

PRESS RELEASE

The 100,000 Italian sports centres, where approx. 20 million people practice sports every day, are risking collapse due to the COVID–19 motivated closures.

So far everyone has followed the closing restrictions with great civic sense, but after 2 weeks of closure the risk of bankruptcy is real and high.

Support measures are now essential to "sustain" the sector after the necessary closures.

ANIF, the National Association of Sports and Fitness Facilities, which for over 20 years has been protecting and representing sports facilities, gyms, swimming pools and sports centres throughout Italy, intends to bring to the attention of the Institutions, in particular the Minister of Sports, the Minister of Economy and Finance, the Minister of Labor, as well as the media and the public opinion, the serious crisis that our sector is facing.

Sports facilities were, in fact, among the first victims of the *state of crisis* triggered by the COVID–19 epidemic: already on February 23rd the sports' sector was hit by the DPCM which, by prohibiting any kind of sports' events, also impacted all amatorial sports by halving i.e. emptying sports centres, even in regions not yet affected by official ordinances and decrees. The following decrees and ordinances then lead to an emergency state, i.e. a curfew throughout Italy and the implementation of draconian measures to contain the virus for instance the total closure of gyms and sports centres.

The whole sector has adapted to the nation's necessity to fight the virus epidemic and has promptly carried out all the ordinances, keeping at home nearly 20,000,000 practitioners who daily attend the approx. 100,000 existing sports facilities.

Italy's sport sector is made of approx. 100,000 Amatorial Sports Associations and Amateur Sports Companies, which represent more than one million employees and collaborators and which can absolutely not afford the social and economic costs of this crisis by themselves.

It is a sector that has always been involved in introducing young people to sports, which allows adults and the elderly to practice and exercise, and which has brought forward and to the top many great Italian champions.

Today, ANIF, in order to ensure that all these sports centres will be able to resume activity, once allowed to reopen, and to protect the people's health, is requesting:

1. Redundancy-state-funds (layoffs) for employees (administrative, maintenance and cleaning staff)
2. Issuance of urgent measures for the Sector in the matter of social safety nets (exemption lay-off fund / layoffs, subsidies for collaborators pursuant to art. 67 TUIR (institutional activity area).
3. Access to credit, suspension of mortgage instalments.
4. Extend i.e. defer payment of water, electricity and gas by instalments for at least 6 months in the following 48 months.
5. Cancellation for 6 months of income taxes, paid as employees, as well as social security and welfare contributions and premiums for compulsory insurance, related to permanent contracts (maintenance , cleaning etc.) for ASDs (Amateur Sports Associations) and SSDs (Amateur Sports Clubs) or Suspension and instalment payments for 48 months.
6. Cancellation for 12 months of other taxes such as, for example, IRES, IRAP, VAT etc... when due.
7. Access to sports' credit for financing the crisis, for 20-year re-start loans, proportional to the size of the sports centres (revenue volume).
8. Financial aids for the payment of wages and salaries, for the closing period

We will not allow that one of the most important health booster and healthy lifestyle promoter collapses!

When the country will restart, children, adults, elderly people and the pathologists will need to exercise their right to exercise sport, as a corollary of the right for health, also recognised by the European Union.

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