



Associazione Esposizioni e Fiere Italiane
Italian Exhibition & Trade Fair Association

Press

**AEFI ECONOMIC OBSERVATORY ON THE TRADE FAIR SECTOR:
Positive end of year for Italian trade fairs in 2014. The growth trend is consolidated.**

Milan, 6 February 2015 - The 23rd quarterly survey on trends in the trade fair sector conducted by the **AEFI Economic Observatory** for the October–December 2014 period points to a constantly developing situation and confirms the recovery of the sector that had already emerged in previous quarters.

The results for the fourth quarter highlight an improvement both with respect to the previous quarter and to the corresponding quarter in 2013, confirming the capacity of trade fairs to face difficult economic circumstances.

The survey, which involved 26 AEFI-member Italian trade fair districts, through the positive and negative balances defined on the basis of responses from members who took part in the analysis, highlights a positive trend for all the indicators considered: number of exhibitions, total exhibitors, exhibition space taken, total visitors and total turnover.

The number of exhibitions is still growing (42.29% hosted more exhibitions and 50% recorded a stable figure, highlighting the resilience of the system) and, in particular, the number of exhibitors is growing considerably. With a balance of +46% recorded from the members' responses, it confirms the positive performance of the previous quarter, with marked improvement: it more than doubles that of the previous quarter (20%) and more than triples that of the same period last year (+15%). Analysis of where exhibitors came from shows a distinct resurgence of Italians, with a balance of +42%, and continuous progress in terms of foreign exhibitors, both European and otherwise, with a balance of +15%.

There is also parallel growth in the area taken up, its +31% balance marking a clear improvement both with respect to the quarter which ended in September (+8%) and to the end of 2013 (+12%).

The data on visitor intake was also positive: increasing for 53.87 of respondents, unvarying for 23.07% and decreasing for 23.06%. The balance of +31% confirms the positive dynamic, despite a less marked increase with respect to the previous quarter (+36%). The cross section of visitors highlights an increase in Italians, with a balance of +35%, followed by Europeans (balance +27%) and non-Europeans, who record a positive balance of 15%. Finally, confirming a trend of recovery in the sector, the development of turnover in the quarter under consideration marks a balance of 12%, positive despite a slight decrease with respect to the previous quarter (+16%) but decidedly encouraging when compared to the end-of-year figure in 2013, when the balance was zero.

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AEFI - the Italian Exhibition and Trade Fair Association - was set up in 1983 with a view to generating synergies between the most significant Italian exhibition districts. Specifically, AEFI would like to be seen as a privileged partner for operators and institutions alike, and its role is to support members through the development of activities and programmes in the sphere of training, marketing and promotion plus research, as well as to provide services for trade fairs through the activities of its Committees: the Exhibition Hub Technical Committee, the Administrative-Legal Committee, the Trade Fairs Network Committee, the IT and Technical Innovation Committee, and the new Initiatives and Programmes Committee.

On an international scale, AEFI represents Italian trade fairs in UFI-Union des Foires Internationales. Chaired by Ettore Riello, AEFI includes 33 member exhibition districts, which organise over 1,000 events a year over an overall exhibition area of 4.2 million square metres. Most international trade fairs, and 85% of all trade fairs, which take place each year in Italy, are held in AEFI-member exhibition districts.

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