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# HISTORY, CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION OF THE 'ITALIA' NETWORK. THE CASE OF RUSSIA

*Abstract:* This article highlights essential issues concerning Italy's role in the world as a source of innovation and creativity through the analysis of important Russian-Italian relations and cooperation, which date back from the 14<sup>th</sup> century. The period focussed upon in this paper is the last twenty years. Migration statistics are used to describe the intellectual migration from Italy to Russia in the years from 1997 to 2016. Moreover, a case study of several Italian enterprises in Russia are presented to explain the logic of the paradoxical predominance of the food and fashion industries within Russian-Italian cooperation partnerships. The paper also highlights how the development of high-tech imports from Italy to Russia is hampered by a number of socio-cultural factors. First of all, stereotypes created through the fact that the most important wealth of the Italian economy lies in sectors oriented toward the quality of life, such as the hotel and catering, food and fashion sectors. At the same time, the achievements of the Italian science industry are generally undervalued in the field of innovative technologies in the energy sector, for example as far as "smart cities", "smart environment" are concerned.

*Keywords:* cultural heritage, innovation, Italian migration, Made in Italy.

## 1. Introduction

In the hyper-competitive world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, fundamental elements for generating economic value are: a global economy, cultural contents, and the enhancement of historical heritage. If the quality of products remains an important factor for consumers, the perception of quality is no longer linked to quality in itself, but rather it becomes linked to the individual's sense of quality. The cultural element becomes significant especially for the so-called "creative" industries, i.e. those that respond in the first instance to non-cultural functional imperatives, but for which cultural contents have represented - and are increasingly representing - a relevant segment in developing a value chain (Sacco, 2018). A key role in this value chain is played by heritage, as a link between fashion companies and their customers. Indeed, experience and tradition certify the quality of a product, its value and its positioning in a historical perspective (Martino, 2013). This is why the adoption of a precise historical placement is an integral part of modern branding, and companies with a strong cultural heritage can in this way shed a positive light on their present and future holding (Corbellini and Saviolo, 2009).

The historical heritage of companies operating in the Italian fashion sector is also characterized by the presence of textile factories in various regions, often dating back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. These not only tell the story of a single enterprise, but that of an entire territory and of different generations that helped create its productive fabric. Many of these factories or plants, owing to the success of industrial archaeology, have now become (or are becoming) sites of considerable historical-cultural relevance in many Italian regions. In fact, industrial archaeology is one of the first scientific disciplines dealing with a company's tangible and intangible assets. Industrial archaeology began in England between the 1950s and 1960s with the aim of protecting industrial heritage as a bearer of significant evidence of economic and social history (Lowenthal 1998). It then began to take hold in Italy in the 1970s, finding a central role in the preservation, management and enhancement of cultural heritage (Ciuffetti and Parisi, 2012; Murphy and Wiltshire, 2003;

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\* Sapienza University of Rome

+ Saint Petersburg State University of Economics and Finance

Vitali, 2017).

*Made in Italy* (in the fashion, design and food sectors) represents Italy, as well as the recent resumed Italian migration following the economic crisis in 2008. Such migration is characterized by a different typology of migrants compared to the past, consisting especially of specialists, business managers and people with valuable skills. The study aims to contribute to the complex field of research on Italian migrants in the world and the “glocal” system (Bauman, 2005). Indeed, this network allows people to connect worldwide, who do not want to feel they belong to one nation, but who want to experience the historic opportunity to be part of a “community of feelings” or “practices.” These global communities are increasingly developing across the world with a transversality typical of those who shape the future (Zanoni, 2018; Bauman, 2005, 2011). In fact, if the Italian presence in the world is the result of a migratory phenomenon that has characterized Italian history, it may be said that today “Italics” are above all the citizens of the Republic of Italy residing in Italy (sixty million) and abroad (more than four million). Since the establishment of the Italian state, there has been tens of millions of emigrants and millions of “mixed” descendants (Roic, 2006; Tirabassi and Del Prà, 2011). To this regard, the social sciences have developed tools that allow us to estimate the number of descendants from the various diasporas. According to these estimates, Italians amount to seventy million, representing an important market and, above all, a rich source of inspiration and research, representing highly sought after scientific, innovative and entrepreneurial skills (Bassetti, 2015; Corradi and Pozzi, 1995). Apparently, even though the above-mentioned methodological approaches seem to be different and far apart from each other, they are necessary for understanding a country’s history and the path it has taken. The same can be said concerning a country’s cultural heritage which is also the fruit of an innovation process.

