

Extraordinary intervention incentives for industrial investments (1959-1993)

Dataset description and metadata

To properly cite the data, use the following:

"Gli incentivi dell'intervento straordinario per gli investimenti industriali (1959-1993)", edited by A. Lepore, S. Palermo, A. Ramazzotti, based on "Sinit" data for PRIN 2022, *The assessment of regional development policies in Italy through a new database (1950s-2000s)*, <https://datimezzogiorno.svimez.it>

1. Description and purpose of the dataset

The dataset "**Gli incentivi dell'intervento straordinario per gli investimenti industriali (1959-1993)**" [Extraordinary Intervention Incentives for Industrial Investments (1959-1993)] collects and presents the funding disbursed by the *Cassa per il Mezzogiorno* to industrial sectors following the enactment of "Law no. 634/1957, *Provvedimenti per il Mezzogiorno*," in the dual form of contributions on interest on bonds and industrial mortgages and grants in favour of industrial activities. The reference period also encompasses the final phase of the Cassa's liquidation management and the activities of *Agensud*.

The dataset was developed by cleaning, classifying, and harmonizing the records originally held by "Sinit" (*Sistema informativo per investimenti territoriali*), which collects information on funding disbursements to industrial enterprises from 1959 to 1993. The focus on disbursed amounts and the additional work performed on the records distinguishes this dataset from other digital sources regarding the extraordinary intervention, including those published upon the conclusion of the "Aset" project (*Archivi dello sviluppo economico e territoriale. Modelli innovativi di conservazione e riuso delle fonti per la storia degli interventi straordinari per lo sviluppo del Mezzogiorno*). The purpose of the dataset is to provide an information base of more immediate utility for scholars and the general public, permitting the comparison of economic values over time, favouring spatial and sectoral analysis, and facilitating integration with data sources external to the project.

Work on the dataset is the result of a progressive process carried out over time, originally initiated with the operations described in A. Lepore, S. Palermo and A. Ramazzotti, *Il contributo della Cassa allo sviluppo industriale del Mezzogiorno. La ripartizione settoriale e territoriale degli interventi (1957-1993)*, «Rivista giuridica del Mezzogiorno», 2-3, 2021, pp. 521-555. The current version was profoundly revisited for the PRIN Project "The assessment of regional development policies in Italy through a new database (1950s-2000s)," for which further operations of record cleaning, revision, integration, aggregation, and harmonization were conducted. These were undertaken to foster a better and more complete presentation of results and to facilitate statistical analysis by interested scholars. Further information regarding the source and the operations performed on the data is presented in A. Lepore, S. Palermo, A. Ramazzotti, *Gli incentivi dell'intervento straordinario per gli investimenti industriali: settori, territori, valutazioni di impatto (1959-1993)*, in A. Lepore, V. Daniele (eds.), *Divari regionali, politiche di sviluppo e impatti economici nel Mezzogiorno. Una nuova prospettiva di lungo*

periodo (1950-2024), Soveria Mannelli, Rubbettino 2025, pp. 177-234, to which users are pointed for additional details and bibliographic references.

Here is a summary overview of the main steps in the data work:

