

## 17. Industry

This chapter gathers together statistical information about the industry sector in Sicily. A first group of tables examines data regarding the electrical energy sector and the sales of petrol, diesel oil and kerosene; a second group provides data about active manufacturing enterprises registered with the Chambers of Commerce.

In Sicily in 2012, 19,622 million kWh (gross production) of electrical energy were consumed, accounting for 7.3% of the total amount produced in Italy and 21.9% of the amount consumed in the whole Mezzogiorno (south of Italy). Production was generated almost entirely by thermo-electrical sources (97.3%), and fell by -8.1% when compared with 2011.

On the other hand, 19,087 million kWh of electrical energy were consumed in Sicily in 2012; most of the energy was absorbed by industry (35.1% of total consumption), followed by the family sector for domestic consumption (31.6%) and by the service industries (31.1%), whilst the lowest consumption was recorded in the primary sector (2.2%). Over the last five-year period, energy consumption registered a decreasing trend beginning in 2008 and 2009 (-1.8%), and then in 2010 it underwent a reversal of trend, with a gradual increase in the quantity of electrical energy consumed, only to then return to a decreasing trend. At the sectorial level the Sicilian service industry registered an increase in consumption in all the years under examination, whereas industry, on the other hand, registered continual rising and falling trends of varying intensity from 2008 onward, until the decrease in the last year, in which a -7.1% drop in electricity consumption (over the previous year) was registered. In 2011 there was an upturn in consumption which increased by +1.5% when compared to 2010. This increase faltered in 2012 (-1.5% over 2011).

Regional disaggregation reveals that the overall consumption of electrical energy in 2012 was concentrated mainly in the Provinces of Catania, Siracusa, Palermo and Messina. Within the industrial sector the highest consumer was Siracusa with over 2,800 million kWh, explained by the energy requirements of the petrochemical plant at Priolo. The industrial zones of Gela and Milazzo competed to keep the Provinces of Caltanissetta (643 million kWh) and Messina (948 million kWh) near the top of the Sicilian Provincial table, where they were also joined by Catania (1,029 million kWh).

Further indicators correlated to this sector are those relating to the sale of petrol and motor diesel oil, which closely parallel the vehicular movement of goods and persons. In 2012 the total amount of petrol sold was a little under 689,000 tonnes, equivalent to 8.2% of the national total. Compared to 2011 there was a -11.7% fall in sales, thus emphasizing the negative trend which had already been apparent since 2008. Over the period 2008-2012 the average

annual variation in petrol sales was -6.4%. The greatest quantity of petrol at the Regional level was sold in the Province of Catania (184,000 tonnes). The sales of motor diesel-oil in 2012 totaled a little under 1.5 million tonnes, and, when compared to the previous year, 2011, showed a fall of -8.2% and a continuation of the trend emerging in 2011. Catania also held the record for diesel-oil with a total of about 431,000 tonnes. As regards fuel-oil, the main fuel for supplying thermo-electric power-stations, data for 2012 reveals that the quantity sold amounted to 23,400 tonnes in all, which represented a sharp fall of -81.3% when compared to sales in 2011. The Province of Messina alone accounted for the most significant quantities sold (33.9% of the Regional total).

From the point of view of the structure of Sicily's industrial configuration in 2012, there were 29,481 business enterprises operating in the manufacturing sector (5.6% of the national total); these were operating mainly in the timber sector (7,122 businesses, 24.2% of the total), along with the food sector (24.2% of the total) and metallurgic sector (18.5%). The number of business between 2008 and 2009 fell by 6,693 units, representing a drop of -17.8%, with a further drop of 230 units in 2010. In 2012 a further -1.5% reduction characterized the trend for the Regional industrial sector. On analyzing individual sectors over the period 2008-2012 there are clear downtrends everywhere, although certain sectors do show, in some years, feeble signs of an upturn that are not then confirmed over the longer term

The textile sector (-3.2%), the transport sector (-3.1%) and non-metalliferous products (-2.7%) seem to be languishing particularly. Over 58% of active Sicilian businesses operate in the combined Provinces of Catania (6,679 enterprises), Palermo (6,410) and Messina (4,078); this predominance also exists at the level of single sectors.

However, apart from the three above-mentioned Regions, it is worth mentioning that Trapani still has a substantial number of business enterprises in the food sector (26.5%), the timber sector (23.6%) and the sector of non-metalliferous products (15.5%), which also makes its presence felt in the Provinces of Catania (22%), Palermo (19,2%) and Siracusa (10,7%).

## *Glossary*

**Business enterprise:** a juridical/economic entity producing goods and services intended for sale; it has the authority to distribute the profits to the owners of the enterprise, be they private or public.

**Dense combustible oil with a low sulphur content (BTZ):** residual of inferior quality much used in industry for heating, for powering ships and as a combustible in thermoelectric plants.

**Electricity supply (consumption):** amount of electricity sold by public enterprises, by wholesalers and by producers to their customers, and the amount of electricity consumed by self-producers themselves.

**Fuel-oil:** heavy or residual distillates from refinery distillation or other operations, used for the production of heat for industry (furnaces and boilers) and for domestic heating or the production of energy (motors)

**Gross electricity production:** total amount of electricity produced in a given period and recorded at the terminals of generators in power stations.

**Hydro-electric plants:** the totality of plumbing, machinery, equipment, buildings and services intended for the transformation of hydraulic energy into electrical energy.

**Motor diesel-oil:** intermediate distillate from refinery processing, used as fuel in diesel motors.

**Net electricity production:** total amount of electricity produced and recorded on emission from the production plants

**Thermo-electric power-stations:** the totality of traditional thermo-electric, nuclear thermo-electric and geo-thermo-electric plants.

## *Further reading*

### **Publications**

Italian Statistical Yearbook 2013– ISTAT

### **Internet**

<http://www.istat.it/>

8° Census of industry and services

Italian Statistical Yearbook 2013 – Chapter 14: “Industry”

<http://www.terna.it/>  
Electrical system “statistics”

<http://www.infocamere.it/movimprese.htm>  
Data regarding registry changes in business enterprises

<http://dgerm.sviluppoeconomico.gov.it/dgerm/>  
Statistical data regarding energy resources