEFING PAPER**

Pay issues

* Sect. 36 of the Italian Constitution includes the right of the worker to a liveable wage for himself and his/her family
* most workers are actually covered by a minimum wage agreement,

Cassa Integrazione Guadagni

* It was established by Act 788 of 1954, with a view to protecting the workers’ earnings in the event the enterprise has difficulties
* It covers all enterprises
* The Cassa Integrazione Guadagni operates mostly in cases of suspension or temporary reduction of activity due to causes beyond the will of the enterprise or the workers and includes suspension of activity in the building industry due to bad weather

Protection of workers’ claims in case of insolvency of the employer

* In the event of insolvency of the enterprise, the employer-employee relationship is not interrupted due to bankruptcy
* Sect. 1676 of the Civil Code gives direct action to the contractor’s employees towards the employer within the limit of the sums he is in debt towards the contractor.
* Act 80 of 1992 implemented EU Directive 80/987 on the protection of workers’ claims in case of insolvency of their employer.
* Workers’ claims so protected are the salaries corresponding to the three final months of the employment relationship, within a time limit of one year before the declaration of insolvency.

Trade union regulation

* The Italian Constitution recognises the right of citizens to associate freely (Sect. 19) and the right of employers and employees to join associations or unions.
* Sect. 39 of the Constitution regulates trade unions and specifies that only the registered ones can obtain legal status and can make collective agreements valid erga omnes
* The Workers’ Statute (Sect. 14) recognises freedom of association and freedom of trade union activity at the workplace.
* The law does not fix any model of union organization either for the unions or for the employers’ associations.
* For workers the most frequent pattern is the industry-wide union, which has local, provincial, regional and national organs
* For the employers there is a similar model of organization, with provincial, regional and national associations, that join to form federations
* Recently local unions have been formed but have their own coordinating organs.