

# THE CAMPAIGN 'RICERCATORI DETERMINATI' AGAINST THE PRECARIOUS WORK IN ITALIAN UNIVERSITIES

TITO RUSSO & BARBARA GRÜNING

FLC-CGIL

YOUR TURN: TEACHERS FOR TRADE UNION  
RENEWAL, 9-10 MAY 2019

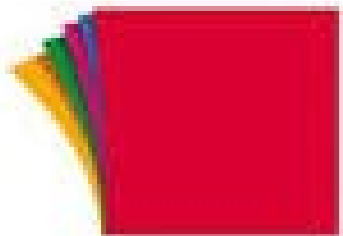


# ITALIAN UNIVERSITIES: A LONGITUDINAL OVERVIEW

The main 'milestones' of the Italian governments from 2008 to  
2019

- **2008** -> block on turnover for the next ten years
- **since 2008**: a global disinvestment in the university system (and in the sectors of the education and cultural production), in order to face the economic crisis -> loss of 1,5 Mds
- **2010** -> University reform ('Riforma Gelmini', law no. 240/2010): in order to apply the ideology of 'efficiency' to the Italian Universities, without investing new economic and human resources -> 'strategical increase of academic precariousness'





FLC CGIL

# the University reform in more details

- ◆ changing of the the existing academic structure
- *before 2010* - > full Professor; associate professor; lecturer [**tenure positions**] + research associate; research assistant; post-doc fellow; adjunct professor; teaching assistant [**untenured positions**]
- *after 2010* - > Full professor; associate professor [**tenure positions**] + senior researcher [**tenure track position, 3 years**] + junior researcher (3 years + scientific qualification); research associate; research assistant; post-doc fellow; adjunct professor; teaching assistant [**untenured positions**]

