

Italian Chamber of Commerce and Industry for the UK

Survey of Italian Investments in the UK

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ITALIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
AND INDUSTRY FOR THE UK

London, Manchester, Glasgow & Edinburgh

Overview of the Data Fellowship

I worked at the Italian Chamber of Commerce and Industry for the UK at their main office in London, as assistant project manager on their Seventh Survey of Italian Investments in the UK. Over the course of the data fellowship I produced a 70 page report, covering the period of 2020-2022 a unique and turbulent time in international trade due to the restrictions of the Covid-19 pandemic. The report details the trends between the two nation's economic relations with a specific focus on Italian Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the UK economy. 11 key sectors were investigated across the report from Aerospace to Food and Beverage.

Data Analysis

Much of the initial analysis was extrapolating trends from existing available data on FDI published by sources such as the Department for Trade. Additionally I had access to the Chamber's own extensive database of its own members activities, representing 100s of Italian businesses. This ranged from family-owned restaurants to multi-billion companies such as Stellantis, Ferrari and Leonardo. Alongside this extensive database which covered investments, geographic location and UK employees, several qualitative interviews were also conducted with members of the Chamber.

Findings

As was likely to be expected, 2020 was a uniquely terrible year for FDI flows into the UK, and trade between the two nations. This was exacerbated by Italy being one of the first countries in the world to lockdown during the pandemic. 2021 saw near record-backing growth, however, the bulk of this recovery was simply recouping the contractions seen in the previous year.

- Italy remains one of the UK's largest sources of trade and investment, however geographic disparities in both nations were hard to ignore. Over a third of all Italian subsidiaries were based in London, while out of the 626 subsidiaries only 9 were in Scotland and a further 19 in Wales. Similarly over a third of parent companies were based in Lombardy whilst 0 were based in the Southern regions of Calabria and Basilicata.

Key Skills Learnt

Coming from a Politics and Sociology background, it was an exciting learning experience to get involved in a project focused almost entirely around economic and business. Much of the jargon and information was something I was unused to working with, however, I quickly learnt and became invested in the issues. It was also great to work in a bilingual international team. Translating and working in both Italian and English with colleagues abroad, improved by communication and cooperative skills. I learnt to apply and adapt myself to a wide variety of industries, having to learn the ins and outs of the energy sector one day, and the clothing sector the next. It provided a broad and diverse range of issues to understand and research.

Maneuvering and updating the Chamber's vast database, I also became familiar with a variety of data visualisation skills to depict the findings from our analysis. At times this meant developing graphic design and software skills alongside traditional data skills.