Section 2 of this study deals with the relationship between history and cultural heritage. The third section analyses the role of technology and innovation, which in the Italian case is characterised by the relevance of the creative industries linked to knowledge, innovation and culture starting in the period of the 2008 crisis. Section 4 highlights the relationship between Italy and Russia, whose point of contact is represented by Italian migration. In fact, the latter has contributed to transmitting Italian cultural heritage, its knowledge and technological innovation, also thanks to its enterprises and to a consolidated network of Italians that can be taken as a global model, precious to the Italian global network.

## **2. The relationship between history and cultural heritage**

Roman civilization has created considerable grounds for the evolution of civilization with regard to logistics (roads, aqueducts, cities), materials (inventing cement, developing ceramics), and regulations (civic law, democracy principles). In fact, over the past twenty-five centuries, Italy’s export of technologies, management methods and approach to governance related to the building of aqueducts and roads in various Western European countries, for example, Londinium (London, UK), as well as the use of cement and arches in the construction sector, the development of military logistics, technologies and the creation of a codified legal system, have all played an important role in Europe’s economic development.

Since the 15<sup>th</sup> century Russia has joined the process of mastering the intellectual achievements of Roman civilization. As the aim of this work is to evaluate Russian-Italian intellectual migration, the analysis involves both statistical data and a case study investigation of Russian-Italian contacts and relations, which began as long ago as the 14<sup>th</sup> century and ended with the Italian presence in Russia, primarily in urban areas.

A large amount of literature has been produced on the link between heritage and history and on the difficulties for heritage to narrate history. The past is the infinite whole in which the lives of all those who preceded us in every age and place find space. It is evident that no form of knowledge can contain the past, which as such exceeds man’s cognitive ability. Whereas, what man can do is open small windows in order to develop small segments of knowledge.

Cultural heritage is therefore inevitably subject to continuous review and re-conceptualization, both in terms of content (which expressions of the past to preserve and which not to preserve) and in terms of values to be transmitted to future generations. The modern era’s definition of cultural heritage was

therefore based on the idea of intrinsic artistic value (works of art), on the testimony of a very distant past (archaeological finds) and on the value of cultural transmission (ancient books). This vision remained almost unchanged up to the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with the exception of the inclusion of the natural environment first in the United States legislation in the mid-Nineteenth century and then in the European one at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

In the mid-Twentieth century, a new concept of heritage began to assert itself in the attempt to incorporate the transmission of different aspects related to the social, economic and cultural life of the past. At an international level, the paradigm shift occurred at the *Second International Congress of Architects and Specialists of Historic Buildings* held in Venice in 1964. On that occasion, the Venice Charter was adopted providing the guidelines for heritage preservation. Moreover, the foundations were laid for the creation of ICOMOS (International Council of Monuments and Sites), fostering a periodic comparison among all those who in the world were involved in cultural heritage. All in all, the Venice Charter proposed a new way of conceiving cultural heritage. Indeed, Article 1 reads: “The concept of historical monument embraces not only the architectural artefact, but also the rural and urban context in which we can find traces of a particular civilization or of a significant development or historical event. This applies to large works of art, but also to the more modest artefacts of the past that have acquired cultural significance over time.”

If the Venice Charter, with its concept of transmitting memory and cultural studies relating to the symbolic value of goods, expanded the range of products deserving protection, it did not however exhaust it. In fact, in Paris (2003), UNESCO adopted the *Convention for the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage*, which in article 2 is defined as “intangible cultural heritage” meaning the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills - as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith - that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage (Stoczkowski, 2009; UNESCO, 1998, 2003). This intangible cultural heritage, from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, providing them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity. Article 2 was intended to be used in conjunction with international human rights instruments, as well as with the requirements of mutual respect between communities, groups and individuals, and of sustainable development.

