

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

Year 2010, new investments 2011-2012

Data refer to 2010 for the business structure and economic activities carried out abroad by Italian-controlled enterprises, and to 2011-2012 for new investments abroad with a majority share, including information on their geographical and business functions breakdown.

In 2010, Italian multinational enterprises increased their presence abroad: +818 firms (+3,8%), +96 thousand persons employed (+6,4%), 57 billion turnover as compared to 2009.

In 2010, about 22 thousand Italian foreign affiliates operated in more than 164 countries. These enterprises employed 1,6 million persons, and generated a turnover of 435 billion euros. The economic relevance of these enterprises, as compared to resident businesses, was equal to 11,7% of turnover, and 15,8% of turnover excluding the purchase of goods and services, where 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 four times more remarkable than non financial services.

The industrial sectors where the activity carried out abroad by MNEs is more significant are manufacture of machinery and equipment n.e.c. (1.239 Italian foreign affiliates with about 114 thousand persons employed, and with 24,6 billion euros of turnover, of which 5,5 billion net of the purchase of goods and services), manufacture of textiles and textile products (663 enterprises, with more than 95 thousand persons employed, 5,4 billion turnover, of which 1,6 excluding the purchase of goods and services), and manufacture of motor vehicles, trailers and semi-trailers (215 units, more than 87 thousand persons employed, 29,8 billion euros in turnover, of which 5,4 excluding the purchase of goods and services).

Industrial activities carried out abroad by MNEs are more remarkable in Romania (88 thousand persons employed by Italian affiliates), Brazil (81 thousand) and China (78 thousand), while services activities carried out abroad by MNEs are mainly located in the United States (107 thousand) and Germany (66 thousand).

Labour cost per capita in Italian foreign affiliates is particularly low in China (4,7 thousand euro), India (5,6 thousand euro), Romania (6,1 thousand euro) and Mexico (6,4 thousand euro) while it is higher in the United States (52,5 thousand euro), France (52 thousand euro) and Germany (51,1 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 43% of their turnover. 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 44% of MNEs operating in services and more than 42% industrial IMNEs planned new foreign investments abroad.

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

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