

Nationalization

The state owns considerable industrial and commercial facilities, particularly in the coal, steel, aluminum, power, and shipbuilding industries, and in certain types of blanks. In 1954 the Federal Government owned 8 percent of the nominal capital of all joint stock companies. The present administration has announced itself to be opposed to nationalization and has made no attempt to expand nationalized industry (though it has participated in transportation projects). It has made some efforts to dispose of nationalized undertakings, but little has been done in this field. In 1954, some 2.5 million persons were employed in Government administration and in industrial and commercial undertakings without legal personality (out of 17.6 million employed in Germany and West Berlin); in addition, 241,000 persons were employed in private companies in which public authorities had an interest.

ITALY*Unions*

There are four important confederations in Italy. In order of size they are the Communist-dominated Italian General Confederation of Labor (CGIL), the predominantly Catholic Italian Confederation of Workers' Trade Unions (CISL), the mainly Social Democratic Italian Labor Union (UIL), and the neo-Fascist Italian Confederation of National Workers' Trade Unions (CISNAL). Membership figures are highly uncertain, but estimates are: CGIL, 3.5 million; CISL, 1.75 million; UIL, 470,000; and CISNAL, 80,000. It seems certain that less than half of the working population is organized. There are also various small federations and independent unions.

Though the four federations are mutually hostile, the CISL and UIL frequently combine against the CGIL; religious and political differences, however, prevent their merger. In recent years the non-Communist unions have been gaining membership at the expense of the CGIL.

As is the case in France, union dues are very small and, even so, are paid very irregularly. In view of the competition among the confederations, "members" are kept on the rolls even though they do not pay dues.

Each confederation is made up of national industrial unions, which in turn consist of local associations uniting all the members of the federation (i.e., national union) in a given locality. There are no true local unions. Ties between the local associations and the federations are rather loose, the latter having too few resources to render much aid to their affiliates.

Employers' associations

There are three main confederations of employers which have a national character: (1) the General Confederation of Italian Industry (Confindustria) with 103-member federations, (2) the General Confederation of Italian Agriculture with 6, and (3) the Italian General Confederation of Commerce with 59. Members of the industrial confederation hire some 2.5 million persons; the agricultural confederation has 1.8 million and the commercial confederation about 300,000.

Collective bargaining

Collective bargaining is conducted at the national level in the great majority of cases. It is in the hands of either the confederations of employers and workers or the industrywide organizations (federations in Italian terminology). Such agreements as are concluded by these groups tend to reflect the cost conditions of the least efficient producer within the given category (the employers' associations have always successfully maintained their insistence that no one should be forced out of the market by the agreement). It is assumed by the unions that the terms of the contract are minimal and that upward adjustments will be made at the plant level, but the weakness of the unions at the lower levels makes this unlikely to occur). Commonly, in fact, the local association finds itself unable to cope with managements which refuse to honor the national agreement at all.

Up to very recently, the employers' association bargained for publically owned firms as well as private ones, but this practice has been ended.

Contracts

Contracts signed at the national level are both very broad and minimal in their terms. Because of their inability to enforce national contracts at the local level, the unions have sought legislation to make collective agreements