These measures have led to the possibility of preserving and transmitting traditions and spoken expressions, including the language of small communities, performing arts, social practices, rituals and parties, the knowledge of nature or of the universe and related practices, crafts and traditions.

In addition to expanding the concept of cultural heritage, the Paris Convention resumed and re-thought some of the reference concepts involved in the whole identification process and in the protection of universal heritage, such as the protection of authenticity and cultural diversity. Therefore, the capitalization of culture acquired an important institutional dimension owing to the self-promotion of multilateral cultural organizations like ICOMOS, the UNESCO World Heritage List Centre (Bartolotto, 2011), and the Institute of European Cultural Routes (Berti et al., 2015). The construction of transnational cultural networks was also the basis for redefining the concept of universal and international heritage (Ashworth and Tunbridge, 1999). The outcomes have been varied and diversified. The extension of the definition of heritage has helped strengthen the cultural identity of communities, allowing all the members of society to recognize and value their practices (Valentino and Misiani, 2004). At the same time, it has given rise to new problems and new challenges, such as the emergence of a dissonant or divisive heritage, or the emergence of conflicts between universal human values and the cultural distinction of some communities. In the case of Italian communities abroad, this cultural tradition is extremely alive and could be considered a further dissemination instrument and an aspect of cultural heritage to be safeguarded (Strangio and Tamborrino, 2016).

There are several cities in the world that boast a strong Italian presence which has stratified over time and has been the result of past migrations (Colucci, 2012). Recently, this strong presence has found new life with the migratory phenomenon and the severe financial crisis. Among other things, not only is Italian mobility significant, but there is also the growing number of immigrants from Asia and other continents, returning to their countries with a cultural loyalty to the Italian reality (Golinelli, 2012).

In fact, Asian markets are becoming increasingly interesting, growing in terms of size and outlets, while appreciating the *Made in Italy* and showing considerable economic availability. Therefore, what is emerging and assuming properly corporate connotations - from the more specifically historical aspect of cultural heritage, opening new frontiers - is the need to devise a new approach, such as that of *Italianness*. The latter, in fact, allows the creation of a loyal network identifying knots where there are Italian communities to be transformed into distribution platforms for business sectors. At the same time, though, it creates an increasingly large market composed of millions of people.<sup>1</sup>

### 3. Technology and innovation and the “middle ground”

Considerations on the economic and social role of cultural and creative industries has been intensifying over the last years. There are many studies conducted by the European Union that have shown how these sectors contribute significantly to the European Union's GDP. These studies have led to useful classifications of the industrial sectors that make up the ICC (Information Coding Classification), developing analyses devoted to each sector. Even more important is the indirect role played by the ICC in the economic and social system, providing significant inputs that influence the innovation processes in other sectors of the economy.

What is innovation? Inventions are new ideas, new scientific developments, technological innovations that have not yet been realized materially (not induced by economic or competitive motivation); innovation, instead, is the translation of inventions into new products or new processes that find commercial application. Two different models driving technological innovation within an economy can be identified as a «demand-pull», where the demand imposes the direction and speed of development and creates new needs to be satisfied. Companies achieve their competitive advantage by anticipating market trends. For example, “technology push” is the offer of companies that find innovative and direct investments in the market for direct and indirect investments. Companies promote innovation. Technological innovation as economic progress entails: the exit from the market of less efficient companies; a widespread process for adopting new and better alternatives; the evolution of the scientific knowledge available; the organization of research; the accumulation of know-how; and the development of learning economies.

To this regard, the European Innovation Scoreboard is a tool developed by the European Commission to compare the performance of technological innovation regarding member states, specifically in relation to knowledge creation, innovation and entrepreneurship, and the application of Intellectual property.

