

Thematic session #1 Public financing – Digitalisation - Session 2 - 3 minutes

Enrico Lobina, FP CGIL

I warmly greet everybody. It is a great pleasure to stay with you, even if we are in front of a laptop. I thank PSI for this activity.

I don't have a lot of time, so I'll make some remarks about Italy and public services following the COVID-19 pandemic. Afterwards, it there's still the opportunity, I'll make some general remarks

COVID – SMART WORKING

COVID has brought a drastic change in the process of digitalization of the public services. We digitalized everything that could be digitalized. Smart/agile/working and telework has become normal and widespread. Generally speaking, our colleagues have liked it. Since the beginning, we have tried to collectively bargain every aspect of it. We have signed some agreements on the level of single Administration, that are "emergency agreements".

RENATO BRUNETTA

The current Minister, Renato Brunetta, however, has decided not to start a real negotiation on this topic and on the 23rd of September, with a decree, has decided that all local and regional government workers must come back to the offices from the 15th of October.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

At the moment we are negotiating the national collective agreement for central administrations, which usually leads the way for others, and we are discussing to include the regulation of smart working in the national agreement, and that is one of the main points of innovation in collective agreements renewals.

FP CGIL will start on October the 4th a very difficult and challenging round of negotiations with the counterpart, in order to renovate the economic part and many other parts of the national collective bargaining agreement of local and regional public workers.

Within this framework, our aim is to include more rules regarding smart/agile/working and telework.

Last, but not least, the new national collective bargaining session can be the starting point of a new era in which the public service trade union capacity to effectively governs the "digitalisation era".

GENERAL REMARKS

Probably digitalization, together with climate change, are the most important social changes of this century.

Digitalization is deeply changing our world, and local and regional governments, and all public services, are an important part of our societies, all over the world.

On the one hand, digitalization can lead to privatisation and impoverishment of public services, within a framework very well described by Shoshana Zuboff in its seminal book "capitalism of surveillance".

On the other hand, technology development and digitalization can cause an enormous improvement of the quality and quantity of public services. Let's only think about what AI (Artificial intelligence) in every aspect of our daily life.

There's a struggle. The winner will depend also on what we will be able to do.

SMART CITIES

The very interesting brief PSI prepared before this meeting, also in order to better realise it, stresses the concept of "smart cities".

As the brief suggests, the emphasis on "smart cities" has slowed down in the last years. It has happened the same in Italy.

This has brought to a pulverization of interventions, which are not necessarily positive.

Up to now, the trade unions have not focused on these issues.

DATA CONTROL

We can state the same regarding the data control. Italy, like many other countries, has not developed a strategic response to the excessive power of GAFAM (google, amazon, facebook, apple, Microsoft).

GDPR, the General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679 protects us, but we must think about a more pro-active approach

DIGITAL DIVIDE

Furthermore, even if we are part of the global north, we must know that there a strong digital divide within Italy, between urban and rural areas, and between North and South Italy.

FP CGIL looks forward to working with all the affiliates and PSI in this domain.