



## **Employer representation: questions and perspectives**

SUMMARY: 1. The employer associations and their recent fragmentation. – 2. Proliferation and extension of the scope of the CCNLs. – 3. The concept of the comparatively more representative employer association. – 4. The measurement of employer representativeness: the possible indicators. – 5. The problematic identification of the scope of measurement.

### **1. The employer associations and their recent fragmentation**

Although less widespread than those of the workers' union associations, the studies on employer associations describe a very fragmented phenomenon that originated between the second half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century as a response to the industrial conflict and the beginning and diffusion of workers' associations.

The fragmentation and pluralism that historically characterised employer associations seem to reflect the different characteristics and interests of the associative base; this also explains the presence in the Italian context of the greater number of business compared to trade union associations: 20 versus 6.

The representation of the interests of employers is mainly based on the sectoral affiliation of members (industry, crafts, trade, agriculture, banks and insurance etc.), even if the reference to the dimensional element (medium, small, micro) and the legal nature of the company (cooperatives) is present. However, the recent changes in the economic and manufacturing context, which have caused a profound transformation of the markets, have led companies to aggregate according to different models compared to the past, surpassing the traditional organisation by sectors.