In 1956, Robert Solow demonstrated that the economic growth of a country in the first half of the century was not explained by an increase in production factors, but depended 87% on technological changes in products and processes. At enterprise level, the impact of technological innovation is measured through various indicators that affect: i) the impact of innovation on a company's productivity; ii) the company's market value (in relation to investments in R & D and the company's shareholder value on the market; iii) revenues from the sale or license of proprietary technology to third parties.

One of the most current and original contributions to the theorizing of cultural enterprises is undoubtedly the book edited by Monica Calcagno (2013), *Narrare terre di mezzo*, which defines cultural and creative industries as a real middle ground, or as hybrid territories in constant change, arising from the intersection of different themes and research fields. In particular, this middle ground represents economic

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<sup>1</sup> With reference to the literature that has recently dealt with this market relationship see Elizabeth Zanoni (2018), who highlights how Italian immigrants to the United States and Argentina hungered for products from home. Merchants imported Italian cheese, wine, olive oil, and other commodities to meet the demand. The demand and supply sides met in migrant marketplaces--urban spaces that linked a mobile people with mobile goods, in both real and imagined ways. Elizabeth Zanoni's work provides a cutting-edge comparative look at Italian people and products on the move between 1880 and 1940. Concentrating on foodstuffs, a trade dominated by Italian entrepreneurs in New York and Buenos Aires. Zanoni reveals how the consumption of these increasingly global imports affected consumer habits and identities, sparking changes and competing connections between gender, nationality and ethnicity. Women in particular, by tradition tasked with buying and preparing food, had complex interactions that influenced both global trade and their community economies. Zanoni is able to convey the complicated and often fraught values and meanings that surround food, meals and shopping.

and social spaces, in full swing, between the processes of cultural production and traditionally understood business processes. These two areas of social life have begun to interact more and more intensely, giving rise to forms of activities that tend to innovate our concept of company and management. Businesses, however, encounter obstacles in trying to give a cultural dimension to their products. The logic of production in manufacturing is different from the logic of cultural productions. In the first case, there is the need to contain costs by replicating processes.

On the contrary, the output of cultural production both in visual arts and in exhibitions is always unique, and it is the unrepeatability of cultural productions which makes it valueless. Culture is starting to play an increasingly important role in design and production. The relevance of the cultural sector lies only in part in the contribution it offers in supporting national GDP. Culture manifests itself to a greater extent when it becomes a source of innovation, assuming the function of creative input entering the design and production of material objects destined to be traded on the market. Design activities play a strategic role in connecting the cultural environment to the production of goods and services. Design represents the natural channel for connecting the elaboration of symbols, meanings and narratives in the different kinds of cultural productions. The concept of design has been rediscovered in a new form. Once the functional perspective is abandoned, and leaving out the aesthetic aspect, the strategic lever is recognized in design to construct the meaning of the product, as in the case of *Made in Italy*.

Firms are able to maintain a high level of competitiveness by applying creativity through innovative design, allowing ideas to be modelled so they are practical and attractive for consumers. In other words, design can be described as creativity used for a specific purpose, thus leading to a commercial application of creativity (Calcagno, 2013, 2017). The value that design adds to a product or service is often not very tangible, but can be a distinctive resource for competitive advantages. The society in which we live is increasingly characterized by creativity, a concept that has become popular and at the service of the most diversified fields, from economics to art, from science to medicine. The ability to produce ideas, knowledge, new techniques and innovation has become a discriminating factor to be competitive and keep up with the times. The concept of creativity has been extended to different categories, such as entrepreneurs and business operators in general. The latter figure has recently raised great interest in numerous business analysts who recognize that creativity, in its broadest sense, constitutes the real critical factor for a company's success. This is evident in the attention paid by companies toward research, innovation and new technologies that can guarantee competitiveness and improve the offer of products and services.

Entrepreneurial actions aimed at promoting culture and art can trigger a virtuous circle that contributes to increasing a company's competitiveness in its markets, as well as a region's competitiveness. Creativity evokes paths for innovation and scenarios of economic and social development, connecting managerial practices with the wider world of artistic and cultural productions. In the business world, creativity is viewed as an engine of innovation in the broad sense, as well as a key element for product, process and even organizational innovation, becoming the lever for building new competitive models. Interest in the art world stems from the recognition of its diversity, perceived as a source of original and unpublished ideas.

