

AEFI for the 2019 Global Exhibitions Day
"COLLABORATION AND SUSTAINABILITY: change drivers for Italian fairs"

A work group at MISE has been announced

#GED19 #AEFIGED2019

Rome, 5 June 2019 - Today in Rome, at the **Ara Pacis Auditorium** was the fourth **Global Exhibitions Day**, a celebratory event created in 2016 by the UFI Global Association of the Exhibition Industry and one that has immediately become the annual event of reference for the sector worldwide.

For the occasion, [AEFI](#) (the Italian Association of Trade Fairs and Exhibitions) organised an event entitled **"Collaboration and Sustainability: Change Drivers For Italian Fairs"** focusing on collaboration to become stronger and more competitive and to achieve systemic goals in global economy perspective.

"The Global Exhibition Day is also an opportunity to solicit the opinions of the public, institutions and financial world on the centrality of the Italian trade fair sector and the need for urgent action in terms of reinforcing and defining the strategic role of trade fairs within the country's industrial policies", commented Giovanni Laezza, President of AEFI to open the works. "It will be a chance to promote trade fairs as drivers for the sustainable growth of company business and to highlight the contribution exhibitions make to the achieving of those sustainable development goals set out by the UN".

The sector is a strong engine of development on **world level**. According to UFI 2018 data, **EUR 115.9 billion are spent by exhibitors and visitors** and **1.3 million people are employed**, rising to **3.2 million considering allied industries, such as transport, accommodation and food service**.

Every year, the **32,000 trade fair events** worldwide attract more than **300 million visitors** and **4,500,000 exhibitors**. **Italy is a leader in this sector, second in Europe and fourth in the world**. With 200,000 exhibitors, over 20,000 global operators and about 1000 events on the 2019 calendar, of which 200 international, the sector has a significant weight in Italian economy.

*"Italian trade fairs generate business for **EUR 60 billion** and promote **50% of the exports of the participating companies**. They are a fundamental tool for extraordinary development, able to react to crisis situations by innovating and renewing", said President Laezza. - "They are a strategic asset that must be supported with dedicated measures".*

Today's meeting was also the opportunity to focus on contributions by authorities whose presence is a further sign of attention to the sector: **Giuseppe Mazzeella**, Director of Agenzia ICE; **Nicola Lener**, Central Director for Internationalisation of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, **Fabrizio Lucentini**, Director General for Internationalisation Policies of the MISE, **Giuseppe Tripoli**, Secretary General of Unioncamere and **Stefano Bonaccini**, President of the Conference of Regions and Autonomous Provinces all attended the event.

In their introductory speeches they highlighted the value of trade fair activity with respect to the growth of exports in recent years. This result that was possible also thanks to the contribution of the *Extraordinary Plan for Made in Italy* to the sector.

Collaboration as union, cross-contamination and sharing of ideas was the leitmotif of the round table that brought together representatives of Italian trade fairs in a dialogue with Undersecretary at the Ministry of Economic Development, **Michele Geraci**. *"CREATING A SYSTEM is good for the entire sector and means collaboration at all levels. First and foremost, between fairs, where there are many opportunities for collaboration, not only from a corporate point of view, but also in terms of products and supply chains, to be more competitive abroad. And also on national economy level, where all the players are involved and everyone provides their contribution to ensure that our trade fairs are recognised*

as one of the levers of the industrial policy of the country", shared **Antonio Bruzzone**, General Manager of BolognaFiere and Vice President of AEFI, **Lorenzo Cagnoni**, President of the Italian Exhibition Group and Vice President of AEFI, **Fabrizio Curci**, Managing Director of Fiera Milano and Vice President of AEFI, **Maurizio Danese**, President of Veronafiere and Vice President of AEFI, **Renzo Piraccini**, President of Cesena Fiera and Coordinator of the AEFI Internationalisation Commission, together with **Giovanni Laezza** in his dual capacity as President of AEFI and General Manager of Riva del Garda Fierecongressi.

Undersecretary Geraci acknowledged the appeal and invited AEFI and its members to join integrated work group on the exhibition sector with MISE and ICE to jointly identify the best strategy to enhance and strengthen the role of fairs.

"We hope that this work group can become permanent," Giovanni Laezza added. The presence of trade fairs in the **National Control Room**, as in other European countries, would promote the coordination of the action of AEFI with the activities of Ministries and Institutions for optimal strategic planning of resources for the sector.

There are several other issues that the association would like to address with the Government, including Article **49 of the Growth Decree** (still under discussion) which, while recognising the trade fairs as an engine for development, the fact that of not having been extended to Italian international trade fairs held in our country represents a serious penalty for our economic system.

The Global Exhibitions Day continued in the afternoon with a round table focusing on a discussion on **Italian trade fairs (BolognaFiere, Ferrara Fiere Congressi, Fiera Bolzano, Fiera Milano, Fiera Roma, Firenze Fiera, leg-Italian Exhibition Group, Riva del Garda Fierecongressi, Veronafiere and Villa Erba)** sharing their best practices in terms of eco-sustainability from the point of view of exhibition halls, organisational processes and specialised exhibitors with the aim of generating positive emulations, because trade fairs are an efficient and sustainable way to do business and can contribute to achieving a sustainable world.

[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 internationalisation front, AEFI supports members thanks to agreements with strategic markets. To date, partnerships have been agreed with Iran, Taiwan, Lebanon, India, Thailand and South Africa, with AmCham, the American Chamber of Commerce in Italy, with CENTREX, the International Exhibition Statistics Union and with EUPIC-EU Project Innovation Center. A memorandum of understanding has been signed with SACE and SIMEST.

AEFI 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 Giovanni Laezza, AEFI counts 36 member exhibition districts, which organise over 1000 events a year across an overall exhibition area of 4.2 million square metres. Nearly all international and national trade fairs which take place each year in Italy are held in AEFI-member exhibition districts.

www.aefi.it/en/

For further information

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