

Good morning everyone,

My name is Patrizia Alma Pacini, President of Unione Industriale Pisana.

Unione Industriale Pisana is part of Confindustria and brings together more than 500 voluntary member companies of all sizes, employing a total of 17.000 people.

It was founded in 1912. The last 7th June it celebrated its centenary year at the Theatre Verdi in Pisa.

The mission of the Association is to protect and represent the employers' interests in dealing with the political organizations and local authorities as well as with trade unions.

Unione Industriale Pisana also provides its associated companies a great variety of services and advice on many business and management matters.

Throughout its history, the Association has always been a “reference point” for associated companies, supporting them in the major historical, social and economic issues that have taken place during these 100 years... from economic recessions to wars, from oil crises to Covid-19 emergency etc ...

In recent years, one of the most relevant issues is “Sustainability Challenge”.

The uncontrolled consumption of the natural resources can be no longer allowed. I would like to focus your attention on this information/fact: the Earth Overshoot Day, an initiative of Global Footprint Network, marks the date when humanity will use all the biological resources that Earth regenerates during the entire year. This year, Earth Overshoot Day lands on July 28. For Italy the overshoot Day 2022 landed on May 15.

As you are aware, in 2015 the Agenda 2030 was signed. The Agenda sets out 17 Sustainable Development Goals, which are part of a broader programme of action consisting of 169 associated targets to be achieved in the environmental, economic, social and institutional domains by 2030. (for instance “no poverty, quality education, gender equality, climate action as a few examples.)

As Unione Industriale Pisana, we promote to local authorities the Sustainable Development Goals of Agenda 2030.

For this purpose, the Association promoted the creation and signing of a “ASVIS Agreement” in according with the local authorities of province of Pisa, chamber of commerce of Pisa, University of Pisa, Scuola superiore Sant'anna and Scuola Normale.

Unione Industriale Pisana was the first among Confindustria Associations to sign an ASVIS Agreement.

As Unione Industriale Pisana we have also established a product group, called circular energy, which groups companies operating in waste management and energy production, with the aim to promote best practices in this sector. After all, Tuscany has excellent knowledge on circular economy management and waste recycling.

In addition, during the UIP 100th anniversary celebration, we established for the first time the sustainability award. The award was based on the evaluation criteria of B-Corp. certifications.

All these initiatives are necessary to raise awareness among our associated companies on Sustainable Development Goals.

We are involved also in various activities with local schools and Universities to raise awareness of Sustainable Goals Agenda among our younger generation, especially for gender equality.

This year we also wanted to promote safety management systems in small and medium-sized companies, providing to our associated companies the training plan of ISO 45001 certification.

However, the big challenge for Italian companies now is managing high energy cost.

Italian companies compared to those in Europe are penalized by the lack of an energy policy by Italian government.

Italy has preferred to delegate the production of energy to other European countries (in whatever form it is generated, so even non-green) buying it, despite energy it is a strategic asset for businesses and people.

In Italy many forms of energy production, including the greenest ones, such as wind turbines or Photovoltaic or Geothermal plants have often been hindered.

Over the years, companies have tried to reduce energy consumption by optimizing production, but despite this in the manufacturing industry the energy cost item remains very significant...and there are sectors where the use of gas for production is essential, such as the glass or paper industry.

This situation creates a paradox: companies do not meet customer order demand because of high production costs, generating higher costs to the end user.

Answer

It is now established opinion that the cost of energy will not return to pre-pandemic or pre- Ukraine war standards. In Europe, as well as in Italy, governments need to make long-term strategic decisions.

A short term solution to reduce costs could be to create a European energy purchasing market/agreement, as it was done for anti-covid vaccines....To streamline

bureaucracy for approval of photovoltaic, geothermal, and wind turbines projects....
The use of LNG is another opportunity to diversify supply sources, but, again, our territory is poorly equipped with facilities to accommodate liquefied gas