

**T**he gold and jewelry sector in Italy has over the years become concentrated in several clearly defined parts of the country due to a variety of technical and historical factors, and to cultural and artistic reasons.

Indeed, almost half of the companies operating in the sector (46.5%) are in just five districts (Vicenza, Alessandria, Arezzo, Milan and Naples), employing 68.1% of the sector's total workforce. The Vicenza gold district has the largest number of employees at 10,646, almost a quarter of the total. Vicenza is also the district with the largest average number of employees per firm: 10.4 compared to the national average of 4.5. More recent figures show an increase both in employee numbers (up to 12,330), and companies (1,146) with an annual turnover of approximately 3.5 million euros.

There has been considerable development in the Vicenza district since the 1950s, thanks also to the driving role played by the Vicenza Fair. The district is now firmly geared to exports (60%) with sales going to a fairly wide range of countries (about 180).

#### **Vicenza Fair drives the gold sector**

The Vicenza Fair, with its three international trade fairs, is a dynamic witness to the work of the entire gold sector – explains the president Giovanni Lasagna –: to the role of manufacturers and that of distributors, machinery manufacturers and providers of added and complementary services. The Vicenza trade fairs – continues Lasagna – also mirror the evolution of the relations between international competitors, thus constituting a promotional factor for the companies. They are one of the few means by which the sector can participate in industrial politics: a central element that allows firms, especially small ones, to communicate with the entire market.

## **Il ruolo propulsore della Fiera di Vicenza** **The driving role played by the Vicenza Fair**



Foreign markets play a decisive role in the development of the sector. To this end, the Vicenza Fair has always sought new stimuli for sales abroad, with constant promotional work, both in Italy by way of welcoming foreign buyers and abroad by presenting Italian production to important foreign distributors. This work helps improve the sector's terms of trade, by focusing on quality.

Note must finally be made of the Vicenza Fair's contribution to the spread of technology. Twice a year it presents Oromacchine, the exhibition dedicated to the technological progress of instruments and specific tooling for the sector, from hardware to software with a wide range of services.

#### **Constant growth of professional visitors at the jewelry exhibitions**

The number of Italian and foreign buyers at the jewelry exhibitions is in constant growth, evidence of a level of appreciation that shows no sign of decline: 1995: 35,864; 1996: 39,329; 1997: 43,298; 1998: 46,033; 1999: 48,213; 2000: 51,453; 2001: 56,630.

First in Italy in terms of visibility (% of foreign visitors) with 27% of the total, the Vicenza Fair, with a turnover of 24.275 million euros and 45 permanent

staff, is also the first in Europe in terms of staff number to overall turnover ratio. The related business generated in the city and province by all the Vicenza Fair's events amounts to 206 million euros per year.

In over 50 years of business, the Vicenza Fair has taken a position of world leadership in the gold sector with its three international trade fairs: Vicenzaoro1, Vicenzaoro2 and Orogemma. These are complemented by the thematic exhibitions dedicated to jewelry machinery (Oromacchine) precious and semi-precious stones (Gemological Pavilion) and watches (Watch Pavilion).

#### **The 2003 calendar**

Fourteen events will be organized directly by Vicenza Fair during 2003. As well as the three Gold Shows there will be eight Public Shows and three Innovation Fairs, joined, as in the past, by Sat Expo.

The Gold Shows include the three internal exhibitions dedicated to gold, silverware, jewellery and watches: Vicenzaoro1 (January 12-19), Vicenzaoro2 (7-12 June) and Orogemma (6-11 September). Mirroring the evolution of the relative strengths of the forces of international competition, Vicenzaoro1 is the first gold jewellery event in the international calendar



and also the most important venue worldwide in the precious goods sector. Vicenzaoro2, strategically placed at mid-year, allows operators to assess fashion and market trends, while Orogemma is the point of reference for Italian and foreign retailers both because of its vast range of goods and because of its closeness to the Christmas holidays. An important contribution to technology applied to jewellery-making is offered by Oromacchine which, alongside Vicenzaoro 1 and 2, provides the most complete, wide-ranging and important event in the world dedicated exclusively to machinery and equipment for gold and silver production. ->