

## GLOBAL EXHIBITIONS DAY 2017

### **A MEETING AT THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES TO PRESENT ITALIAN TRADE FAIRS AND GENERATE INTEREST IN THE SECTOR AMONG THE INSTITUTIONS**

On the occasion of **Global Exhibitions Day 2017**, celebrated on 7<sup>th</sup> June, the **AEFI - Associazione Esposizioni e Fiere Italiane** reserved a meeting for its **members**, who met the representatives of the **Italian Institutions** at the **Refectory Room of the Chamber of Deputies Library**.

***“Promotion and regulatory context: key factors for the development of the Trade Fair System and Italian Industry”*** is the title of the closed-door meeting to take stock of the strategies for promotion and the regulatory context, as well as to highlight the burden of local taxation, the **IMU** in particular, on exhibition districts.

After thanking the members of the Italian Parliament for accepting the Association’s invitation – even in such an intense moment in political life – **AEFI Chairman Ettore Riello’s** speech recalled the figures of the sector and the role that it plays in the country’s economy: **955 exhibitions, 200 of which international in nature**, are scheduled to take place in Italian exhibition districts this year. In total, the 955 trade fairs involve **200,000 exhibitors** and **22 million visitors**; 13 million of them – 10% of which from abroad – are attracted by the international exhibitions.

**Riello** went on to stress that Italian trade fairs create **60 billion euros’ worth of business, generating 50% of the exports** of our companies and that for **75% of industrial concerns and 88.5% of Italian SMEs**, the ‘trade fair’ tool is a fundamental means of development outside the country.

These figures demonstrate that the **Italian trade fair sector represents a great growth opportunity for our country: “a colossal investment, that should be assessed, emphasised and supported correctly”**.

*“For years, as AEFI, we have raised the awareness of the Institutions regarding the role of trade fairs as an instrument in the country’s economic policy and the need for specific intervention and clarification in terms of legislation so that Fairs can continue to represent an instrument of growth for Italian businesses,”* stressed the Chairman in his report. *“Thanks to the constant work of the Association and the sensitivity of the Ministry of Economic Development, we have gained some important recognition,”* added **Riello**. So it is that in 2015 trade fairs found their way into the Special Italian Manufacturing Promotional Plan, a turning point that started to generate the conditions enabling global competition. *“We are grateful for the attention received to this point, which however risks being undermined by the absence of concrete responses to the requests of the sector in relation to taxation of trade fair halls and regulations on company structures and operating methods,”* continued Riello.

Chairman Riello **reminded the Members of Parliament present that trade fairs are an instrument in the industrial policy** and as such **perform essential activities necessary for the development of the country**. In a national economic context still marked by ups and downs and a global scenario that sees continual investment in the sector, from China to Germany and from France to Thailand, *“failing to support a fundamental asset in the growth and development of businesses would slow down an already weak recovery,”* continued **Riello**.

Among the various themes not yet clarified, Chairman Riello **urged the Institutions to intervene urgently with respect to the IMU** and define a fiscal policy with respect to trade fair real estate appropriately, with a sustainable level of taxation.

*“What we have asked of all institutional bodies is that taxation, with regard to the application of the IMU, be more just with respect to trade fair halls, which are currently treated as commercial facilities, and not calculating the days effectively used for the exhibitions,” explained **Ettore Riello**.*

Italian decree no. 50 of 24<sup>th</sup> April 2017 is under examination within the Budget Commission, with respect to local finance. *“I would urge you to intervene on this text to avoid removing profitability and competitiveness from the sector,” added **Riello**, “because trade fairs, all of them, each with their own particular qualities, can play a vital role in relaunching our country, lending new life to local areas and acting as incubators for growing sectors”.*

The Chairman concluded hoping for particular attention to ensure trade fair regulations that govern the sector, recalling that it remains necessary to *“Coordinate the System, because we’re all players in the same field: relaunching a spectacular country, one that too often fails adequately to showcase its own excellence”.*

The meeting continued with contributions from **Giulio Sapelli, Professor of Economic History at the University of Milan**, who dwelt on the role of Italian trade fairs in the national economy and their contribution to growth and internationalisation, and from **Nicola Aicardi, Professor of Administrative Law at the University of Bologna**, who illustrated all the technical aspects and issues that still require clarification in the existing regulations.

Thanks to the contributions from **Giovanni Barbato, Coordinator of the AEFI Legal Committee**, and from **Nazario Pedini, Vice Coordinator of the AEFI Technical Committee**, it was possible to explore specifically the implications that the distortion of the IMU, as it is currently applied, has for the balance sheets of trade fairs.

**AEFI - Associazione Esposizioni e Fiere Italiane**, a private non-profit Association, was established in 1983 with the goal of generating synergies between the most important Italian exhibition districts. 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, promotion and research, as well as to provide services for trade fairs through the activities of its Committees: Exhibition Hub Technical Committee, Legal-Administrative Committee, Internationalisation Committee and Trade Fairs Network Committee.

On the internationalization front, AEFI supports members thanks to agreements with strategic markets. To date, partnerships have been agreed with Iran, Taiwan, Lebanon and India and a memorandum of understanding has been signed with AmCham, the American Chamber of Commerce in Italy.

AEFI, together with CFI-Confindustria, CFT-Confindustria and Unioncamere, has promoted the foundation of ISFCert, the Certification Institute for Exhibition Industry Statistics which, through rigorous methodologies, enables Italian organisers to present and recognise standardised data, in the name of transparency and reliability.

AEFI represents Italian trade fairs in UFI - Union of International Fairs. Chaired by Ettore Riello, AEFI includes 35 member exhibition districts, which organise over 1,000 events a year over an overall exhibition area of 4.2 million square metres. 95% of international trade fairs, and 85% of all trade fairs, which take place each year in Italy, are held in AEFI-member exhibition districts.

[www.aefi.it/Aefi/site/en/index](http://www.aefi.it/Aefi/site/en/index)

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