Cremona is one of the most active provinces of the Lombardia region, an area considered one of the driving forces of Europe and the most economically evolved of the country. Cremona’s distinctive feature is its consolidated production tradition that can boast a robust network of small and medium enterprises that typifies Italy’s development model and can count on numerous excellent performances in the manufacturing and agricultural sectors. In addition, Cremona is one of Italy’s leading centres for artistic production, the most distinctive of which being the violin-making for which it is considered a world capital. UNESCO in 2012 inscribed violin making tradition of Cremona on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity being an expression of knowledge and craftsmanship transmitted from generation to generation.

Cremona's business environment is an interesting mix of leading international players and, for the most part, small and micro enterprises in the agriculture and food processing sectors. These segments have remained economically stable in recent years as they are part of the real economy and are thus less exposed to periodic market fluctuations and international crises. As well as historically more developed industrial sectors, metalworks equipment exports are very common and substantial growth has been recorded in cosmetics.

The stock of companies currently registered with the Chamber of Commerce is not very stable (26,144 on December 31 2018).

The educational system of the province of Cremona is particularly advanced. Alongside a network of schools and technical and professional institutes, the territory of Cremona hosts a new university system encompassing five of the most famous Italian Universities (Politecnico di Milano, Università degli Studi di Milano, Università di Pavia, Università di Brescia and Università Cattolica), able to guarantee, with degree and master courses, high educational standards and the necessary technology transfer from the academic world to the business sector.
Agriculture, food processing and biotechnologies

The agriculture and livestock sector in Cremona is noted for its high production levels, quality and the use of new technology.

Local agriculture is one of the most advanced in Italy and Europe and accounts for 5.2% of the added value, much above the Lombardy region average (1.9%) and the national average (2.3%).

Zootechnics is one of the pillars of Cremona economy, contributing for 80% of the total value of the primary sector. Within the bovine sector, with about 300,000 livestock units (50% of which being dairy cows), local farmers reached a very high level of breed selection, focusing mainly on the Italian Friesian, capable of a very high rate of production and quality.

On average, the total yearly production of milk is about 1.3 million tons, nearly a quarter of the whole production in Lombardy and more than 10% of the entire national production.

The ripper sector in Cremona accounted for more than 800,000 units, nearly 10% of the national total amount.

The strength of the agricultural sector lies in its high quality production which, especially for milk and meat, gave origin to a major food industry, strongly committed to combining at best the concept of product quality and security, but also to investing in research and technology innovation.

The sector is supported on the territory by leading research centres which are specialised in food treatment techniques, biotechnology and zootechnics, as the CRB - Biotechnology Research Centre of Catholic University, the Centre for Research and Experimentation in Agriculture, Zootechnics and Farming, as the CRB - Biotechnology Research Centre of Catholic University, the Centre for Research and Experimentation in Agriculture, Zootechnics and Farming, as the CRB - Biotechnology Research Centre of Catholic University, the Centre for Research and Experimentation in Agriculture, Zootechnics and Farming, as the CRB - Biotechnology Research Centre of Catholic University, the Centre for Research and Experimentation in Agriculture, Zootechnics and Farming, as the CRB - Biotechnology Research Centre of Catholic University, the Centre for Research and Experimentation in Agriculture, Zootechnics and Farming, as the CRB - Biotechnology Research Centre of Catholic University, the Centre for Research and Experimentation in Agriculture, Zootechnics and Farming, as the CRB - Biotechnology Research Centre of Catholic University, the Centre for Research and Experimentation in Agriculture, Zootechnics and Farming, as the CRB - Biotechnology Research Centre of Catholic University, the Centre for Research and Experimentation in Agriculture, Zootechnics and Farming, as the CRB - Biotechnology Research Centre of Catholic University, the Centre for Research and Experimentation in Agriculture, Zootechnics and Farming, as the CRB - Biotechnology Research Centre of Catholic University, the Centre for Research and Experimentation in Agriculture, Zootechnics and Farming, as the CREMA Agro-industry and Technology Park.

Metalworks engineering

The Cremona metalworks engineering sector is well known for its efficiency in terms of production and organisational structure.

The Cremona metalworks engineering sector, encompassing leading steel producing factories but also micro and small enterprises more and more linked in networks, has gradually strengthened its position on foreign markets over the years.

New products in Cremona are focused on steel tubes and high quality steel production, is represented by 25 unit plants with a total of nearly 2,600 employed people and it is the sector with the highest contribution to the growth of export in recent years, with an export value of 6.5 billion euros in 2018, 35% of the total of the Cremona Province.

Much more various, with a major role of micro and small enterprises, are the principal sectors of mechanical engineering: in which more than 1,500 plants are active, with a total employment of (12,600) people, mainly in the production of metal processing machinery (for factories and agriculture). Large part of machinery production is exported and in 2018 this amount overcame one billion euros.

Tourism

Surrounded by castles and defensive walls with various examples of “wall” cities, Cremona has a lot to offer to the tourist, thanks to its huge artistic and cultural heritage, but also to its natural environment to be discovered by cycle routes or river navigation. There is no doubt that the image of Cremona is connected, since at least 5 centuries, to violin making. The tradition of the “violin craftsmanship know-how”, awarded by UNESCO in 2012 as Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, makes Cremona a unique place in the world, not only because of its glorious past, but also for the current capacity to act as a worldwide capital for violin making.

It is hosted the most famous families of violin makers, like Amati, Guarneri and Antonio Stradivari, and their art is still taught nowadays at the International School for Lutherie and renewed with passion and skill in the 150 workshops working for the international market. The talent and dedication of this tradition are appreciated by visitors coming from all the world to admire also the collection of ancient and contemporary instruments of the Violin Museum. Together with kulturk, music is another element which characterises Cremona, whose roots are deeply linked with music, gave birth to a fundamental career of musicians and masters and with Gaudì Monteverdi, Crema is famous for organ art and in the homestead of Giovanni Bottesini, named “the Paganini of Counterbass”. Gaesimaggio hosts every year the “Gasimaggio International Festival”, very rich is indeed the program of concerts and masterclasses that every year attract in the province musicians and orchestras from all over the world.

ICT

The interest towards new technologies is evident across the whole province, even in areas where more traditional activities are still present. Private business networks in the ICT sector have been set up, especially in the Cremona Technology Hub, the campus of Politecnico of Milan in Cremona and the Universita Statale of Milan in Crema. A major plus that adds value to Cremona’s profile is its digital infrastructure in the shape of fibre optic cable networks.