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Whirlpool's plan for Italy: zero redundancies, €250 million in investments, and the return of washing machines from Poland

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It took only two meetings in a month to reach a draft agreement on **Whirlpool's** business plan for Italy, for the three-year period 2019-2021. The agreement was signed by the Minister for Economic Development, **Luigi Di Maio**, the metalworkers' unions and representatives of the **regional** councils, as well as the **company's** top management. (photo: the parties at the moment of signing; source: **FIOM** press office)

Whirlpool have agreed to develop a business plan that completes the process of consolidating and strengthening the production sites in Italy, which already started with the 2015-2018 plan, to pursue a sustainable strategy for Italy, and to plan new, significant investments of **€250 million in product and process innovation, research and development**.

The business plan also includes bringing the production of **built-in washing machines and washer-dryers** back from Poland, to the **Comunanza** plant, near Ascoli Piceno. The plant in the Marche region will therefore become the EMEA centre for manufacturing these two products.

Whirlpool have confirmed their commitments to completing their plan to **reindustrialise** the **Teverola** site, near Caserta, and are making new, significant investments in the specialisation of the other Italian plants, starting with that of **Cassinetta di Biandronno**, near Varese, the **EMEA** centre for built-in products for the cold and cooking categories, **Melano**, near **Ancona**, the regional hub for **high-end**

hobs, Naples, which is dedicated to the production of high-end washing machines and **Carinaro**, near Caserta, which has been confirmed as the **EMEA** centre for replacement parts and accessories.

Even the **Siena** factory, which is dedicated to the production of horizontal freezers, which has suffered most from market difficulties, should increase volumes, thanks to the new trade policies.

These investments, together with a **plan of incentives** for voluntary mobility or to assist in retirement, and with the availability of tools to support the business and work provided by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies for the year 2019-2020, will ensure an **increase in production volumes and a zeroing of redundancies until 2021**.

“We are very satisfied with the agreement reached today, because we continue to believe in the potential and abilities in Italy. This is where we find a long manufacturing tradition, which is essential for innovation, extraordinary creativity and talent. This is why we are committed to investing in this country, so that it will always play a leading role within the global geography of Whirlpool,” said **Davide Castiglioni**, Whirlpool EMEA’s vice-president of industrial operations, and CEO in Italy.

In the next few days, meetings will be held at all of the factories and administration centres to illustrate the 2019-2021 business plan and terms of the draft agreement in detail; the agreement will then be subjected to a **referendum** among all of the Group’s workers.

di Translated by Giordano & Maifredi (Reviewed by Prof. Rolf Cook)