



Rome, 2 April 2020

To IndustriALL European Trade Union  
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Object: Position of the Italian unions on the document on the impact of Covid19 on the tanning industry

Dear colleagues,

We would like hereby to express our opinion on the document you sent us on the 31<sup>st</sup> of March.

As you may know, in order to contain and manage the epidemiological emergency of the coronavirus, since last March 22 the Italian government has suspended all production activities, except for some sectors considered "essential" to the life of the country, specified in a list attached to the text of the law.

Following its publication, the Italian trade unions requested an immediate discussion with the government to intervene with a new revision of the list of essential activities<sup>1</sup>, aimed at further reducing the number of sectors considered really necessary, with the main aim of protecting the health of workers, as stated in the *Protocol on health and safety at workplaces*<sup>2</sup>, signed by the Government and the Social Partners on March 14, 2020.

The list of sectors mentioned above certainly includes hospital and health services, the agri-food chain, pharmaceutical and chemical products linked to the health system and food chain, energy supply networks (electricity, gas, water), manufacturing of machinery for industry, financial activities, insurance, public and private transport.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2020/03/26/20A01877/sg>

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.etuc.org/sites/default/files/page/file/2020-03/protocollo covid 19 EN.docx](http://www.etuc.org/sites/default/files/page/file/2020-03/protocollo%20covid%2019%20EN.docx)



The TCFL area, in particular, includes exclusively the manufacturing of technical and industrial textiles, overalls, uniforms and other workwear, and the sanitization of the textiles for hospitals and care facilities.

With regard to the problem posed in the document presented, concerning the risk of deterioration of the leather if untreated and stored within the next 24 hours, then, we would like to point out that after the announcement of the suspension of non-essential activities, a three-day extension has been granted to allow tanneries to make raw materials and working environments safe from a health and environmental point of view.

We also believe that the tanning industry cannot be classified as an essential activity, neither comparable to the food industry.

The instruments put in place by the Italian government in terms of dedicated and additional social shock absorbers, and the temporary suspension of tax and social security contributions, are also useful to enable companies in the sector to go through this complex period.

We also understand the heavy sacrifice that this sector, like others, is tackling, but we are equally convinced that this measure, however strict it may be, is the only one that can guarantee the immediate protection of the health of our workers and, hopefully, the quickest possible exit from the emergency caused by the spread of the Coronavirus.

In conclusion, for the reasons stated so far, as Italian trade unions we cannot agree with the document you have proposed and, on the contrary, we would find it more appropriate to take a precise position for the tanning sector too, such as the one expressed by IndustriALL for production activities in the area of chemicals<sup>3</sup>, putting the right to the health and safety of workers first.

In unity,

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<sup>3</sup> <https://news.industrialall-europe.eu/Article/433>