

# **International convention on intellectual property and competitiveness of MSMEs**

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## **Tools and services of the Italian Chambers of Commerce network**

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Dintec is the Consortium for Technological Innovation of the Chamber of Commerce System. Its shareholders are the Italian Union of the Chambers of Commerce (Unioncamere), the Italian National Agency for New Technologies, Energy and the Environment (ENEA) and several Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Craft Trade and Agriculture.

The mission of Dintec is to support the Chamber of Commerce network on issues that have a primary role on the competitiveness of companies, such as: technology innovation, technical regulations, quality management systems, legal metrology and market regulation. Technology innovation projects are mainly focussed on industrial property (IP); agro-food production and green economy.

Regarding IP Dintec is involved in several activities dealing with diffusion of patent information and technology fertilization tools for Italian companies, through the involvement of Chambers of Commerce:

1. technology monitoring service offered through the technology innovation platform;
2. monthly email information service on IP issues;
3. Italian patents and trademarks observatory;
4. technology trends.

### **Technology innovation platform services**

Technology innovation platform is a web tool developed by Dintec and Unioncamere to foster SME activities regarding innovation and technology transfer. It is used to promote and support interaction between enterprises, patent information centers (Patlib) and Chambers of Commerce. It gives up to date information on IP issues: events, legislation and databases. It gives the opportunity to subscribe to the technology monitoring service and IP newsletter. Figure 1 shows a snapshot of the innovation platform.

IP newsletter offers a monthly selection of Italian and international industrial properties news about publications, statistical reports, laws, calls and funding opportunities. Its technical content is mainly addressed to SMEs dealing with industrial property; Patlib centers; Chambers of Commerce patent and trademark offices; patent attorneys; Universities and research centres. This newsletter is delivered to almost 900 subscribers.

Dintec has developed a technology monitoring tool called Patnews that gives to SMEs the opportunity to set up a free patent alert service in order to identify relevant EPO applications and extract strategic information. Patnews could give an answer to the following issues:

- What is the latest technology developed in my field of interest?
- Who is the most active player for a specific technology application?
- Who are my direct competitors in the technology arena?

The activation process is divided in 3 main steps:

1. Request  
First step is the activation request made online through the innovation technology platform; each request is manually validated by the Chamber of Commerce or by Dintec.
2. IPC code identification  
This is the most important step that starts with keywords collection from SMEs and web site competitor analysis. From data collection and elaboration it is possible to find the exact technology fields of interest and the related IPC code.
3. Service start up

IPC code will be loaded on the monitoring system that will identify EPO patent applications described by the proper IPC codes. A technology personalized report will be prepared with the information extracted from the identified patent applications. These technical and strategic information will be periodically delivered to the subscriber in the form of a PDF document attached to an email.



**Figure 1.** Technology innovation platform snapshot<sup>1</sup>

### Italian patents and trademarks observatory

There are several projects of the Chambers of Commerce aimed at the diffusion of patent information. The Italian Patent and Trademarks Observatory (Osservatorio Brevetti e Marchi) is a Unioncamere project, managed by Dintec, that has the main following goals:

- analyse industrial property scenario of Italian applicants, that is: companies, inventors, Universities and research centers;
- compare Italian technological trends and performances with that of most industrialized countries (for example G8 or G12 countries);
- discover emerging Italian technologies;
- disseminate information about Italian technology development.

The project core is made up of two databases, updated every year, that contains patent applications with Italian applicant published by EPO and community trademark filed by Italian applicant. These databases can be segmented on several parameters, such as:

- assignee type (company, University or Research Institute, physical person);
- geographical area (area, region, province, postal code);
- product and service classification (Nizza code);
- technology classification (IPC code).

A semiautomatic process is used to assign VAT number and fiscal code to most of the applicants in order to have the opportunity to integrate technological data with economic data like revenue, company dimension or number of workers. Up to now several output has been prepared starting from the two databases:

- statistical analysis with technical and scientific comments;
- annual report about patent and trademarks observatory;

<sup>1</sup> Web site: <http://www.innovazione.dintec.it>

- technology data analysis on a subset of Italian companies: the Italian medium manufacturing companies;
- technology trends of made in Italy industrial sectors.

