

Craft businesses: Italy has lost 135,000, 1800 in Varese alone

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The results of the survey “**Craft businesses in Italy, provinces and sectors**”, carried out by the **Study Centre of the National Confederation of Craftspeople (CNA)**, have been published. This survey details the progress of craft businesses in all Italian provinces from 2009 until 2016, and its results are particularly interesting, for both Italy and Varese Province.

THE DATA: 135,000 BUSINESSES LOST IN ITALY, 1800 IN VARESE

An analysis of the data shows there was a reduction in the number of craft businesses between 2009 and 2016. In numbers, there was a reduction of about 135,000 businesses throughout Italy, which corresponds to a drop of 9.2%. The percentage was better in Lombardy (-6.7%), corresponding to almost 18,000 companies in the region. In Varese Province, the figure was below the regional average; almost 1800 business were lost between 2009 and 2016, equal to 7.5%. Meanwhile, the situation in Como is of little consolation, as it was even below the national average, with more than 2000 (-11.9%) companies lost.

The only province in Lombardy that showed a positive trend was Monza and Brianza, which recorded an increase of 1.7%.

TWO TOWNS BUCKED THE TREND: CARONNO PERTUSELLA AND GALLARATE

Among the biggest towns in the province, two showed a positive change in the number of businesses:

Caronno Pertusella and Gallarate. In 2016, there were 1358 new businesses, almost half of which were construction companies, with non-European owners. “The crisis left a significant aftermath, also in our province,” **Roberta Tajè**, a director of CNA Varese, stressed. “It’s clear from this survey that the manufacturing, construction and transport sectors are shrinking and that the craft industry’s model is in an even greater crisis. This model is increasingly less successful in these fields, but not in the personal and business service sector.” However, the truth is that the new businesses are often very small, or even individual, and not very specialised, as we can see from a careful analysis of the provincial data.

“In light of these numbers and trends, we are asking for greater attention to small businesses and craftspeople, rather than focusing all attention on the so-called Industry 4.0, which sounds intriguing, but does not really reflect the production fabric of most Italian businesses,” according to the Chairman of CNA Varese, **Luca Mambretti**.

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