- 1) Data from the “Sinit” source were originally provided in different files depending on the type of intervention (non-repayable grants and interest subsidies) and the information contained therein. Using identification keys, the records were aggregated and cleaned to obtain a single record for each combination of the beneficiary enterprise’s registration number (*matricola*), the municipality of location, and the year of disbursement. The numbering of the registration numbers was preserved as present in the Sinit source, which, in a minority of cases, differs from that reported in other digital sources present in the “Aset” database. The comparison with “Aset” sources revealed no significant qualitative differences, other than a higher level of aggregation in the registration numbering for certain firms that received multiple registration numbers during the course of the intervention. In order to preserve the structure of the primary source, the decision was made to prioritize the “Sinit” numbering.
- 2) The “Sinit” records contain a string variable that broadly describes the economic activity conducted by the firm that received the disbursement. As the dataset lists over 14,800 distinct strings, it was deemed appropriate to provide a concise classification of greater utility for research purposes. The sectoral classification was carried out by the authors in accordance with the methodology discussed in A. Lepore, S. Palermo, and A. Ramazzotti, *Gli incentivi dell’intervento straordinario per gli investimenti industriali*, op. cit. Here is a cursory summary of the steps: a finite number of economic sectors (28) was identified, and for each of these, a dictionary of terms was defined to coincide with the entries of the “activity” variable found within Sinit. Following the assignment of records to each sector based on the activity dictionary, numerous manual checks were conducted to resolve ambiguous cases or attribution errors. This step was performed by also leveraging information present in the company name and relevant historical records. Further information regarding the definition of sectors and record classification is provided below in section “3. Notes on sectoral classification and in the aforementioned chapter. **NB: The attribution of records to sectors is based on the reconstruction performed by the authors using information available in the Sinit sources and is intended solely for statistical/descriptive historical analysis; therefore, it holds no legal value. The dataset is provided "as is," and any liability for the improper use of the information contained therein is disclaimed.** Furthermore, future refinements of the classification technique and/or the reclassification of records over time are not excluded. The authors remain at the users’ disposal for any verification or integration needs that might arise regarding the classification.
- 3) The disbursement amounts present in the Sinit records are expressed in euros at current values. To facilitate intertemporal comparison, the amounts have been converted into current lire and revalued to both 2011 euros and 2021 euros, utilizing the methodology described in Istat, “Il valore della moneta in Italia”, tables available at the address:

<https://www.istat.it/tavole-di-dati/il-valore-della-moneta-in-italia-dal-1861-al-2023/> (last accessed February 2025). **NB: The conversion and revaluation of monetary values are performed solely for historical statistical/descriptive analysis purposes; therefore, they hold no legal value. The dataset is provided "as is," and any liability for the improper use of the information contained therein is disclaimed.**

- 4) The “Sinit” records include a string variable indicating the municipality where the intervention was located. To facilitate territorial comparison, the records have been harmonized to the 1991 municipal boundaries, according to the methodology described in section “4. Notes on territorial harmonization” of this document.

The resulting dataset consists of 30 variables for 127,770 records. Each record concerns one observation, i.e. a disbursement item for a specific firm id in a given municipality and year. The dataset’s characteristics are summarized below.

Size (number of observations): 127,770

Time period: 1959-1993 (time frequency: annual)

Territorial coverage: areas falling within the scope of the extraordinary intervention (the Mezzogiorno, and certain areas of Lazio, Marche, and Tuscany). Twenty records are present, referring to a single beneficiary enterprise, assigned by the source to the municipality of Milan.

Livello di disaggregazione territoriale: comunale, eccetto 133 *record* riferiti a progetti “pluricomunali”.

Level of spatial disaggregation: municipality, except 133 records concerning “multi-municipal” projects.

Level of sectoral disaggregation: 28 sectors (roughly 2 digits) inspired by, but not entirely adhering to, the 2002 Ateco classification.

2. Variables description

- **tipo:** String variable with two modalities indicating whether the record refers to the disbursement of “contributions on interest on bonds and industrial mortgages” or of “grants in favour of industrial activities.” Source: Sinit.
- **matricola:** Numeric identification code assigned in the source to the entity receiving the disbursement. Source: Sinit.
- **ditta:** Legal denomination of the entity receiving the disbursement. Source: Sinit.
- **attivit :** String variable usually containing a concise description of the economic activity conducted by the recipient entity. Note that different activities may correspond to the same *matricola* or *ditta* across different records. This occurs primarily in the case of firms possessing multiple production units located in different municipalities, potentially dedicated to different productive activities: in these instances, the activity refers to that performed by the production unit for which the financing is disbursed, not the generic or prevailing activity of the firm.
- **anno_ erogazione:** Year in which the financing was disbursed. Source: Sinit.

