



The European Business Registry Association (EBRA), together with our peer organizations International Association of Commercial Administrators (IACA), Corporate Registers Forum (CRF) and ASORLAC, sought member feedback on the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on business registries. The response period was open from 8 March to 16 April 2021. We hereby present the received responses from our member jurisdictions.

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### COVID-19 in your country

*The COVID-19 pandemic has not only taken the lives of many Italians, but has affected life in the country in so many ways, having an economic and social impact on Italy as a consequence of the virus. The health emergency had immediate repercussions first on the social system and then on the economic one.*

*The first response recorded by the National Statistical Institute is a sharp collapse in consumer and business confidence.*

*Decisions on adopting social distance have inevitably involved almost all productive activities.*

*During this period the Business Register played a significant role in economic information and in supporting companies and authorities for classifying the activities eligible to continue their business during the lockdown according to the provisions related to the virus containment.*

### Impact of COVID-19 on workload and operations

*The activities of the Business Register in Italy have not been suspended during the period of the health emergency; the Chambers of Commerce have promptly organized themselves with home working and the already highly digitized services have allowed the continuation of the activities without interruption. Thanks to the fact that both the online registration in the Business Register and the consultation of the Registry have been carried out electronically for many years, there was not a great impact in the activity due to the pandemic sanitary emergency.*

*However, some national provisions on the containment of the spread of COVID-19 have suspended some obligations for companies by postponing some deadlines in order to simplify business activities in the difficult time of the epidemiological crisis.*

*Compared to the year 2019, the survey related to the year 2020 of the births-mortality of companies indicates that the registrations are decreased by 17.2%. At the same time, terminations dropped by 16.4%.*



## Impact of COVID-19 on development projects and strategy

*The ongoing health emergency has accelerated the digital race, especially among small and medium-sized entrepreneurs, and the Chambers of Commerce have played an important role in accompanying companies on this path.*

*The Italian Chambers of Commerce system prior to the pandemic created the digital drawer, an online platform available to every Italian entrepreneur who, free of charge and through the SPID, can access all the official documents of his Company available in the Business Register.*

*The tool has been activated by 800,000 entrepreneurs and during the sanitary emergency period the users increased by about 30%.*

*Generally speaking, there were no significant slowdowns in the implementation of projects concerning the business register performance, which on the contrary in some cases saw acceleration and further implementations to meet the needs of businesses and the Government in the difficult period of the pandemic.*

## COVID-19 and companies

*Given the state of epidemiological emergency from COVID-19 on the national territory and given the provisions issued by the Government on the subject, the Chambers of Commerce have adopted various organizational methods to continue providing services to businesses and citizens, guaranteeing the right to health. Home-working was organized, enhancing access to digital services, companies were supported with listening desks and extraordinary contributions were allocated.*

*A lot of digital processes have been sped up to be ready to answer the businesses requests.*

*Online training was activated through free remotely accessible webinars.*

*The Chambers of Commerce have been among the public entities involved right from the start and in these months of great difficulty they have demonstrated their commitment to businesses both in the delicate moment of the lockdown and in that of the restart: 300 million euro have been timely made available, tailored to the needs of companies in areas such as credit, digital, export, tourism.*

## The “New Normal”

*When we finally enter the post-crisis period, the business and economic context will probably not have returned to its pre-crisis state. Enterprises preparing their organizations to succeed in the “new normal” must focus on what has changed and what remains basically the same for their customers, companies, and industries. Enterprises need to seize the opportunity offered by this crisis to make those corrections to the industrial dynamics that in recent years have led Italy to have great fragility and not to give adequate answers on the environmental and social side.*



*The Chambers of commerce are going to be prepared to support the Companies in these new challenges focusing on some specific fields of action, where in many cases the management of the Business Register data may play a quite significant role:*

- *Supporting the “Enterprise 4.0 program” by fostering the use of home-working, the use of e-commerce, the integration of different digital technologies and cybersecurity activating a specialized assistance to SMEs;*
- *Reducing the bureaucratic and administrative burden on businesses giving an effective contribution to simplification of public administration;*
- *Organizing specific program to support the tourism sector recovery and the internationalization, which are great assets for our economy; the Chambers of Commerce, together with the network of Italian Chambers abroad, are strongly committed to support and strengthen the international projection of Italy;*
- *Supporting the drive for new entrepreneurship for young people, not only in the case of innovative start-ups but for all those activities with a strong innovative content even in the most “traditional” sectors of manufacturing and services;*
- *Continuing to monitor the demand for professions of our companies, to promote an effective link between school and the world of work, to strengthen the orientation of young people especially towards the technical and professional chain;*
- *Activating qualified information and training services on environmental issues, adopt guidelines for green public procurement, support the creation of sustainable and high-tech new businesses.*