The process for approaching management to the art world follows different trajectories. A first trajectory starts from the recognition of the domain of the artistic field over creative processes. The creative drive, the ability to break the rules and the pursuit of visions related to the future combined with operational skills are elements that bring artistic experience closer to the entrepreneurial one. Entrepreneurs are able to impose their ideas on the market by organizing very complex processes, seizing opportunities and overcoming constraints and obstacles in order to obtain recognition of their work. The artist-entrepreneur is ultimately recognized as able to combine creative thinking and managerial practices in ideal doses. To this regard, some literature ascribes to the artist as entrepreneur the ability to create in an absolutely original way, in that entrepreneurs have the ability to trigger a series of phenomena from nothing, in other words to be the origin of a complete series of events. This also applies to artists. The process is offset by the Schumpeterian approach, which outlines a figure of entrepreneur capable of destroying the existing order and, starting from there, recreating a new one (Schumpeter, 1972). A sequence of destruction and creation that is basically a recombination process.

In recent years, the world of artistic productions has been confronted with the worsening of a traditional



lack of funds. In fact, if artists have always divided their time between the pursuit of their creative aspirations and the need to get the means to do it, the combination of different jobs is increasingly a must for those who work in art. The world of artistic productions has thus come to terms with the need to work on new fronts for the collection of the necessary financial resources. In parallel, art has become attractive for companies that have found the context for referring to design, innovation, creativity and learning. The rapprochement between the artist and the entrepreneur is therefore the result of an economic necessity, but also of the desire to find new spaces for cooperation (Martino, 2013; Douglas and Baron, 2013; Murphy and Wiltshire, 2003). Companies turn to artistic productions in order to rethink their creative processes, review the meaningful constructions of their products and regain the motivation and involvement of their human resources. This aspect is reciprocated by the art world, which finds in firms possible sponsors for their projects and openness to collaborations and mutual exchange. An exchange that takes place in fields of high creative intensity such as fashion, design and communication. However, this process must take place also for the manufacturing and service sectors which, even though distant from the artistic sphere, need to rethink their product systems with equal urgency.

Often actual treasures are hidden in companies which the artist is able to bring to light through creative capacity. This enables a company to realize how rich its cultural potential is, which perhaps it originally neglected in order to chase the urgencies imposed by management needs. In this panorama, the most interesting aspect is the fluid and hybrid nature of roles, processes and solutions adopted. A context is defined in which it is difficult to divide roles, to identify the artist as different from the entrepreneur, to separate the process of the aesthetic creation of content from the management of the processes through which work reaches the public, distinguishing the forms of collaboration. The theme of cultural and creative industries and creativity becomes a factor for development. Management, on the other hand, is the analysis of the cultural dimension that characterizes the processes through which the company creates value. Some processes are currently recognized as more cultural than others. This applies, for example, to product innovation, marketing and communication. These processes used to be more closely linked to the language of culture, translating it into elements that helped to build products and processes. This has led to a field of confrontation in which the parties involved are the company and culture. Therefore, communication between the art world and the business world seems precious. However, there are two conditions for this to happen. The first involves the role of management, which needs to approach art not with the aim of colonizing a new land, but with the aim of understanding it, thereby seizing the opportunity to develop new knowledge. The second concerns the world of art which, has led the way to interaction with different fields and languages for the realization of new and interdisciplinary projects.

#### **4. Relations between Italy and Russia**

Italy's technological and socio-cultural achievements are considered worldwide, on the one hand as a legacy of Roman civilization and on the other, as a matter of business interest. The fact that a number of Ancient Roman buildings are still incredibly stable, and that Roman civil law has become the main tool for regulating socio-economic relations (including, for example, regulations on tax relations in a country with a basic system of common law, such as the US), often does not promote the development of business interests in Italy's modern economy and science, but actually limits them. As a result, already in the Middle Ages, intellectual migration from Italy acted as an instrument for exporting knowledge, technology and competences more than state policies, with the aim of promoting Italian achievements in the world.