**Ricercatori**



**Determinati**

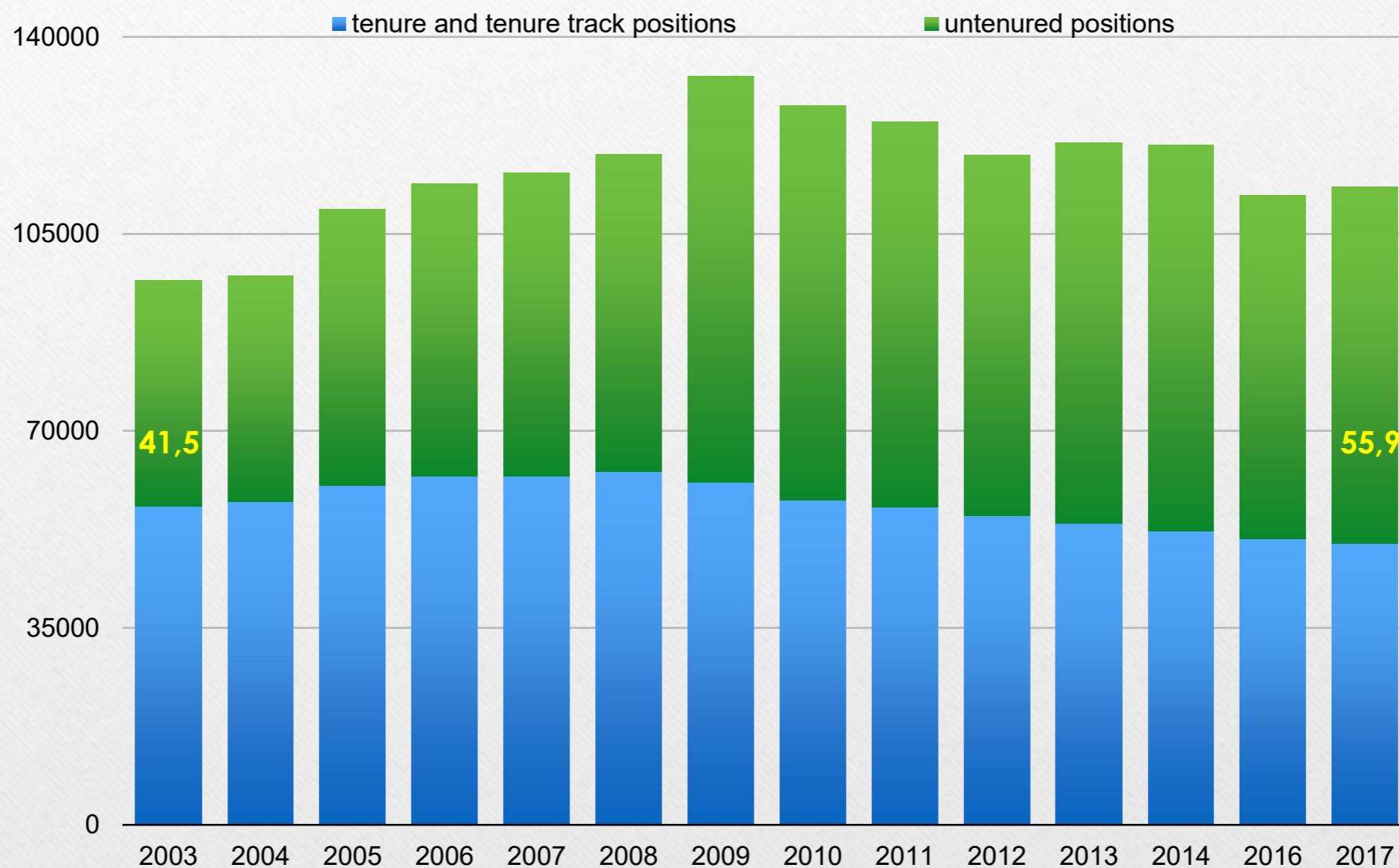
- ◆ Introduction of the National scientific Qualification for becoming associate and full professor [ plus local open competition] according to objectified parameters [i.e. for becoming associate professor a young scholar should publish as much as the average of the amount of publications of the associate professor at the time, when he/she applies for gaining the qualification]
- In order to improve the proceedings for gaining the NSQ, from 2012 to 2016 has not been possible for young scholars to apply
- ★ more and more the distribution of public expenditure for supporting the normal academic research and teaching activities is based on reward mechanisms, that is on competition among universities (the so called ‘quota premiale’)

- ◆ Worsening of the juridical and economical conditions of the adjunct professors -> according to the inter-ministerial decree law no. 313/2011 adjunct professors are paid only for lectures, albeit they are obliged by contract to do office hours and exams; supervise graduate student researches, and so on.
- Usually adjunct professors are paid at the end of the academic year.

# MAIN RESULTS of the Higher education politics in the last 10 years

1. 15000 tenure positions have been cut in the last 10 years
2. the number of academic precarious workers ( ca. 60% of the whole teaching academic staff) and academic precarious positions
3. -> 93% of precarious academic workers are expelled every year from universities
4. -> temporal extension of precariousness, which is especially detrimental for women
5. cutting of training courses especially in South Italy
6. worsening of the working conditions of adjunct professors (increase of duties and responsibilities and decrease of the remuneration, protections and social status)

# The academic staff in Italy from 2003 to 2017



**The decree law 'Madia' no.  
75/2017 for the Public  
administration: starting points  
for constructing our campaign...**

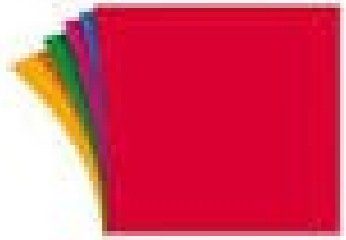




- In order to reduce the number of precarious worker in the Public administration two measures have been adopted by the government:
  1. opened competition reserved to workers of the public administration who worked at least three years with fixed-term contracts in the last eight years
  2. opened competition reserved to workers of the public administration who worked at least three years with precarious contracts (< 50% of the available positions)
- Also the precarious workers employed in the Research Institutes have had the possibilities of competing for a tenure position (nevertheless, according to the investment of each Research institute for the settling of new position)
- *Conversely*, the precarious researchers and teachers of the Italian universities have been excluded for two main reasons: 1. to be stabilized they have to possess the national scientific qualification; 2. their contracts are not covered by the National contract for the public sectors

