ESAME DI STATO CONCLUSIVO DEL SECONDO CICLO DI ISTRUZIONE

Indirizzi:
ITRI, EA06, EA26 – AMMINISTRAZIONE FINANZA E MARKETING
ARTICOLAZIONE RELAZIONI INTERNAZIONALI PER IL MARKETING

Disciplina: LINGUA INGLESE

IL CANDIDATO DEVE SVOLGERE TUTTE LE ATTIVITÀ COMPRESE NELLA PROVA

QUESTION A

PART 1 – COMPREHENSION AND INTERPRETATION

Italian wines in the world

Italian wines, celebrated globally for their rich heritage and diverse varietals, have experienced a remarkable surge in international sales over the past five years. However, this promising trajectory faces a significant challenge with the imposition of tariffs by the United States on April 3rd, 2025. This development casts a shadow of uncertainty over a crucial market for Italian winemakers, potentially disrupting the industry's sustained growth.

The export figures prior to the tariffs reveal a compelling narrative of success. In 2019, Italian wine exports reached a record high of approximately 6.4 billion euros, demonstrating the industry's robust competitiveness. Despite the global pandemic's disruptive influence, which temporarily reduced exports to 6.2 billion euros in 2020, the sector demonstrated remarkable resilience. By 2021, exports rebounded strongly, surpassing pre-pandemic levels to reach 7.1 billion euros.

This upward trend continued in 2022, with exports climbing to 7.8 billion euros, indicating a consistent and growing demand for Italian wines worldwide. Preliminary projections for 2023 suggested a continuation of this positive momentum. Early data for 2024, despite some emerging concerns about global economic slowdown, showed a modest increase, reaching an estimated 8.1 billion euros. This demonstrated the resilience of the Italian wine sector, and the continued strength of its brand recognition.

However, the newly implemented US tariffs threaten to derail this growth. The United States represents a vital market for Italian wines, particularly for premium varietals like Chianti, Barolo, and Amarone. The increased costs associated with these tariffs are expected to significantly impact the competitiveness of Italian wines in the US market, potentially leading to a substantial decline in sales. This development could have severe consequences for Italian winemakers, distributors, and related businesses, disrupting their carefully cultivated market presence.

The timing of these tariffs is particularly concerning, as the Italian wine industry has invested heavily in expanding its presence in the US market. Strategic marketing campaigns, distribution network development, and brand building efforts could be undermined by these trade barriers. Furthermore, the tariffs may trigger retaliatory measures from other wine-producing nations, creating a complex and challenging global trade environment for Italian wines.
To mitigate the potential damage, the Italian wine industry must adopt a multifaceted approach. Diversification of export markets, exploring emerging markets in Asia and South America, becomes crucial. Additionally, a shift towards value-added products, such as premium and organic wines, could

help maintain profit margins despite increased tariffs. Exploring alternative distribution channels, including direct-to-consumer sales and e-commerce platforms, is also essential.

Moreover, the Italian government and trade associations must engage in vigorous diplomatic efforts to address the trade dispute and advocate for fair trade practices. Collaborative initiatives to promote Italian wines in non-tariff-affected markets are also necessary. While the Italian wine industry possesses a strong foundation of quality, tradition, and innovation, the imposed US tariffs represent a significant hurdle that requires strategic adaptation and coordinated action to overcome.

(478 words)

1 Choose the answer which fits best according to the text. Circle one letter.

1 What was the approximate value of Italian wine exports in 2022?
A 6.2 billion euros
B 6.4 billion euros
C 7.8 billion euros
D 8.1 billion euros

2 What event significantly impacted Italian wine exports in 2020?
A A global economic boom
B The implementation of new trade agreements
C The global pandemic
D Increased competition from other wine-producing nations

3 What did early data for 2024 show regarding Italian wine exports?
A A sharp decline
B A modest increase
C No change
D A dramatic increase

4 Which country’s tariffs are mentioned as a potential problem for Italian wine exports?
A Germany
B France
C United Kingdom
D United States

5 What is NOT mentioned as a strategy for the Italian wine industry to overcome the challenges from the new tariffs?
A Increasing domestic sales
B Focusing on value-added products
C Diversifying export markets
D Engaging in diplomatic efforts

2 Refer to the text to answer the following question. Use complete sentences and your own words.

What are the trends in Italian wine exports over the past five years, and the factors that have influenced it?

3 Refer to the text to answer the following question. Use complete sentences and your own words.

What are the potential consequences of the US tariffs on the Italian wine industry, and what strategies are suggested to mitigate these consequences?

4 Refer to the text to answer the following question. Use complete sentences and your own words.

How did the global pandemic impact Italian wine exports, and how did the industry respond to this impact?

PART 2 – WRITTEN PRODUCTION

Choose either A or B. Clearly mark your choice on your exam paper by writing “A” or “B”.

TASK A

You work for the Italian Trade Agency in New York. Following the imposition of US tariffs on Italian wines (as mentioned in the text), you have been tasked with creating a strategy document (300 words) outlining how Italian wine producers can maintain and potentially grow their market share in the United States despite these challenges. Focus on specific actions and target audiences.

TASK B

You are a representative of a consortium of Italian wine producers attending a major international food and beverage trade show. A key objective is to attract new distributors and importers in markets other than the United States (in light of the recent tariffs). Write a 300-word persuasive presentation that you will use to present the unique selling points of Italian wines and encourage partnerships in these alternative markets.

