

## **ITALY'S FASHION INDUSTRY WANTS TO GET GOING AGAIN WITH TRADE FAIRS BUT DEMANDS CLEAR DECISIONS AND CERTAIN DATES**

Trade fairs are an essential asset for SME's and industry in Italy, and starting them up again would be an important trigger for recovery of the national economy. This is why Italy's biggest fashion trade shows, **PITTI Uomo, Bimbo, Filati** and **Taste** in June, **Milano Unica** (showcasing excellence in fabrics and accessories) in July and the September shows **MICAM Milano** (the international footwear show), **MIPEL** (the international event for leather goods and accessories), **TheONE Milano** (the women's haut-à-porter show), **LINEAPELLE** (an exhibition of innovative leathers, fabrics, accessories and components), **DaTE** (an exhibition of advanced eyewear) and **HOMI Fashion&Jewels Exhibition** (featuring costume jewellery and fashion accessories), are asking the government for absolute certainty about when they will be able to open their doors again, holding their events in compliance with the health and safety regulations and protocols for both exhibitors and visitors.

The trade fair organisers are asking the government to announce, in the next Decree of the Council of Ministers, expected to be issued on April 6, permission to organise trade fair events compatibly with protection of public health. Organising an international B2B trade fair, open only to professionals in the trade, requires a lot of advanced planning and set-up, and cannot be accomplished in a matter of a few days. Continued uncertainty could put the whole fall season at risk.

While there is currently public debate about resuming certain events and activities in the summer, there has been absolutely no mention of trade fairs: an essential industry for the Italian economy, generating an estimated turnover of 60 billion Euro a year, according to the CFI. B2B events are an essential driver of enterprise in the country: 50% of our exports are the result of contacts made during trade fairs, representing a total volume of 251 billion Euro a year, with a return on investment of 8 Euro per Euro invested.

Professional B2B trade fairs do not permit entry of crowds of visitors from among the general public, and have always been an essential tool for industrial policy; starting them up again could give a major boost to overcoming the current social and economic slump. Delaying the reopening of trade fairs, or continuing to stop them from being held, means holding back the resumption of international trade and promotion of Italian goods essential to get the country going again.