

## The figures do not say everything

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Every day, in **Italy**, **5 greengrocers'**, **4 butchers'**, **42 clothes shops**, **43 restaurants**, and **40 public concerns close**. Between 2008 and 2013, **224,000** shop owners disappeared, and, in the same period, the income decreased by **€9700** per family. The data presented by **Roberta Vitale at the meeting of Confesercenti** (the Federation of Italian Trade, Tourism and Services), is terrible, but it does not explain everything.

**Francesco Cancellato**, a sociologist from **AASTER** (an association for the development of the territory) said, "If we look at the export figures, **Lombardy** is such good health, that, if we were an independent country, we would be exporting as much as the whole of **Turkey**. Moreover, we have 918,000 businesses, that is, twice as many as Catalonia. The real problem is that production hasn't increased in the last few years."

According to the sociologist, Italy, and with it, **Lombardy**, is currently trudging along, because there were not many businesses equipped to supply foreign demand, when the system showed signs of recovery. In other words, only those businesses that had invested in internationalisation were ready to meet the demand. Cancellato continued, "**Ninety seven point four per cent** of the business fabric of Lombardy is made up of **small and very small companies**, with fewer than 20 employees, which are now in danger of wilting away if they do not supply that demand. Something is moving in software production, IT consulting and business support." However, it is too little, if we consider that the 2 regions that the majority of young people are leaving are **Lombardy** and **Veneto**.

**Alberto Bubbio**, a lecturer at the School of Economics and Management of the LIUC University, in Castellanza, has spoken about a new figure, the "**border entrepreneur**", who should inspire the new generations. "We're asking the new entrepreneurs to be the agents of change," Bubbio explained, "so they have to be able to balance their ability to learn with their ability to act, and this isn't easy in such a complex world, like ours. Of course, those who are curious and do not allow themselves to be paralysed by fear have an advantage. The border entrepreneur is like the captain in "**Dances with Wolves**", who understands that, only by establishing a relationship of deep knowledge with the new world can he live and prosper in the context in which he is."

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