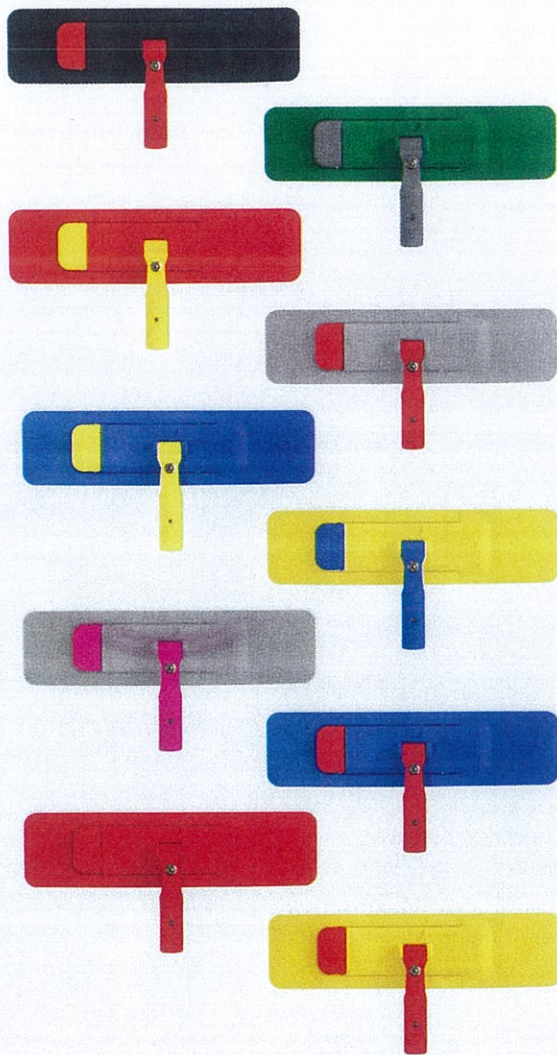


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Sicilian cleaning sector at risk

Italian correspondent Anna Garbagna reports on difficult times in the Sicilian cleaning industry.

The difficulties that many sectors - and the cleaning sector in particular are experiencing are having strong repercussions in a number of Italian regions. This is particularly evident in Sicily, where hundreds of companies and about 50,000 workers are at risk.

"The constant and continuous initiatives of insourcing of cleaning services and supporting services set up by regional government in some offices and departments of the Sicilian administration risk closure of hundreds of companies and the termination of 50,000 workers employed in their contracts."

This complaint has been made by ANIP, the association which represents, within Confindustria at national level, the cleaning and integrated services sector, on the eve of a hearing at the Sicily Regional Assembly.

"Insourcing operations which are already in force at a number of headquarters of regional local governments", the association highlighted, "lead us to predict the gradual dismantlement of the whole cleaning and auxiliary services sector at regional level which is currently underway."

Beyond the serious concerns that these initiatives raise, for example the retention of the regional productivity situation itself which is seriously threatened as previously mentioned, it appears evident that as contracts are cancelled, the termination of many workers will certainly follow. This is an important workforce which is actually employed for carrying out jobs which may be suddenly cancelled or suspended, with obvious social and economic consequences.. Furthermore, on top of all this we must add the

reflection that the forced closure of many local small and medium sized companies could generate seriously detrimental consequences at a social level and for the regional economy as well.

The latter situation will be caused by the recourse to Cassa Integrazione (the national fund that pays workers when companies don't have work and can't pay for their salaries) which supports workers who have been terminated and also by abatement of the tax return (or internal revenue) which up to now was guaranteed by the companies in the sector.

The association has estimated that the consequences due to this situation are serious: the impact of the insourcing operations, according to ANIP's estimate, will put around 50,000 jobs at risk. Furthermore, from what has been analysed, the insourcing operations already in force have also caused an unjustified increase in service costs, which means the operation is unjustified as far as market and employment are concerned as well as being detrimental to administrative efficiency.

ANIP, therefore, is hoping for an inversion of the trend with the objective safeguarding the cleaning and support services regional market and the companies which have been operating within the sector with competence and professionalism; the safeguarding of many jobs and their background of training; the safeguarding of the contribution that Sicilian companies offer to the regional tax system also in terms of efficiency of the service; the safeguarding of the possibility to continue to be a company in Sicily. To sum up: the safeguarding of its future.

Le secteur de la propreté en Sicile est menacé par la politique d'internalisation des services de nettoyage de l'administration régionale, écrit notre correspondante en Italie, Anna Garbagna.

Die Vertragsreinigungsbranche in Sizilien sieht sich aufgrund der Richtlinie der Regionalregierung zur internen Vergabe von Reinigungsdiensten mit einem großen Risiko konfrontiert, schreibt die Italien-Korrespondentin Anna Garbagna.

La corrispondente italiana Anna Garbagna ci informa che in Sicilia, il settore degli appalti di pulizia è a grande rischio a seguito della decisione delle amministrazioni locali di internalizzare i servizi di pulizia.