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ITALIAN NATIONAL REPORT

Our national Report focuses again, one more time, on the spread of COVID-19 pandemic in Italy.

Before that, we are glad to make known that our Stability Law for 2021 has augmented doctors' wages: for those who fully practise in our hospitals, a 27% increase to the exclusivity indemnity has been assigned (ranging from 52.32 € up to 383.68 €, monthly, before taxes).

Furthermore, since the beginning of April, a foregoing deal (CCNQ) in order to bargain the 2019-2021 Collective Agreement for the Doctors, as well as for the other health managing professionals, has been signed: trade union goals' include better possibilities of careers, increased meritocracy, clinical safety, and guarantee of contract rules' application without interpretation.

Moving back to our Covid-19 experience, as you will remember, we were the first western country to be slammed by the outbreak. Consequently, at that time, the Italian government decided to lockdown: despite aggressive containment efforts, the disease continued to spread and the number of affected patients raised deeply, in particular in some of the northern regions. At the end of 2020 spring, some improvements occurred: thus, the heavy measures initially adopted by the Italian Government were reduced. Unfortunately, starting from August 2020, Italy witnessed again a new rise in detected COVID-19 cases. On October 7, the Parliament postponed the end of the state of emergency to January 31, 2021, and Prime Minister Conte imposed the use of protection mask outdoors. On October 13, the Italian government introduced stricter rules again in order to limit the spread of COVID-19 pandemic. Demonstrations and gatherings of people were forbidden. Regions and municipalities were given the power to tighten, but not release, containment measures. Italian regions and the central government began reinforcing hospitals to accommodate more sick patients. All hospital facilities were upgraded and expanded, with a larger capacity for beds and intensive care units. Tracking applications and monitoring systems, with the help of surveillance drones, were used to understand the progress of the epidemic. On October 25, Prime Minister Conte introduced new restrictions, imposing the closing of gyms, swimming pools, theatres and cinemas, as well as the closing of bars and restaurants by 6pm. Overall, the Italian political agenda was focused on the control and on the reduction of COVID-19 pandemic. It generated enormous damages to the economy: in 2020, an 8.8% decline of the GDP occurred.

On the other hand, the vaccination campaign began on December 27, 2020, as Italy received 9,750 doses of the Pfizer BioNTech vaccine: according to a scientific study, the Pfizer–BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine also protects against the two mutations (so called British and south African, respectively) of the virus that more recently have spread in Europe. Pfizer BioNTech first delivered doses' were entirely used to vaccinate part of the medical and the health personnel of hospitals. Of course, as a member of the EU, Italy would receive different vaccine doses together with the other EU countries, according to a coordinated task managed by the European Commission. Unfortunately, since the beginning, the Italian vaccination campaign has slowed down many times. In Sicily, vaccine's administrators went under investigation following the death of a young policemen. Overall, the lack of deliveries of vaccines by all pharmaceutical companies represents the main problem: since January former Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte accused **Pfizer and AstraZeneca** of contract violations.

On January 12, 47,000 doses of vaccine were delivered by Moderna. On January 21, [AstraZeneca](#) delayed the delivery of its vaccine and reduced the expected quantities for deliveries across Europe. On January 30, [AIFA](#) (The Italian Medicines Agency) limited the administration of the [AstraZeneca](#) vaccine only from 18 to 55 years: this decision was made pending an analysis of the possible links between the drug and episodes of thrombosis seen among adults. On April 13, 184,000 doses of the [Johnson & Johnson vaccine](#) arrived in Italy: however [Johnson & Johnson](#) announced that it would delay deliveries of its vaccines to Europe. [AIFA](#) cautiously suspended its distribution to vaccination centers, pending information from the [USA](#) where the [Johnson & Johnson vaccine](#) has been suspended for investigation into suspicious deaths and thrombosis disorders following its administration.

As of April 18, 2021, about 15.2 million doses of vaccines have been administered; moreover, about 4.5 million people (7.4% of the Italian population) has already received a full vaccination. Since the beginning of the new year, a national political crisis was officially declared.

On January 26, Prime Minister Conte resigned from his office, prompting President Sergio Mattarella to start consultations for the formation of a new government. On February 13, Mario Draghi, was sworn in as the new Prime Minister and formed his government. He promised to progressively reduce the forceful measures till now adopted as the vaccination campaign would move on. Starting from April 26, schools are reopening as well as restaurants, manufacturing, construction, real estate brokerage and wholesale have been allowed to resume their activities.

As of April 29, 2021, some official data are provided:

- overall assessed cases in Italy are 3.994,894;
- 442,771 people have tested positive;
- 2,711 patients are in ICUs;
- 120,256 died (however, the mortality rate will have to be validated upon certification of cause of death by the Istituto Superiore di Sanità).