

PRESS RELEASE

Work: Abi, flexibility and social equilibrium to encourage employment and growth

Green light for the fifth annual congress on human resources. The effects of the crisis and employment policies at the centre of the debate. For banks new development strategies required for HR management. Intensify action on cost containment

Flexibility, cost containment, social equilibrium: these are the main themes that refer to the requirement of identifying new strategies in the field of human resource management, compatible with the difficult market and employment situation in Europe and in Italy. These are the challenges launched by the radical changes of the global economic scenario with clear repercussions on the labour market, at the centre of the fifth Abi annual congress “HR2010 – Quality Employment: development strategies”.

The effects of the financial and economic crisis – Greece in the lead – impose the need to define instruments that encourage recovery and that are able to combine flexibility with social protection measures, with the objective of seizing all the growing and strengthening opportunities of the enterprise. In this scenario, the banking sector gave a demonstration of soundness by means of a prudent, reliable and responsible management of the traditional instruments available: territorial rootedness, large number of customers, strategic prudence. Modest profitability margins for the credit system and increasing doubtful loans are foreseeable in the future. Absolutely necessary to intensify the action concerning cost containment.

The dialogue for the renewal of the sector national collective labour agreement, expiring in December 2010, will be the most concrete occasion for analysing any change to the regulatory and salary structures, as well as possible legal instruments to be used in terms of employment, flexibility and competitiveness. An essential step for carrying out balanced solutions is the experienced will of the parties to keep collaborative labour relations based on the pursuit of consent, at the rate of the organisational and size development of the enterprise.

Among the first objectives, the need of a *balanced* turnover with subsequent modernisation of skills. On this front, cutting-edge banks structurally resorting to apprenticeship that, according to the most recent data, already involves 2.4% of bank employees. More can be done for youth employment by launching a debate on the theme.

To the innovations of the “incoming” policies correspond “outgoing” policies managed by banks under social equilibrium conditions and without charges to the collectivity. This thanks to the interventions of the sector Solidarity Fund that, completely financed by the banking system, involved at least 30,000 workers.

Adjusting resource management to time means to be able to count on a clear, flexible, modern legislative framework by avoiding the excessive rigidity of the rules that can penalise the workers and the enterprise.

Rome, Palazzo Altieri, 12 May 2010