The centralization of the Russian state in the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries led to Russia's first urbanization. At the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century Ivan III, who married the niece of the Byzantine emperor Sophia Paleologus, who lived in Rome, invited architects from Italy to build Moscow's Kremlin. Indeed, Aristotle Fiorovanti became the architect for the Kremlin's Assumption Cathedral (1475-1479), Marco Ruffo created the Kremlin's Beklemishevsky Tower (1487-1488) and the Faceted Chamber (1487-1491), which was later completed by Pietro Antonio Solari, and others. At the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Russian Tsar Peter I focused on importing technologies and intellectual resources from Europe, not only expanding cooperation in the shipbuilding industry, but also continuing the tradition of inviting Italian builders and architects to

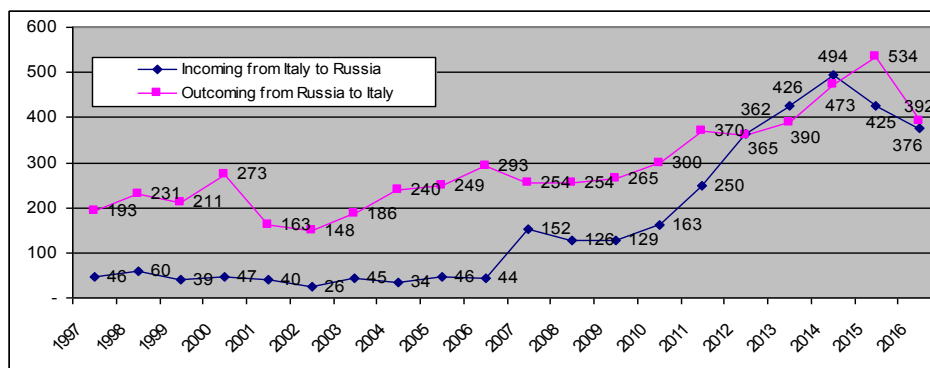
erect St. Petersburg and to reconstruct Moscow. This tradition went beyond the reign of Emperor Peter the Great. In fact, magnificent creations of Italian architectural genius were created in St. Petersburg and Moscow up to the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It should be noted that in 1711 the first Russian consulate was established in Venice.

In the years after World War II, the Soviet state continued to cooperate with Italy, in particular, with the Communist Party. Therefore, in 1964, after the death of the Party's leader, Palmiro Togliatti, a city in the Samara region was given his name, where since 1966 in accordance with Fiat's technical project, the Volga Automobile Building Plant (VAZ) was established and a full production cycle, including equipment and the training of specialists, was created. Even earlier, in 1958, SoyuzNefteExport (a Russian energy company) signed agreements with Eni on the supply of oil from the USSR to Italy. Moreover, by 1969 large-scale agreements were concluded not only on the supply of oil and gas to Italy, but also on the attraction of Italian engineering and technical competencies for the construction of a pipeline, as well as for the supply of high-tech equipment and high-quality technical solutions.

In the post-Soviet period, industrial contacts between the two countries did not differ much compared to the Soviet period. Today, there are about 500 Italian firms operating in Russia, including the car factory in Togliatti (Fiat), chemical complexes for the production of ammonia and carbamide (Progetti Montedison), a pipe plant in the Volgograd region and compressor stations for the Siberia-Western Europe main gas pipeline, reflecting not only the traditional areas inherited from the Soviet period, but also new fields of cooperation. In addition, it is possible to note projects such as the Russia-Ukraine-Turkey-Italy fiber-optic communication line, an industrial complex for processing and packaging equipment related to agricultural products in the Kemerovo region, the Indesit plant for the production of washing machines and refrigerators, and a ceramic tiles production factory in the Moscow region. All these factories are actively using specialists drawn from Italy.