- **cod_comune_univoco:** Unique code of the municipality in which the record is located, at historical borders and denomination. The record is typically located in the municipality where the financed production activity was situated, not the registered office of the recipient. Source: obtained by the authors by concatenating the historical region, province, and municipality codes present in Sinit.
- **cod_reg_sinit:** Sinit region code. NB: Does not correspond to Istat codes. Source: Sinit.
- **regione_sinit:** Sinit region denomination. Source: Sinit.
- **cod_prov_sinit:** Sinit province code. NB: Does not correspond to Istat codes. Source: Sinit.
- **provincia_sinit:** Sinit province denomination. Source: Sinit.
- **cod_com_sinit:** Sinit municipality code. NB: Does not correspond to Istat codes. Source: Sinit.
- **comune_sinit:** Denomination of the municipality where the disbursement is located. NB: municipalities are at historical boundaries. Source: Sinit.
- **importo_erogazione_euro01011999:** Disbursement amount expressed in euros at current prices. Source: Sinit.
- **importo_lire_correnti:** Disbursement amount expressed in lire at current prices. Source: authors' elaborations obtained by multiplying the value of the variable `importo_erogazione_euro01011999` by 1936.27 (euro-lira exchange rate).
- **cambio_lira_euro:** Euro-lira exchange rate equal to 1936.27.
- **importo_euro_2011:** Disbursement amount expressed in euros at constant 2011 prices. Source: authors' elaborations obtained by multiplying the value of the variable `importo_lire_correnti` by the variable `coefficiente_istat_2011` and dividing by the variable `cambio_lira_euro`.
- **coefficiente_istat_2011:** Currency revaluation coefficients at 2011 prices. Source: Istat, "Il valore della moneta in Italia", tables available at the address: <https://www.istat.it/tavole-di-dati/il-valore-della-moneta-in-italia-dal-1861-al-2023/> (last accessed February 2025).
- **coefficiente_istat_2021:** Currency revaluation coefficients at 2021 prices. Source: Istat, "Il valore della moneta in Italia", tables available at the address: <https://www.istat.it/tavole-di-dati/il-valore-della-moneta-in-italia-dal-1861-al-2023/> (last accessed February 2025).
- **importo_euro_2021:** Disbursement amount expressed in euros at constant 2021 prices. Source: authors' elaborations obtained by multiplying the value of the variable `importo_lire_correnti` by the variable `coefficiente_istat_2021` and dividing by the variable `cambio_lira_euro`.
- **sector_id:** Numeric variable identifying the economic sector assigned to the record. Source: authors' elaborations according to the methodology described in Lepore, S. Palermo, and A. Ramazzotti, "Gli incentivi per l'industria della Cassa per il Mezzogiorno", op. cit.

- **sector_name:** Denomination of the economic sector assigned to the record. Source: authors' elaboration according to the methodology described in Lepore, S. Palermo, and A. Ramazzotti, "Gli incentivi per l'industria della Cassa per il Mezzogiorno", op. cit.
- **cod_reg_1991:** Numeric identification code of the region of record location, harmonized to the 1991 Istat classification. Source: see Notes on territorial harmonization.
- **den_reg_1991:** Denomination of the region of record location, harmonized to the 1991 Istat classification. Source: see Notes on territorial harmonization.
- **cod_prov_1991:** Numeric identification code of the province of record location, harmonized to the 1991 Istat classification. Source: see Notes on territorial harmonization.
- **den_prov_1991:** Denomination of the province of record location, harmonized to the 1991 Istat classification. Source: see Notes on territorial harmonization.
- **sigla_prov_1991:** Abbreviation of the province of record location, harmonized to the 1991 Istat classification. Source: see Notes on territorial harmonization.
- **pro_com_1991:** Numeric identification code of the municipality of record location, harmonized to the 1991 Istat classification. Source: see Notes on territorial harmonization.
- **den_comune_1991:** Denomination of the municipality of record location, harmonized to the 1991 Istat classification. Source: see Notes on territorial harmonization.
- **lat:** Latitude of the centroid of the location Municipality at 1991 boundaries. Source: own processing in QGIS using the Istat shapefile of Administrative Boundaries as of 1991 (most detailed version).
- **lon:** Longitude of the centroid of the location Municipality at 1991 boundaries. Source: own processing in QGIS using the Istat shapefile of Administrative Boundaries as of 1991 (most detailed version).

3. Notes on sectoral classification

The sectoral classification was carried out by defining 28 economic sectors, of which one is residual for records not otherwise classifiable (242 records out of 127,770, i.e., 0.19% of the total). The economic sectors are inspired by the 2-digit Ateco 2002 codes¹, albeit with various modifications to adapt the classification to the data of the extraordinary intervention and to facilitate comparison with other historical sources (for example, industrial censuses). The sectors of the dataset, with their respective codes, are indicated in Table 1 in the appendix.

