
EU Commission: economy slowing down, Omicron and energy prices taking a heavy toll. Gentiloni, “headwinds have intensified”

Economy is slowing down, hard pressed by Omicron (and the pandemic-induced restrictions) and by the price of energy. “Headwinds have intensified” in the last part of 2021, and the recovery has lost momentum. In Brussels, Paolo Gentiloni, Commissioner for Economy, presented the Winter Economic Forecast that goes well into 2023. “After a remarkable 5.3% expansion in 2021, the EU’s economy will grow by 4.0% in 2022 and by 2.8% in 2023”. The numbers are clear. “Even the growth of the euro-zone is expected to be 4.0% in 2022, with a moderate 2.7% in 2023”. The EU as a whole reached pre-pandemic GDP levels in the third quarter of 2021, “and all the member states are expected to exceed such target by the end of 2022”. But the general picture still shows a marked inflation (3.5%) and a fairly slower international scenario. The world GDP is expected to be 4.2% in 2022 and 3.8% next year. Finally, a positive figure comes from employment: “we are back to pre-pandemic levels – Gentiloni says – with an unemployment rate of 6.4% in the EU”. 1.8 million jobs have therefore been recovered, but millions of people are still out of a job, especially young people.

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