

Italy as the showcase of the world: Italian fairs and expos positive trends in 2018.

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This year, Italian fairs and expos are recording increasingly positive numbers. In the third trimester, July-September 2018, according to the data collected by the AEFI (*Associazione esposizioni e fiere italiane*) Economic Observatory the exhibition sector improved on last year's numbers. The survey, which involved 28 AEFI-member Italian trade fair highlights a significant positive trend of all the indicators taken into account: number of exhibitions, total exhibitors and visitors, taken space and total turnover. The forecast for the final quarter of 2018 is also positive. The number of exhibitions is increasing once again. The balance is decidedly positive (+25%), with a strong quarterly and yearly growth, as the same period registered a -8% in 2017. Exhibitors' numbers are also growing: almost half of the survey sample (46%) reported an increase while, of the remaining ones, a 17.85% recorded a downturn in participation. The balance (given by the result of the difference between those who forecast an increase and those who forecast a decrease) is close to a 29% increase, a very good result both compared to the previous quarter, when it stood at +11%, and to the end of September 2017, when it was +12%.

If we look at the exhibitors' provenance, both Italian and European exhibitors' performance is more than satisfying, as they both record a 21% growth, while non-EU exhibitors trail them closely with +18%. Visitors' numbers are steady if not looking upwards in the majority of cases: for 40.74% of the sample, they increased, while for a similar percentage they remained unchanged. A +22% balance is decidedly positive and marking an increase both over the previous quarter (recording a zero net total) and over the end of September 2017 when the balance was +4%. With regard to guest provenance, the results highlight greater dynamism among Italian visitors, with a net gain of +21%, followed by Europeans (+11%). The attendees from outside the EU remained stable. Forecasts for the final quarter of the year are optimistic. For the majority of the survey-takers, expectations are positive for all indicators: 46.42% of the districts that took part in the survey foresee an increase in the number of exhibitions, and 53.56% predict an increase in exhibitors and space taken. Expectations regarding the number of visitors are also promising: an increase of 44% and stable for 37%. The balance of +26% reinforces this positive impression.

Source: AEFI