

## **Italy: Rubber-plastic sector sharpens focus on gender equality.**

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A new collective agreement has been signed in Italy's rubber and plastic sector, covering around 150,000 workers at more than 5,000 companies. The agreement, which is valid until 31 December 2025, include a pay rise of €167 over three years, steps forward on gender equality, measures to help vulnerable workers and to foster parenthood.

Minimum wages will be increased by €153, and all workers will be covered by a health insurance with a monthly contribution of €14 paid by the employer, bringing the total pay increase to €167. Workers will have the option of contributing voluntarily to the insurance scheme (€7 per month) to get a better coverage.

The social partners will set up a gender observatory to share good practices and carry out initiatives on female employment, return to work after maternity leave, women in management and in roles related to new technology, as well as reskilling and upskilling. Furthermore, victims of gender-based violence will benefit from two months' paid leave, in addition to the three months provided for by law. The agreement also provides for four hours of training per employee about gender-based violence.

Workers suffering from serious illness will be granted a special leave for treatment. Moreover, unpaid leave for sickness of children is increased from five to six days per year, and parental leave can be split into two-hour or four-hour periods.

A national observatory with six company representatives and six worker representatives will assess the sector's situation regarding industrial policies, jobs, innovation, new technology as well as social and environmental aspects.

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