Some data elaboration results is reported in this paper. Table 1 and Table 2 show respectively macroarea distribution of patent applications with Italian applicant published by EPO in the period 1999-2007 and type of applicant share for patent applications with Italian applicant published by EPO in the period 1999-2007.

**Table 1.** Macroarea distribution of patent applications with Italian applicant published by EPO in the period 1999-2007

Italian area	Share	Mean annual growth rate
North-West	49,8%	3,8%
North-East	31,8%	5,5%
Central	13,1%	6,5%
South & Islands	3,9%	5,9%

**Table 2.** Type of applicant distribution for patent applications with Italian applicant published by EPO in the period 1999-2007.

Type of applicant	Share	Mean annual growth rate
Companies	86,8%	4,5%
Individuals	9,8%	5,0%
Public Research Inst. / University	2,0%	18,8%

Table 3 shows the Italian technology landscape using 3 different kind of indexes: share of patent applications, EPO Quartile information, tendency (that is considered here as a comparison of mean annual growth rate of 1999-2006 and 1999-2007).

On the other hand Table 4 shows the best and worst mean annual growth rate for Nice classes of community trademark filed by Italian applicant in the period 1999-2007.

**Table 3.** Top ten Italian IPC classes for patent applications with Italian applicant published by EPO in the period 1999-2007.<sup>2</sup>

IPC class	Description	Share	Quartile EPO <sup>2</sup>	Tendency
A61	Medical or veterinary science; hygiene	7,6%	I	↑
B65	Conveying; packing; storing; handling thin or filamentary material	7,4%	II	↑
B60	Vehicles in general	4,1%	I	↓
H01	Basic electric elements	4,0%	III	↔
A47	Furniture; domestic articles; coffee mills; spice mills; suction cleaners in general	4,0%	III	↑
F16	Devices for fastening or securing constructional elements or machine parts together	4,0%	II	↔
C07	Organic chemistry	3,7%	III	↑
G01	Measuring; testing	3,2%	III	↓
H04	Electric communication technique	3,1%	II	↓
H02	Generation, conversion, distribution of electric power	2,2%	IV	↑

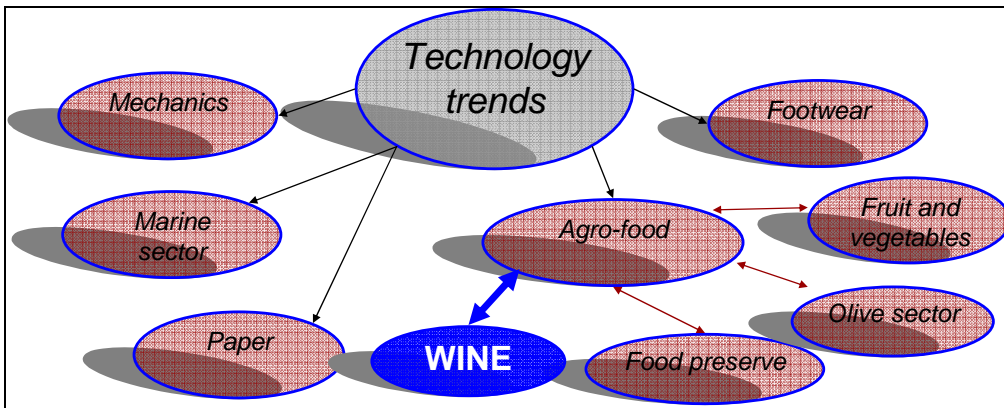
**Table 4.** Emerging products and services topic in Italy. Data was elaborated from community trademark filed by Italian applicants in the period 1999-2007.

