



ITALY & THE MIDDLE EAST

GRID magazine spoke to Dr. Ferdinando Fiore, Italian Trade Commissioner, Italian Embassy, Dubai, about the Italian energy market and the importance of the MENA region for Italian electrical companies.

How has the Italian energy market developed over recent times?

In Italy the energy problem has a structural nature; encouraging the use of renewable energies and the development of related technologies becomes an economic priority. Thanks to the advantages of its geographical location and the many incentives offered for the photovoltaic sector over recent years, Italy has become the third largest solar market in Europe and one of the most important in the world. Italy is also a leader in the production of other types of renewable energy, particularly geothermal energy, hydro electrical, hydrogen and biomass.

In recent years, the Italian Government has funded several major initiatives for energy efficiency at both national and local levels. Today, much of the research focuses on the field of micro-generation, distributed generation and energy efficiency systems. With the implementation of sustainable energy solutions such as solar panels in the built environment, Italy is also at the forefront of green building.

Important research has been done in the field of sustainable waste management, which includes innovative technologies for the treatment of waste and the increase in eco-efficiency of waste cycles. Even technology parks and the private sector are devoted to these issues, in particular the recycling of PET, the biodegradable polymers and the search for innovative solutions for the recovery of energy from waste plants

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and biogas.

Italy is at the top list in the world for the fight against pollution of soil, water and air, with a particular focus on reducing emissions from traffic and other emissions.

How important is the Middle East region for Italian manufacturers in the energy sector?

The Italian presence in the local market is noticeable. Italian businessmen are targeting opportunities in the UAE by visiting the region's largest and most important exhibitions: among the different promotional events, Middle East Electricity (MEE) offers the opportunity to keep an eye on the latest trends and developments in the energy industry. Participating in the MEE is a great way to keep up-to-date with the latest technological advances network with key consumers and competitors with-

in the challenging energy sector. MEE is a hub in clean energy where people around the world meet and form new partnerships and business. At MEE it is possible for companies to evaluate potential business opportunities across a regional as well as global platform. MEE is an excellent platform to give Italian companies an idea about the local market, meet the key people in the industry, examine the market potentials, and generate businesses. After participating in the annual Middle East Electricity event, several Italian companies have launched their business in the UAE either in partnership with local partners or on their own in one of the several Free Zones.

The Italian Trade Agency (ICE) aims at promoting Italian companies' expansion in the UAE. As a matter of fact, our Italian Trade Commission in Dubai provides Italian companies with all necessary information, support and advice. ICE gives them a hand in identifying possible business partners and in building bilateral trade relationship with major market players. This year the Italian Trade Agency organised the Italian Pavilion at MEE 2015, worth more than 1,000 sqm, in joint co-operation with ANIE Federation, which represents the electro-technical and electronic companies operating in Italy.

How important is the Middle East as a trading partner?

Over the past few years, the UAE has been the first market for Italian export throughout the Arab world. Italy

is ranked seventh place overall among supplier countries and third among the European partners.

Since 2010 Italian exports to the UAE have increased sharply. In 2012 alone, Italian exports have witnessed an increase of 16.5%, making the UAE the first market for Italian products in the entire Middle East and North Africa. The main exports are jewellery, industrial machinery and mechanical products, consumer goods and food products. Over the last two years, the value of the Italian exports to the UAE has surpassed 5 billion Euros.

There are already over 300 Italian companies operating in different sectors in the UAE and Free Zones and this number is still mounting up, as many Italian firms are coming to open businesses, make partnerships and take advantage of the favourable conditions of the UAE market.

What is your outlook for the region's power & energy sector?

Energy conservation demand around the globe has been on the rise due to



the increase in energy tariff rates in many parts of the world. This is also the case in the United Arab Emirates. The UAE market is welcoming more and more Italian companies. As a matter of fact, Italian products are increasingly coming to the local market, due to the fact that Dubai's energy demand has increased on average by 7.1% in 2013. This is why the Dubai government is powering towards ambitious emission reduction targets, and has continued to make significant investments in renewable energies as part of the Dubai Integrated Energy Strategy 2030.


I believe that the UAE is on the right

track, setting strategic energy alternative sources. The UAE is making a great effort in securing a sustainable supply of energy and enhancing demand-efficiency for water, electricity and fuel. Dubai in particular aims at diversifying its energy mix to include alternative energy sources, with 71% from natural gas, 24% from both nuclear power and clean coal, and 5% from solar power to fulfil electricity needs by 2030.

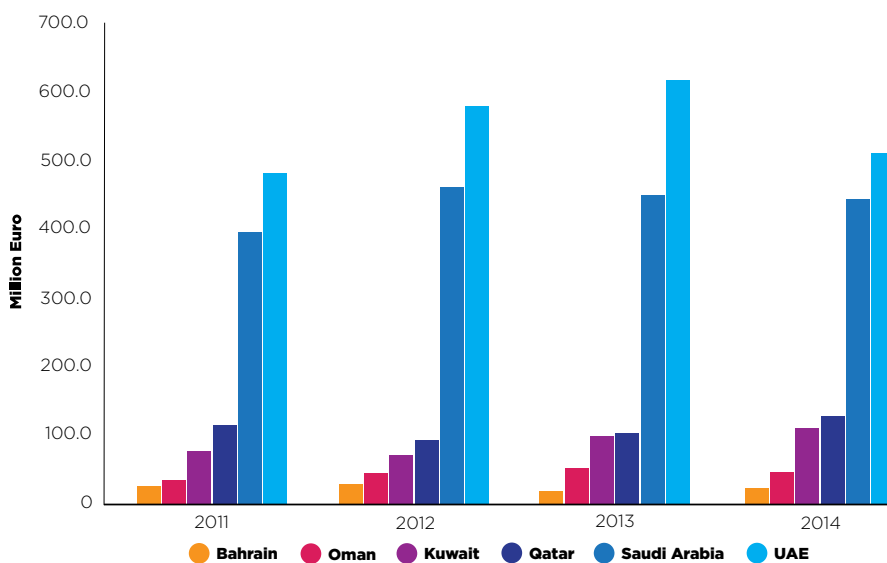
Local authorities have demonstrated more interest in green energy. They have adopted unique green-friendly initiatives to reduce the carbon footprint in government buildings. The UAE are continuing to invest in solar power and other energy-efficient technologies, which is a promising growth sector here.

Italian companies appreciate the importance of penetrating the local market. We have witnessed an increased demand to bring Italian clean technology to the Emirates especially to Abu Dhabi and Dubai where there are great opportunities especially in green energy industry.

It is important to mention that 2020 will also be the year of Dubai World Expo, when the UAE will have the opportunity of "Connecting Minds, Creating the Future," thus exploring new challenging ideas and solutions for Sustainability, Mobility and Opportunity, which have been chosen as the three sub-themes of the event.

Italian companies are well equipped to take on the new challenging projects that will arise in the near future 

ITALIAN ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING AND ELECTRONICS EXPORT TO GCC COUNTRIES



(Source: processing ANIE on UN contrade data)