It should be noted that the assignment of sectors was carried out at the level of the individual record, not by *matricola* or *ditta*, which implies that the same firm may be assigned different sectoral codes for different disbursements. This is consistent both with the criteria for assigning Ateco codes, when these refer to different local units of the same enterprise, and with our object

¹ The reference source for the definition of sectors is Istat, Classificazione delle attività economiche. Ateco 2002, available at the address: <https://www.istat.it/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Volume-integrale-ATECO-2002.pdf>.

of study. First, there are cases in which different local units, located in different municipalities and operating in distinct sectors, were associated with the same firm; secondly, there are cases in which the same local unit modified its prevailing economic activity over time, also in consideration of the long period covered by the dataset; finally, it is possible that different economic activities were carried out in the same local unit and that the disbursements were destined at one time to one activity and at another time to the other. To avoid introducing systematic errors into the dataset, we classified the individual records individually, without imposing consistency with respect to the *matricola* and/or the municipality of location.

It should also be noted that the *attività* entries that have been used to classify the records do not always allow for the unambiguous identification of the economic sector due to excessive vagueness in their content or because they describe multiple activities that should rightly fall into distinct sectors. In the first case, an attempt was made to leverage the information provided by the firm name and any historical sources to disambiguate the attribution. In the second case, in the absence of other information, it was given more weight to the first item in the string *attività*. This approach is inspired by the criterion for assigning Ateco codes: where an enterprise carries out an economic activity compatible with more than one code, the one that is prevailing in terms of production value or factor costs is assigned; lacking this information, in our case we opted to favour the first term, unless other informational sources suggested otherwise.

There remain, however, some activities of difficult attribution which have been treated on a case-by-case basis. Among these, we mention, by way of example, the initial processing of non-metallic minerals, which we attributed to sector 12 (manufacture of non-metallic mineral products) except in cases where the context indicated that such operations were carried out in the quarry, in which case the record was attributed to sector 3 (mining and quarrying). Records relating to ice production and third-party cold storage activities were attributed to sector 4 (manufacture of food products, beverages and tobacco products) rather than to services because it is not always possible to establish whether they also carried out processing activities, as well as to facilitate historical comparisons. Similarly, metal furniture is classified under sector 13 (manufacture of basic metals and metal products) instead of sector 25 (manufacture of furniture).

Nonetheless, please note that the *attività* field is provided in its entirety in the dataset; therefore, users are invited to verify the sectoral attributions according to their own research needs and to report to the authors any request of verification or suggestions of modifications. Furthermore, additional refinements of the classification technique and/or the reclassification of records over time are not excluded.

NB: The attribution of records to sectors is based on the reconstruction performed by the authors starting from the information available in the Sinit sources and solely for historical statistical/descriptive analysis purposes; therefore, it has no legal value. The dataset is provided "as is," and any liability for the improper use of the information contained therein is disclaimed.

4. Notes on territorial harmonization

The dataset contains two types of territorial information. The first type of information comes directly from the Sinit source and is at historical boundaries, therefore it is not directly comparable over time. The second type of information is harmonized by the authors to the boundaries of administrative units in 1991. This harmonization was achieved through various steps, leveraging the dataset of Italian *località* present in the Istat administrative boundary shapefiles for 1991. The *località* shapefile allows for the precise geolocalization of records even in cases where the historical municipality had been suppressed: the merge is in fact performed on municipal *frazioni* (sub-municipal places) and not on municipalities. This methodology was preferred over a manual correction of the municipality variable since the annual frequency of the dataset and the long reference period would have required tracking year by year all territorial changes that occurred in the territory of interest. Once the records were linked to the *località*, it was possible to identify the codes of the municipalities in which such *località* were situated in 1991 and, in this way, harmonize the data to the 1991 municipal boundaries. In detail, the operation required the following steps:

