



The Chambers of Commerce Network for Internationalization Dr. Pietro Infante PhD

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July 16th 2024



Who we are

UNIONCAMERE is the Italian Union of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Crafts and Agriculture.

Unioncamere is a **public institution** whose task is to represent the general interests of Italian Chambers of Commerce in respect of all institutional stakeholders at local, regional, national and international levels, including business organizations, consumers and workers.

Chambers of commerce recently has been involved by the law to **implement the National Recovery and Resilience Plan, in particular on green and digital transition of enterprises.**



Institutional functions

The network of Italian Chambers of commerce offers entrepreneurs assistance in promoting the internationalization of their businesses

According to the Law n.580/93 and several other regulations, Chambers of Commerce deal with the “*support for the competitiveness of businesses and territories through economic information and technical assistance for the creation of businesses and start-ups, information, training, organizational support and assistance to small and medium-sized enterprises for preparing for international markets*”.



Institutional functions

The participation in the coordination mechanisms of Italian policies for internationalization.

Unioncamere is a **Member of the “Steering Committee for Internationalization”**, co- chaired by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and the Minister of Enterprises and Made in Italy and includes the Ministry of tourism, the Ministry of Economy and Finance, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Sovereignty and Forestry, the Conference of Regions, ABI, Confindustria, the Alliance of Cooperatives and the Confederation of SMEs private companies – Confapi.



The Chamber of commerce network for internationalization

- **60 Chambers of Commerce**
- **86 Italian Chambers of commerce abroad in 63 Countries: 5 Chambers in Africa** (Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, Mozambique, South Africa)
- **40 Mixed Chambers of commerce** also in Mena Region (Joint Italian-Arab Chamber, Italian-Libyan Chamber et al.)
- **10 Regional Union of Chamber of commerce**
- **15 Enterprises participated by Unioncamere and/or Chambers of commerce** in different fields and connected with international activities and support for internationalization.



The Chamber of commerce network for internationalization

Main Objectives:

- 1) To represent the **connection points between the policies** decided in the Steering Committee for internationalization **and the territorial levels**;
- 2) To **accompany Small and medium-sized enterprises**, especially smaller ones, to redefine or redesign their presence abroad;
- 3) To **increase the use of digital technology to support exports, to initiate or develop new forms of markets presence.**



The Chamber of commerce network for internationalization

Main activities carried out:

The main contribution of the Italian Chambers of Commerce is to **support the growth of Italian exports**, through the **increase in exporting companies**.

Chamber of commerce provides activities such as information and training, assistance, guidance for thousands of companies that want to start or make their presence abroad stable and less episodic.



What is Competitiveness?

The OECD defines competitiveness as “the ability of companies, industries, regions, nations or supranational regions to generate, while being and remaining exposed to international competition, relatively high factor income and factor employment levels on a sustainable basis”.

Similarly, **Scott and Lodge** (1985) define national competitiveness as the ability of nation States to produce, distribute and service goods in the international economy, in competition with goods and services produced in other countries, and to do so in a way that earns a rising standard of living.

However for **Krugman** (1994) competitiveness can’t be applied to national economies and **Porter** (1990) is of the opinion that the only concept of competitiveness at the national level is national productivity.



Facilitating Competitiveness

Three possible instruments that can facilitating competitiveness:

- **The role of foreign direct investment (FDI) and technology** (case study on the recent The National Foreign Investment Attraction Unit <https://www.investinitaly.gov.it/en>)
- **Export promotion**
- **Soft power** (Joseph Nye, 2004)
- **Made in Italy Brand: a great example of Soft power**



Why a Foreign Investor should invest in Italy

- **First country in Europe for number of manufacturing firms**
- **Italy is the 10th largest economy in the world**
- **First for number of Unesco sites in the world**
- **First in globally in scientific research productivity**
- **First worldwide by patent productivity**
- **First country of G20 economies for industrial diversification**



Export Promotion: the contribution of Chambers of commerce

• OVERVIEW

The Project SEI - Supporting Italian Export was launched in 2018 by Unioncamere Nazionale, in collaboration with Promos Italia and around 70 Italian Chambers of Commerce.

It goes beyond being just a project; it is a methodology embraced by the entire chamber system to offer initial assistance, guidance, and support services to companies that are not currently exporting or only export sporadically.

The Project SEI – Support Italian Export

• AIMS OF THE PROJECT

**INCREASE THE NUMBER OF EXPORTING
COMPANIES**

**ENHANCE THE GLOBAL POSITIONING OF
OCCASIONAL EXPORTERS**

STANDARDIZE THE SUPPORT SERVICES TO SMES

The Project SEI – Support Italian Export

RESULTS ACHIEVED

Progetto SEI



+8.500

companies
registered in
platform and
assisted



+40.000

assessments,
export plans
and market
researches
(last 3 yrs)



6.000

companies
trained
(last 3 yrs)

The Project SEI – Support Italian Export

• WHAT IS PROVIDED?



TRAINING

We provide access to qualified training content on the topics of internationalisation, digital to support exports and access to financing



EXPORT CHECKUP & ASSESSMENT

We help companies to identify needs and evaluate export potential



MARKET SELECTION

Through the Market Selection tool we support companies to choose the market with the highest potential for their product and their needs

The Project SEI – Support Italian Export

• WHAT IS PROVIDED?



EXPORT STRATEGY

We support companies in identifying the most appropriate strategy for entering foreign markets



EXPORT PROMOTION

In coordination with other players in the Italian internationalization system, we help companies seize opportunities for internationalization and promotion abroad



FINANCIAL ADVISORY & EU TENDER

We help companies to seize all the opportunities deriving from national, European and international funding sources for internationalization and to support the competitiveness of companies.

The Project SEI – Support Italian Export

ADVANTAGES FOR SMES

1

**TO KNOW THEIR STRENGTHS AND HOW
TO BECOME MORE COMPETITIVE**

2

TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT MARKETS

3

**TO DEFINE A PROPER AND COHERENT
INTERNATIONALISATION STRATEGY**

4

**TO IDENTIFY THE RIGHT STEPS TO
IMPLEMENT THE STRATEGY**

The Project SEI – Support Italian Export

www.sostegnoexport.it

THE ACCESS PORTAL TO
THE SERVICES OF THE
CHAMBERS' SYSTEM
FOR THE
INTERNATIONALIZATION
OF ITALIAN COMPANIES



Made in Italy Brand: a great example of Soft power



The Italian export value reached **€626 bln** in 2023.

Italy has a strong and historical vocation for export, thanks also to the international recognition of the "Made in Italy" brand.

The Contribution to the Governamental Plan Enterprises 4.0

With the establishment of **“Digital Enterprises Point”** at the Italian Chambers of commerce has been reached almost **700.000 users in 5 years**. The main activities are:

- **Dissemination of Knowledge** (Information and Training Services for SMEs)
- **Mapping of the digital maturity of enterprises** (60.000 Digital Maturity Assessment)
- **Support for technological investments** (40.000 Digital Voucher)
- **Business orientation** (New services dealing with Mentoring, Artificial Intelligence Tool, Cybersecurity, Matching Enterprise-Research)



The new Transition 5.0 Plan

- **13 billion** for 2024-2025
- **6.3 billion to green and digital transition of enterprises**
- The plan aims to support **investments in digitalisation and the green transition of businesses** through an innovative tax credit scheme (i.e. investments in capital goods, worker training)



Thanks for your attention!

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