

Business structure, performance and new investments abroad of Italian multinational enterprises

Year 2011, new investments 2012-2013

Data refer to 2011 for the business structure and economic activities carried out abroad by Italian-controlled enterprises, and to 2012-2013 for new investments abroad with a majority share, including information on their geographical and business functions breakdown.

In 2011, 21,682 Italian foreign affiliates operated in more than 161 countries. These enterprises employed 1,7 million persons, and generated a turnover of 510 billion euros. The economic relevance of these enterprises, as compared to resident businesses, was equal to 15.0% of turnover, and 20.8% of turnover excluding the purchase of goods and services (this latter variable represents a rough proxy for value added).

Italian foreign affiliates in manufacturing account for almost 6,500 enterprises, representing slightly more than a half of Italian affiliates active in non financial services. However, their relevance as compared to resident businesses is more remarkable than non-financial services.

The industrial sectors, where the activity carried out abroad by MNEs is more significant, are manufacture of motor vehicles, trailers and semi-trailers (260 units, more than 148 thousand persons employed, 74.1 billion euros in turnover, of which 21.6 excluding the purchase of goods and services) manufacture of machinery and equipment n.e.c. (1,167 Italian foreign affiliates with about 121 thousand persons employed, and with 31.9 billion euros of turnover, of which 6.9 billion net of goods and services purchase), manufacture of textiles and textile products (596 enterprises, with more than 86 thousand persons employed, 5.2 billion turnover, of which 1.8 excluding the purchase of goods and services).

Industrial activities carried out abroad by MNEs are more remarkable in Brazil (97 thousands employed by Italian affiliates), United States (94 thousands), Romania (86 thousands persons) and China (72 thousands), while services activities carried out abroad by MNEs are mainly located in the United States (104 thousands) and Germany (73 thousands).

Labour cost per capita in Italian foreign affiliates is particularly low in Tunisia (4.3 thousand euro), China (5.8 thousand euro), India (6.2 thousand euro), Romania (6.3 thousand euro) and Mexico (7.8 thousand euro) while it is higher in France (55.2 thousand euro), the United States (49.2 thousand euro) and Germany (48.0 thousand euro).

Goods and services exported in other countries (including Italy) by Italian-controlled enterprises resident abroad and active in industrial sectors account for more than 34.5% of their turnover.

The share of exported turnover to Italy in the Made in Italy sector is relevant: manufacture of textiles and textile products (58.-2%), manufacture of wearing apparel (39.0%), manufacture of furniture and other manufacturing (37.5%).

R&D expenditure accounted for abroad by MNEs is mainly located in the European Union (EU27), South and North America.

In 2011-2012, more than 60% of MNEs operating in services and more than 62% industrial IMNEs planned new foreign investments abroad.

Finally, MNEs highlight that access to new markets is the main reason for new investments abroad.

Contact persons:

ISTAT – National Institute of Statistics

Statistics on foreign trade and enterprises multinational activities

Via Tuscolana, 1768 – 00179 Rome, Italy

Emanuela Trinca

Ph. +39.06.4673.6142

Elisabetta Bilotta

Ph. +39.06.4673.6145