At the same time, according to the Federal State Statistics Service of Russia (Rosstat), in the period 1997-2016, the total migration flows from Italy to Russia did not exceed 500 people per year (the maximum was reached in 2014, when 494 people from Italy arrived in Russia, according to Rosstat). The number of people leaving Russia for Italy exceeded 500 people only once, in 2015 (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Migration from Italy to Russia and from Russia to Italy, 1997-2016, number of persons



Source: [http://www.gks.ru/wps/wcm/connect/rosstat\\_main/rosstat/ru/statistics/population/demography/](http://www.gks.ru/wps/wcm/connect/rosstat_main/rosstat/ru/statistics/population/demography/)

It should be noted that the comparison of these data with foreign statistics, in particular, the Italian Institute of Statistics, provides different figures. In 2011, Rosstat registered the departure of 370 people, and the Italian statistical office registered the departure of 5,754 people, 15.6 times more. In 2013, the number according to Italy amounted to 4,319 people, but 390 people according to Russia. These examples highlight that Rosstat data only give a very truncated picture of the real migration, and unfortunately, do

not provide information on the composition of the incoming and outgoing people in terms of education, occupation, employment and so forth.

It seems that more significant results for assessing migration between Russia and Italy, including intellectual migration, can be obtained on the basis of an independent empirical study. First of all, for the preliminary assessment of the relevance of Italian intellectual resources as a model for importing knowledge and technology from Italy to Russia, the data used should be collected from associations and various type of institutes, working at the Italian Consulates in Russian cities. Institutions and associations that serve to some extent as accelerators for Italian businesses in the Russian socio-economic sphere while serving as an outlet, a “piece” of the motherland where Italians can speak Italian, tend to gather at an Italian table, eat national dishes and feel at home.

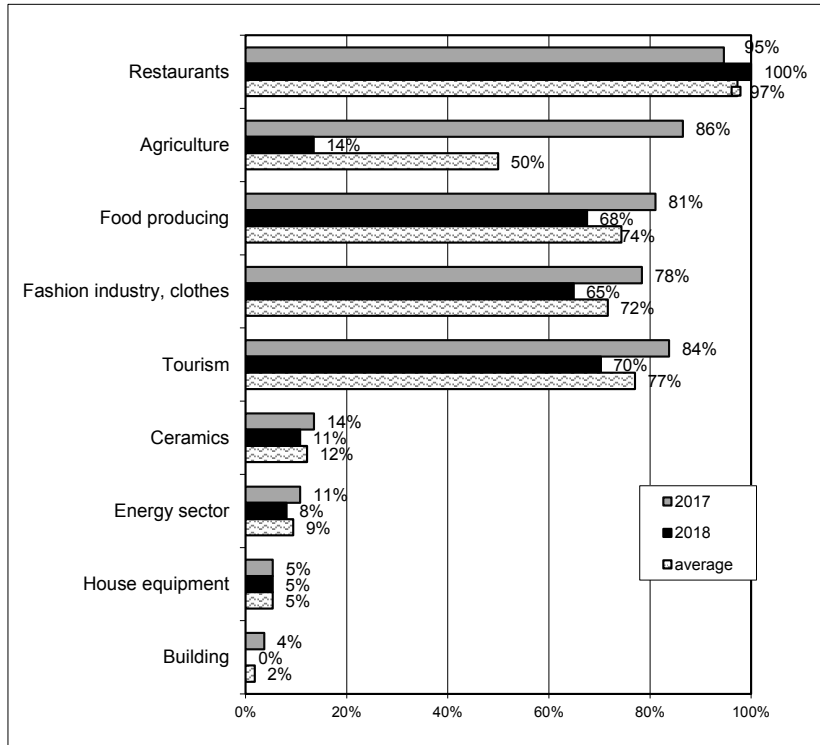
An important tool for assessing the prospects for a Russian-Italian cooperation would be a questionnaire survey given to specialists in financial, economic, investment, and business circles with reference to industries that, from their point of view, may be of interest to the businesses of the two countries, built on mutual trust and mutual understanding.

