

PHYSICS IS A DRIVING FORCE FOR THE ITALIAN ECONOMY AS REPORTED BY AN UNPRECEDENTED STATISTICAL STUDY

Today the Italian Physical Society announced the publication of a ground-breaking study on “The impact of physics on the Italian economy”. It is an unprecedented study in our Country which reveals for the first time in a quantitative way how crucial is the contribution of all “physics-based” industrial, commercial and business sectors to the Italian economy, especially in terms of productivity.

The Italian Physical Society (SIF), a non-profit institution whose aim since 1897 is to promote, favour and safeguard the progress of physics in Italy and worldwide, represents the Italian research, educational and professional scientific community, in all areas of physics and its numberless applications.

Italy has an extraordinary tradition of excellence in science and technology. Besides hosting inland outstanding physics institutions, centres and laboratories, Italy also contributes to the existence of the most prestigious international scientific establishments in physics.

There is a tight connection between fundamental physics and technological applications, which has always been vital to progress and innovation, as also highlighted in the European research programme Horizon 2020. In this context and with reference to our Country, physics plays an essential role, which brings directly to a series of questions: **How important is physics to the Italian economy? How worthwhile is it to maintain and increase the investment in physics? What can be done to adequately support this discipline, which so greatly impacts the lives of all of us?**

To address these issues, in 2013 the SIF, in collaboration with some National Research Institutions broadly involving the physics community, namely **Centro Fermi, CNR, INAF, INFN and INRIM**, has commissioned from the Deloitte company an **independent and quantitative analysis concerning – for the first time –** the impact on the Italian economy of all the industry, commerce and business sectors based on physics and physics-derived technology. The study has been performed on data from the National Statistical Service (Istat) for the 4-year period 2008-2011, the most recent years for which these data are in the public domain.

The resulting snapshot shows that physics-based sectors were able to give a considerable contribution to the Italian economy, producing more than **1,5 million jobs** over 2011, **around 6%** of the total national employment, and **€118 billion of GDP**, corresponding to **over 7%** of the total (which is comparable with other European Countries, such as France and Spain). Moreover, their **productivity** (i.e. the turnover annually produced per worker) **exceeds the national average by more than 20%**. The Deloitte analysis, which refers to a definitely delicate phase for the Italian economy, clearly shows that, even though the physics-based sectors badly suffered the effects of the unfortunately not yet overcome financial crisis, these could resist, maintain and even increase their already high productivity level.

The hope is that the message conveyed by the SIF through the presentation of this study will be inspiring for the future, producing a convincing case for a policy in support of physics in all of its facets, from education to research, from business to industry, both at the national and European levels.

Press release of 16 April 2014

For further information:

The **Deloitte Final Report** (December 2013) and an **Executive Summary** (January 2014) with its most relevant contents are available at the link:

http://www.sif.it/attivita/physics_economy

of the Italian Physical Society website:

<http://www.sif.it>

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