# What to do? OUR CAMPAIGN 'ricercatori determinati': May 2018 - ongoing





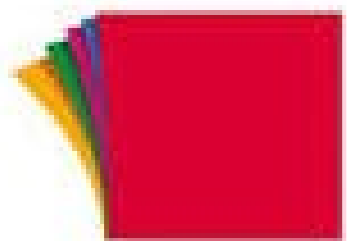
**FLC CGIL**

# PIVOTAL IDEAS

- creating a mechanism and a legislative proposal, which makes possible to include also the precarious workers in the stabilization processes foreseen for other precarious workers in the public sectors
- involving more individual and collective actors as much as possible in the various phases of the campaign: from the planning of the proposal to the communication and exchanging of opinions and ideas until to the ‘political action’



**An inclusive proposal, an  
inclusive campaign...**



**FLC CGIL**



# MAIN STEPS AND MAIN GOALS

- **FIRST**, In front of the higher level of fragmentation and competition even among precarious workers and ‘categories’ of precarious workers, in collaboration with the Italian Association of Ph.D students (ADI), we decided to outline a draft proposal that took into account at the same time the needs of the: younger generation of precarious academic workers (reform of the recruitment procedures); the older generations of precarious workers employed in research positions (reserved opened competitions); adjunct professors (increasing the retribution and longer fixed-term contracts with protections)

- **SECOND**, producing and using longitudinal researches on academic Precariousness in Italy (one specifically on the Adjunct professors began in November 2017) for: 1) implementing our knowledge about the working conditions of precarious workers in Italian universities; 2) communication goals [digital media; articles on local and national newspapers]. Especially, our objective was both of increasing the awareness among the public opinion and generating pressures by political actors

- **THIRD**, definition of a 'logo' for the campaign, so that all the precarious workers could identify themselves within this collective actor, independently from their (original) closeness to the trade union or other formal associations

- **FORTH**, from May to November we organized about twenty local assemblies with precarious academic workers across Italy. In each assembly we have first presented the main outputs of the two researches and the main points of our proposals and, in a second moment, we discuss together and collect suggestions and further information about specific problems and situations (i.e. the institutional lack of a profile for lab scientists and laboratory fellows with the consequences they are employed as research assistant without however career opportunities in the academic system)



- **FIFTH**, in mid-November 2018, we organized a national assembly with more than 100 academic precarious workers coming from all over Italy to discuss together of the proposal and to improve it
- **SIXTH**, in December, we organized two protests, one at a local level in more than ten university cities and one at a national level in Rome, in which also political representatives of the government and party oppositions have participated. One of the main aim was also to pressure the government in light of the budget law 2019.

- **SEVENTH**, in April we began a new round of local assemblies with the aim of:
  1. ‘keeping alive’ the inclusive spirit of the campaign and the discussion from the bottom on the future of the Italian university and their workers
  2. discussing the new reform proposals of the Government in matters of academic recruitment, by stressing the critical points and relaunching our ideas
  3. organizing a new national meeting in June

# MAIN POSITIVE ASPECTS

- INVOLVEMENT OF WORKERS, who are traditionally distant from the trade union
- ACTIVE PARTICIPATION in discussions and political actions about their individual future and the general future of the Italian University
- NEW ATTENTION of the government towards the problems of the University



# MAIN DIFFICULTIES

- the high level of institutional, social and cultural/ideological fragmentation among the precarious workers made difficult to construct a shared vision of the future of the university, that is to overcome own specific point of view and interests (to make them universal)
- the social fluidity of the academic precariousness made (and makes) difficult to continue a campaign, especially after the negative 'feedback' from the government, and to identify then new goals