As far as the paradox of the development of the Italian food and fashion sectors is concerned, it could be useful to interview university students who study economics and management, asking them to identify promising fields of cooperation between Russia and Italy. The first pilot attempt to conduct such a survey on a small group of students, namely 37 applicants in the Russian-Italian program “Enterprise Economics, Quality and Innovation” (a European Master), implemented jointly by Saint Petersburg State University of Economics and Finance and the University of Rome Sapienza, was carried out in July-August 2017, at the time of their application to the program (D’Ascenzo and Pokrovskaja, 2016). During the survey, three questions were posed to entrants:

- 1) In which industries is Italy the most competitive in the global economy?
- 2) What professions and in what areas of business are Italians employed when coming to work or emigrating to Russia?
- 3) Do you plan to remain in Italy, or return to Russia and work in an Italian company, or in a multinational company after receiving the Italian Master's diploma from Sapienza University of Rome?

The applicants to this program are not a representative sample for evaluating the prospects of entrepreneurial projects since they are: a) fluent English-speaking graduates of the Bachelor's program in economics and management, as a rule, and (b) interested in Russian-Italian contacts. Yet, despite their knowledge of international economy, it is possible to notice that in the minds of Russian graduates of economic and managerial universities and faculties there is a rare unity that reflects the prevailing stereotypes. Moreover, only a small number of entrants have independent opinions about the industries in which Italy could boast achievements and realize its competitiveness and competitive advantages in the Russian market.

Figure 2. Hierarchy of the relevant industries for Russian-Italian business cooperation



Source: Results of the Master Students' survey (D'Ascenzo and Pokrovskaia, 2016)

As evident by the results obtained (Figure 2), in spite of their keen interest in economics, applicants view Italy as a country based on tourism, food and agricultural production, clothing and restaurant business. For example, 100 % of the interviewed entrants are convinced that a significant part of Italians go to Russia to open a restaurant or work in the restaurant business.

Since the questions were open-ended, the stereotyped answers identified are especially significant in terms of the need to overcome existing ideas, to inform Russian businesses on the innovative high-tech industries in Italy and to promote contacts and economic ties with Italy's knowledge economy. Therefore, in order to assess the intellectual migration from Russia to Italy and vice versa, the data for Russian official statistics are really not enough. It is necessary to analyze both the statistics of foreign institutions (in particular, the Italian Institute of Statistics) and the results obtained during the empirical study. It is also important to consider the examples related to the development of Russian-Italian businesses in those areas, such as the construction and building materials industry, the chemical industry, the creation of overpasses and fibre-optic communication lines, information and telecommunication technologies, overcoming existing stereotypes in the minds of Russian citizens about Italy, such as sun, olive oil, relaxation and 'happy to-stay' elements, like food and beautiful everyday objects.

The methodology for studying intellectual migration between Russia and Italy should be based on quantitative (surveys) and qualitative empirical studies (interviews, studies on enterprise history).

## 5. Conclusions

This preliminary study highlights that Italians in the world can represent a potential market of great interest for *Made in Italy* companies. However, it would be much more incisive to develop an approach based on *Made by Italics*. The *Made* and will be *Made by Italics* are those products generated and exchanged in the Italic business community, that is goods and services based on the quality and characteristics of authentic Italian interpreters of appealing *Italicity* brands. Nevertheless, relations are also relevant, and will be increasingly relevant as highlighted in the case of Russia. They are relations based on the enhancement of cultural exchange, of identity and aggregation within the Italic civilization network, including online and offline relations. The subsequent realization of a database of Italian people, businesses, companies, buildings, constructions evoking Italian architecture, architects and Italian origins will allow the strengthening and creation of a network of places. This will allow the creation, in addition to economic growth, of greater fidelity toward *Italianness* and a higher appreciation of a certain type of products, namely Italic products or *Made in Italy* products as they are known worldwide (Scaffai and Valsangiacomo, 2018). All this is an extremely important factor in order to strengthen our cultural heritage in the world. Indeed, there is the possibility to fully realize loyalty towards Italian products, making an important contribution towards Italian business, with repercussions related to a strong competitive advantage over others. Close relations and networking must be increasingly developed among Italians living or moving for long or short periods to different parts of the globe. This will allow markets for Italian producers to increase the large group of Italians abroad which about a century ago represented a dramatic phenomenon, while today it can be considered a fundamental heritage.

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