Tendency	Nice classes	Mean annual growth rate
↑	44 - Medical - veterinary services; hygienic and beauty care; agriculture, horticulture and forestry services.	+39,2
	43 - Services for providing food and drink; temporary accommodation.	+33,4
	34 - Tobacco; smokers' articles; matches.	+26,0
	37 - Building construction; repair; installation services.	+23,1
↓	26 - Lace and embroidery, ribbons and braid; buttons, hooks and eyes, pins and needles; artificial flowers.	-0,9
	23 - Yarns and threads, for textile use.	-11,0
	22 - Ropes, string, nets, tents, awnings, sails, bags; padding materials; raw fibrous textile materials.	-11,5

### Technology trends

Dintec has prepared several technology trends reports for the Chambers of Commerce on issues of particular importance for the so called "Made in Italy" and about emerging Italian industrial sectors. Figure 2 shows a scheme with the most important topic covered by Dintec reports.

<sup>2</sup> EPO divides IPC classes in 4 quartiles: (I) very high growth; (II) high growth; (III) moderate or low growth; (IV) decreasing (IV).

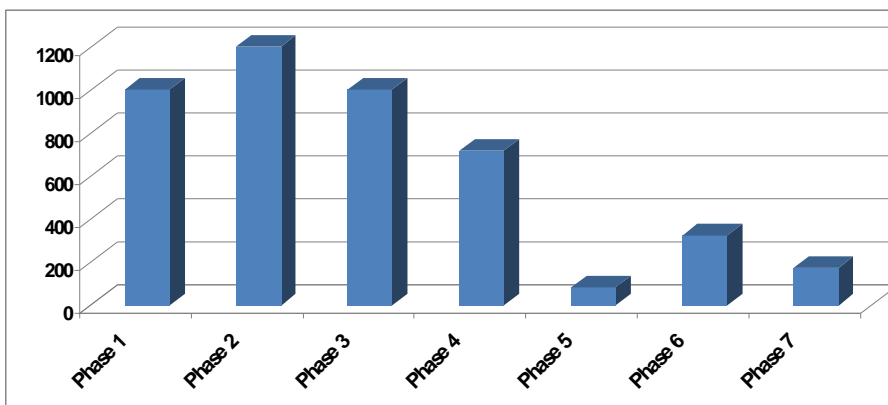


**Figure 2.** Technology trend reports that Dintec prepared for Chambers of Commerce

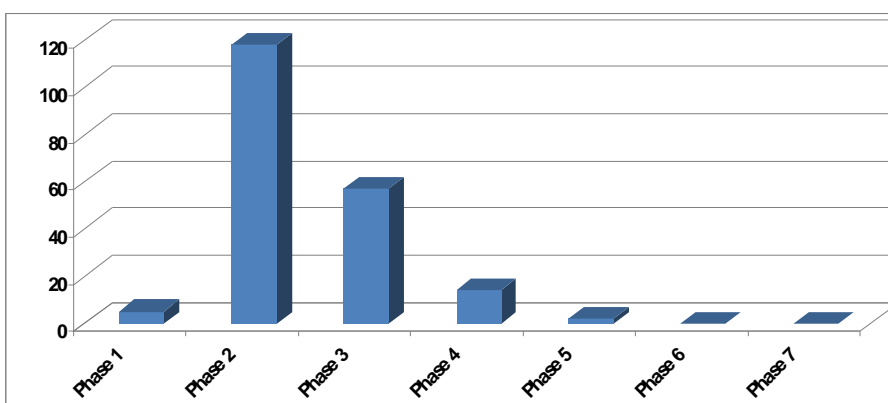
Recently a document was prepared about wine industry chain of production. The first step for the preparation of the report was the identification of the main phases of the production chain, that are the following:

- Phase 1: genetic improvements
- Phase 2: grape cultivation
- Phase 3: productions
- Phase 4: bottling and packaging
- Phase 5: storage
- Phase 6: carrying
- Phase 7: distribution and selling

In the second step it was assigned a group of keywords to each phases. In the third step were identified scientific publications and patent application. Finally all data were elaborated and commented. Some results are showed in Figure 3 and Figure 4.



**Figure 3** Italian scientific publication about wine production chain



**Figure 4** EPO patents application with Italian assignee regarding the wine production chain