

# Italy-Iran 2018: a new deal and opportunities for Iranian investors in Italy.

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Italy and Iran will sign a framework credit agreement worth 5 billion euros whereby Rome will help Italian companies invest in Iran. **Invitalia**, the national agency for investment attraction of the Ministry of Finance, will, according to the new deal, grant the opening of lines of credit to two Iranian banks as to finance Italian companies' ventures.

The agreement will be signed by Invitalia's investment arm, Invitalia Global Investment and two Iranian banks, Bank of Industry and Mine, and Middle East Bank; the deal will be finalized at the presence of Italian minister of Economy and Finances, Pier Carlo Padoan, and Iranian Deputy Minister of Finances, Mohammed Khazei. Back in October, the latter also participated in the meetings with the Italian Ambassador, Mauro Conciatori, where the two sides also discussed the future developments and deepening of financial ties between themselves. The accord will see Invitalia lending money to the Iranian counterparts which will, in turn, lend them to the country public administration: only then the money would reach Italian business in Iran. Teheran will also offer its guarantee to any single investment proposal approved in accordance with Invitalia decision and Iran's economic priorities.

As per the latest Eurostat data, Italy is Iran's major trade partner in the European Union. Rome is the biggest importer of Iranian products (€2.58 billion worth of purchases) and the second biggest exporter towards Teheran (€1.38 billion worth). Both trade flows are intensifying: Italian imports saw a staggering 315% hike in the first 10 months of 2017, compared to the corresponding period of 2016; exports grew by 14.5% on yearly basis.

Italian-Iranian economic relations are benefiting from Teheran's newfound commercial engagement with the international community after the deal on Iranian nuclear program (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action) reached its implementation day on 16 January 2016. As a matter of fact, Iran's President Hassan Rohani made Italy its first foreign visit after that date, spearheading a numerous business delegation, and thus laying the foundation to the significant commercial joint ventures, worth circa 27 billion euros.

These recent developments show how the two countries foster the deep relationships they have always maintained, even in more difficult moments, and pave the way for further bilateral investments amongst them. Concerning investment proposals, small and medium Iranian businessmen can benefit from the new national investment attraction program "Invest in Italy" and the expertise, in business matters and visa-related procedures as well, provided by

**Investorvisa.it.**

Source: Reuters and Financial Tribune