



CNEL
National Council for Economics and Labour

PROGRAMME FOR 2012
(Rule 8 – Rules of Procedure)

Final approval by the Assembly on 19 July 2012

The second part of the 2010-2015 term of office marks a new stage for the CNEL as an institution; Law No 214 of 22 December 2011 amended the Council's membership and operating procedures but did not touch its powers or mandate.

The CNEL, alongside the other institutions of the Italian Republic, must do its part to tackle the lengthy recession with its hard hitting effects on Italy's social fabric.

The budgetary austerity imposed at national and subnational levels has entailed painful structural measures. These measures can be sustainable only if they are flanked by decisive actions bolstering development.

This approach will build sound confidence in the future and win the crucially needed support of all Italians, including workers, pensioners, entrepreneurs, young job seekers, pension reform victims, the new poor, and elderly people living alone. This scenario calls for an extraordinary show of initiative and a coordinated commitment from the government, the political parties and the parliament, as well as the social partners and the CNEL.

As a constitutional body representing Italy's economic and social partners, the CNEL has a specific role: its work programme must focus on promoting strong synergies and convergence between all the economic, social and institutional partners in order to deliver a social pact for economic growth and social equity against a backdrop of sustainability and the balanced management of public finances.

Nowadays, input from organised civil society in the form of proposals and responsibilities seems to be crucial for ensuring balanced, forward-looking reforms together with the social cohesion needed to boost production capacity and competitiveness. The CNEL must bolster its role as the voice of civil society and the local associations that form and drive it, so as to enable the national and local levels represented by the economic and social partners to put forward assessments, practical experience and proposals.

The key focus is on European policies, with a view to supporting and speeding up decisions on a common economic policy, in a context of a stronger sense of responsibility that will foster institutional and political integration: a crucial goal.

It is against this backdrop therefore that the annual work programme describes how the Council will fulfil its legal obligations and focus on analyses and proposals for policies that will have a lasting effect on the country's growth, with an emphasis on equity.

To this end, in 2012, the CNEL will focus on the following areas:

- Analysis and proposals will focus in particular on European policies dealing with economic governance, taking as a framework the Europe 2020 strategy, the European semester (ex-ante procedures - annual growth analysis - and ex-post procedures - European Commission recommendations), the Six-Pack legislation and the future Fiscal Compact, and their impact on national policies. Study sessions (assigned to the CNEL by Law No 11/2005, Article 7) have accordingly been launched with the goal of striking the right balance between measures to reduce forms of public spending that do nothing to spur on development, and targeted investment initiatives designed to provide Italy with the infrastructure (tangible, intangible and regulatory) needed to place industry and employment on a competitive footing. The spending review, fiscal reform and budgetary adjustment, as stipulated in the reform of Article 81 of the Constitution, are fundamental levers in this respect.

- There will be a far-reaching campaign to bring institutions and social partners together on the key topic of "productivity" and its most important aspects (research and innovation; business start-ups and development; the promotion of certain types of association: from networks to fresh forms of cooperation and financing; industrial relations; education and lifelong learning; labour market regulation aimed at combining job security and flexibility; welfare and subsidiarity; the quality of regulation and efficiency of regulatory authorities; etc.) in order to identify schemes that reward the achievement of set targets, based on recognised benchmarks that are at least European in scope.

- An annual initiative with a high institutional profile, such as those trialled for the *Il Lavoro che cambia* (changing face of work) and *L'Impresa che cambia* (changing face of business) events, would provide a good opportunity to provide information on progress made. Ideas driving development could

be researched and disseminated in schools and universities.

- The development for Italy's benefit of the results of the CNEL-ISTAT cooperation agreement to establish indicators of fair and sustainable wellbeing to be used alongside GDP could form a comprehensive basis for proper consideration of the underlying conditions, including at supranational level. They could also encourage and enhance the work of the nascent Consultation on sustainable development.

- There will be renewed focus on policies for local development and specifically for southern Italy as a springboard for balanced national growth and good jobs for young people and women. Targeted discussion will be needed regarding policy on young people and the urgent need to help them find secure employment. A revised version of the Consultation for southern Italy could be a suitable means of achieving this, at a time when Community funds will be concentrated on a few specific projects at set intervals.

- A more modern public administration serving the general public and businesses is a precondition for effective public policies, building on and developing the skills available. With regard to the CNEL's mandate, under Article 9 of the "Brunetta law", scheduled activities must be bolstered, not least through the development of an information system on the services delivered by public administrations, with economic and social representatives contributing by means of assessments and proposals.

- The topic of active ageing will be taken as the basis on which to gradually build up employment and welfare policies, with due regard for the short-, medium- and long-term demographic outlook.

- There are many paths to development; those involving financial crime are highly detrimental to the law and to fair competition. The experience accumulated by the social partners through their observatory is a resource that must be preserved and put to good use.

- Two major issues facing Italy in future are: first, impending flows of migrants, chiefly from Africa (a result of the North African uprisings and the serious demographic and economic imbalances

between Europe and Africa), and, second, the integration of immigrants who are Italian citizens in the making. Italy must succeed in this challenge for the sake of economic stability, a balanced society and enriched democracy. The ONC has proven its worth as an effective tool for promoting and measuring integration as well as a useful platform for comparing and developing migration policies.

For operational and organisational reasons, the activities planned need to be implemented in a more flexible and timely manner. The commissions and council bodies (which are linked by the role of the vice-presidents, with internal structures helping to implement the activities) will make a vital contribution to preparatory work on the various topics on the programme and will bring their work programmes into line with the thematic objectives, depending on their respective remits. The conclusions will obviously be debated by the Assembly, with a subsequent round of discussions and proposals.

In-house skills and the human resources available in general will therefore be assigned as a matter of priority to carrying out the programme's stated objectives.

Special programme agreements with national and international stakeholders (universities, organisations, research centres, the OECD, the ILO, etc.) with definite expertise in these areas will be the preferred channel for the necessary collection of information by external agencies, taking into account the new legislative framework in this area and any regulatory updates that may be required.