



Novara and the province

The province of Novara, with its 88 municipalities distributed on a North-South axis, has always been considered as the link between Piedmont and Lombardy.

Novara has a strategic geographical position which is very important in the relations with the neighbours and which is an important element in the European and international markets.

The geographical situation plays a role of primary importance for the province of Novara as crossroad in transport networks.

Almost half of the revenue produced in the province comes from the industry: the main sectors are ironworks, textile, food, chemical and paper.

You can also find a significant number of companies specialized in services to enterprises and to people, as well as a growing number of services to hotels and restaurants linked to the new demands coming from the business and eno-gastronomic tourism.

In the South part of Novara province you can find a well established agricultural production especially cereals, rice and farm animals. On the hills you will find vineyards with a good production of a DOC wine, the *Ghemme*, and the DOC *Boca, Fara, Sizzano* and *Colline Novaresi*.

During the last years, in the industrial sector has registered several problems mainly in the fashion and textile companies specialised in underwear, sportswear, bathing suits, high quality wool, and all sectors which are subject to a heavy global competition and therefore obliged to constantly review their marketing strategies.

The iron and metal sector is also experiencing some problems mainly in the *taps and fittings* as well in the *pallets* sector, while the food sector registers significant improvements.

In spite of the negative economic conjuncture of these times, there is an extension of the industrial sector in general: the province counts nowadays 31 401 enterprises, with a growth rate of 10% in the last 5 years.

In the Novara province you will find enterprises that can grow and change constantly. There is a reduction of the traditional industry together with a sudden development of the building sector in general, linked to the big infrastructure works represented by the Corridor 5 (Lyon-Kiev) and Corridor 24 (Genoa-Rotterdam), both passing through the province.

At the same time the tertiary sector is more and more characterizing the local economy, thanks to the increase of the services to enterprises and, in particular, to the transport and logistics activities. In Novara there is in fact the CIM, an important and up-to-date intermodal centre.

The tertiary sector counts 16 800 enterprises, which means the 56% of the total enterprises of the area, followed by the building and construction sector (18,1%), by the industry (16,4%) and by the agriculture (9,4%).

The craft sector is also of great importance in the province economy, because it contributes favourably to the development of the region. With 10 594 companies, the craft sector represents the 33,7% of the total of the enterprises in the province.

The 59,1% of the Novarese GNP is represented by services, the 39,2% by the industry, which means that Novara remains one of the biggest Italian industrial provinces, and 1,8% is represented by the agriculture.

The SME is the typical enterprise, mainly oriented to export activities, although there is a certain number of big companies leaders at national or international level.

The most important export products are taps and fittings and pellets for water and gas.

Side by side to the specialised sectors who are concentrated in some areas (like the taps and fittings , pellets and toilet supplies that are produced in Cusio, nearby the Orta Lake,

Briga, Gozzano and S. Maurizio d'Opaglio) there are many SMEs producing different machineries which are not linked to one specific industrial production.

This differentiation is an extremely positive element because it has helped to survive to negative conjuncture periods and it represents strength of the territory to put to good use.

The export activities of Novara enterprises in 2004 has growth of 7,5% and were addressed mainly to EU countries (63,2%) that registered limited growing rates in comparison to other emerging economies (China, India, Russia and Brazil)

This is a weakness of Novara province as well as of the Italian economy in general. Nevertheless, a recent increase of the export towards countries like Turkey, Tunisia , Russia, Japan and Singapore has been registered.

It is also important to remember the presence of marketing operators in the USA market hat represents 6% of the novarese export.

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