1. Extraction of all distinct modalities from the string variable **comune** from the dataset (2,224 observations) and cleaning to simplify the merge with the shapefile of *località* at 1991 borders (e.g., renaming the municipality of “Albano” to “Albano Laziale”).
2. Merge of the unique **comune** modalities using the variable DEMONINAZI (that is, denomination of the *località*) present in the shapefile *Localita_91_WGS84.shp* downloaded from the Istat website <https://www.istat.it/notizia/basi-territoriali-e-variabili-censuarie/>, 1991 version. The merge was also conditioned on the variable **provincia** in order to minimize conflict cases due to homonymous *località*. In cases where the historical denomination of the municipality did not coincide with the name of any *località* as of 1991 (often in cases of *comuni sparsi*) the main *località* was used, or the first unique one if the main *località* did not allow for a merge (e.g., in case of homonymy with *località* present in other municipalities). All conflicts (approximately 250) were resolved manually.
3. Extraction of the geographical coordinates of the *località* on which the merge was performed and spatial join of the same onto the shapefile *Confini amministrativi 1991* available at the address <https://www.istat.it/notizia/confini-delle-unita-amministrative-a-fini-statistici-al-1-gennaio-2018-2/> (last accessed April 2025).
4. Assignment of the 1991 municipality code according to which municipality the merged *località* where located in.
5. Computation of the latitude and longitude of the centroid of the 1991 municipality.

Note that for records referring to multi-municipal projects within the same province, the coordinates of the province’s centroid were attributed; for multi-provincial projects within a region, the region’s centroid was used; for multi-regional projects, the centroid of the South Italy macro-region (*ripartizione Sud Italia*) was used (that is, excluding the Islands).

5. Sectoral and provincial aggregations

To facilitate macro-level territorial and sectoral analyses, two datasets presenting data aggregated at the provincial and sectoral levels, respectively, are also made available on the project's website. The data aggregated at the provincial level are obtained by collapsing the microdata by year and province according to the 1991 boundaries, and calculating the total value, mean value, and number of disbursements. The data aggregated at the sectoral level are obtained by collapsing the microdata by year and sector, calculating—also in this instance—the total value, mean value, and number of disbursements.

6. Appendix

Table 1. Economic sectors in the dataset

sector_id	sector_name	English translation
1	attività collegate all'agricoltura	activities related to agriculture
2	attività collegate alla pesca	activities related to fishery
3	industria estrattiva	mining and quarrying
4	industrie della trasformazione alimentare, delle bevande e del tabacco	manufacture of food products, beverages and tobacco products
5	industrie tessili e dell'abbigliamento	manufacture of textiles and wearing apparel
6	industrie conciarie e dei prodotti in pelle	manufacture of leather and related products (excluding footwear)
7	industria del legno e dei prodotti in legno (escluso arredamento)	manufacture of wood and products of wood, except furniture
8	industrie della carta, dei prodotti in cartone, degli imballaggi, industria della stampa e dell'editoria (incluso foto-fono-cinema)	manufacture of paper and paper products, paperboard and containers, printing and reproduction of recorded media (including photo, sound, cinema)
9	fabbricazione di coke e raffinerie di petrolio	manufacture of coke and refined petroleum products
10	industria chimica, farmaceutica e delle fibre artificiali	manufacture of chemicals, pharmaceutical products and man-made fibres
11	fabbricazione di articoli in gomma e materie plastiche	manufacture of rubber and plastic products
12	lavorazione di minerali non metalliferi	manufacture of non-metallic mineral products
13	fabbricazione di metallo e prodotti in metallo	manufacture of basic metals and metal products
14	fabbricazione di macchine e apparecchi meccanici	manufacture of machinery and equipment
15	fabbricazione di macchine elettriche e apparecchiature elettriche, elettroniche e ottiche (inclusi apparecchi medicali e ortopedici)	manufacture of electrical, electronic and optic machinery and equipment (including medical and orthopedic)
16	fabbricazione di mezzi di trasporto	manufacture transport equipment and vehicles
17	altre industrie manifatturiere	other manufacturing
18	produzione e distribuzione di energia elettrica, gas e acqua	electricity, gas, and water production and supply
19	costruzioni e installazione di impianti	construction of buildings and installation of machinery and equipment
20	riparazione di macchine e veicoli (incluse officine meccaniche)	repair of machinery and vehicles
21	commercio e altri servizi	wholesale and retail trade and other services
22	lavanderie industriali	industrial washing services
23	servizi informatici	computer consultancy
24	industria delle calzature	manufacture of footwear
25	arredamento (esclusi arredi in metallo)	manufacture of furniture (excluding metal furniture)
26	confezionamento di generi alimentari	packaging of food products
27	confezionamento di generi non alimentari	packaging of non-food products
1000	settore non disponibile	sector not available