

## **Joint ILO-UNHCR communique of the seminar on business and inclusion of refugees in the Italian labour market**

On May 11, 2021, the ILO and the UNHCR organized a seminar on business and inclusion of refugees in the Italian labour market. The seminar was supported by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies and attended by 12 employer organizations, including the General Confederation of Italian Industry (Confindustria), the Italian General Confederation of Enterprises, Professions and Self-Employment (Confcommercio – Imprese per l'Italia), the Italian Confederation of Craft Trades and Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprises (Confederazione Nazionale dell'Artigianato e della Piccola e Media Impresa), the Italian Alliance of Cooperative (Alleanza Cooperative Italiane), the Association of the Italian Banking Sector (Associazione Bancaria Italiana), the Confederation of Agricultural Producers (Confederazione Produttori Agricoli), the National Association of Employers and Families Domestic of Domestic Workers (Associazione Nazionale Famiglie Datori di Lavoro Domestico Domina), the Italian Federation of Employers of Domestic Workers (Federazione Italiana dai Datori di lavoro domestico Fidaldo), the Confederation of Farmers (Coldiretti), and the Confederation of Free Italian Artisan Associations (Confederazione delle Libere Associazioni Artigiane Italiane).

In the opening remarks to the seminar the Director General for Immigration and Integration Policies of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies, Ms Tatiana Esposito, underlined the importance of meaningful participation of the employers' organizations and private sector in providing access of refugees and asylum seekers to the labour market, and the need for multi-stakeholder collaboration to ensure their successful integration and support to companies involved.

The key role of employers' organizations in promoting employment opportunities and decent work for refugees was reaffirmed by the Director of the ILO Office for Italy and San Marino, Mr Gianni Rosas, who recalled the relevant international instruments for the inclusion of refugees in the labour market that are promoted by the ILO and the UNHCR. A series of initiatives on integrating forcibly displaced persons in the labour market launched by the ILO's members among employers from the countries of the European Union were presented with a view to demonstrate the involvement of employer organizations in the socio-economic inclusion of refugees through (i) investing in skills and training; (ii) matching refugee talent with employer's needs; (iii) supporting companies in the implementation of employment and entrepreneurship programmes; and (iv) engaging with enterprises through information and awareness-raising campaigns.

The Representative of the UNHCR for Italy, the Holy See and San Marino, Ms Chiara Cardoletti, emphasized the importance of employment as an integral component of integration of refugees and asylum seekers in Italy. She illustrated how the project "Welcome. Working for Refugee Integration" contributed to the employment and labour market inclusion of refugees in

Italy and highlighted that around 4.500 forcibly displaced persons were involved in employment and training activities of 240 Italian companies since 2017.

The positive results of the companies' engagement in the Welcome project were summarized by the Director of the Department of Work, Welfare, and Human Capital of Confindustria, Mr Pierangelo Albin. He mentioned the importance for enterprises deeply entrenched in the local, national and international communities to engage in the socio-economic inclusion of refugees. Beyond the economic rationale, this engagement had a moral and social imperative. Mr Bla Calliste Steeve Guei, a refugee from Ivory Coast shared his experience and the support received by the Welcome in finding a permanent job that matched his skills and aspirations.

During the meeting, the representatives of the employer organizations shared their experience of working together with their member companies in promoting diversity and inclusion and combatting discrimination in the workplace. They conveyed interest in supporting the socio-economic inclusion of refugees through decent work in general and, in particular, the availability to discuss how their respective organizations could eagerly contribute to the successful implementation of the Welcome project. They also requested assistance in putting in place initiatives to mobilize support among the companies that are members of their organizations.