Question B

PART 1 – COMPREHENSION AND INTERPRETATION

Public Debt in the EU

The ominous shadow of public debt stretches across numerous European Union nations, threatening to undermine their economic stability and impede long-term growth. The accumulation of decades of fiscal expansion, a practice where governments consistently spend more than they collect in revenue, has been dramatically amplified by the severe economic shocks of the 2008 financial crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic. This confluence of events has propelled several member states into precarious financial positions, characterised by debt levels that are cause for significant alarm and necessitate urgent attention.

Greece, a country that has become synonymous with persistent fiscal challenges, continues to struggle under the weight of a public debt that exceeds 160% of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP). This staggering figure is a direct consequence of years of economic mismanagement, coupled with the heavy burden of international bailouts aimed at preventing a complete financial collapse. Italy, another major player in the Eurozone economy, faces a similarly daunting situation, with a debt-to-GDP ratio hovering around 140%. This high level of indebtedness renders Italy particularly susceptible to fluctuations in interest rates and shifts in market sentiment, creating a climate of economic vulnerability.

While Spain and France appear comparatively more resilient, their public debt levels, which surpass 110% of their respective GDPs, still represent a significant deviation from the EU's mandated 60% debt-to-GDP threshold. This threshold, established as a cornerstone of fiscal prudence, is designed to ensure the long-term stability of the Eurozone. The data, as presented by Eurostat in late 2024, underscores the severity of the situation and the urgent need for corrective measures.

The roots of this problem are multifaceted. The persistent budget deficits, driven by substantial social welfare spending and ambitious infrastructure projects, have compounded over time. The demographic challenges posed by aging populations and declining birth rates further strain pension and healthcare systems, placing additional pressure on already stretched public finances. Moreover, the European Central Bank’s (ECB) prolonged period of historically low interest rates, while intended to stimulate economic growth, inadvertently incentivized governments to engage in excessive borrowing, exacerbating the existing debt burden.

The consequences of these high public debt levels are far-reaching and multifaceted. Increased debt servicing costs divert crucial funds away from essential public services, such as education, healthcare, and innovation, hindering long-term economic development. Elevated debt levels also erode investor confidence, potentially triggering capital flight and currency depreciation, further destabilizing the economy. Furthermore, the substantial debt burden significantly restricts governments’ ability to respond effectively to future economic shocks, leaving them vulnerable to crises and potentially precipitating a domino effect across the Eurozone.

Addressing this formidable challenge necessitates a concerted and comprehensive effort. Fiscal consolidation, structural reforms, and targeted investments are crucial components of any sustainable solution. Governments must prioritise spending efficiency, streamline bureaucratic processes, and implement policies that promote sustainable economic growth. Simultaneously, the European Union needs to strengthen its fiscal framework to ensure responsible debt management and prevent future crises. This requires a collaborative approach, with member states working together to implement sound fiscal policies and foster a resilient economic environment.

(504 words)

1 Choose the answer which fits best according to the text. Circle one letter.

1 Which countries have public debt levels that exceed 110% of their GDP?

A Germany and the Netherlands
B Spain and France
C Poland and Hungary
D Sweden and Denmark

2 What is one of the primary reasons for persistent budget deficits in EU nations?

A Increased investment in renewable energy sources.
B Decreased military spending.
C Social welfare spending and infrastructure projects.
D Reduced taxes on corporations.

3 What is one of the consequences of high public debt?

A Increased government investment in arts and culture.
B Reduced dependence on foreign oil.
C Increased debt servicing costs divert funds from essential public services.
D Greater availability of funding for scientific research.

4 What conclusion can be drawn about the impact of aging populations and declining birth rates on public finances in the EU?

A They strain pension and healthcare systems, increasing pressure on public finances.
B They have no significant impact on public finances.
C They alleviate pressure on public finances by reducing the need for social welfare spending.
D They lead to increased tax revenues, offsetting the costs of social programs.

5 What can be inferred from the text regarding the EU's approach to addressing high public debt among its member states?

A The EU relies solely on individual member states to resolve their debt issues without any coordinated effort.
B The EU advocates for a combination of fiscal consolidation, structural reforms, and targeted investments, alongside a strengthened fiscal framework.
C The EU prioritises austerity measures above all else, regardless of the potential impact on economic growth.
D The EU encourages member states to increase borrowing in order to stimulate economic growth and reduce debt-to-GDP ratios.

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2 Refer to the text to answer the following question. Use complete sentences and your own words.

What are the primary factors contributing to the high public debt levels in several EU countries, and what are the potential economic consequences of these debt burdens?

3 Refer to the text to answer the following question. Use complete sentences and your own words.

What policy recommendations does the text suggest for addressing the issue of high public debt in EU countries, and how might these measures impact the overall economic stability of the region?

PART 2 – WRITTEN PRODUCTION

Choose either A or B. Clearly mark your choice on your exam paper by writing "A" or "B".

TASK A
Write a 300-word essay about the long-term problems caused by high public debt in the EU. Then, suggest your own solutions, thinking about both the economy and people's lives. Explain why your solutions would work.

TASK B
You are a blogger who has read an article about the public debt problems in several EU countries. Write a review of the situation, explaining the causes and consequences in simple terms, and offering your own thoughts on the proposed solutions, in 300 words.