



FIERA MILANO

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**Fiera Milano
Press Office**

Rosy Mazzanti
Simone Zavettieri
+39 0249977457
+39 335 6992328
press.bit@fieramilano.it

**Trade and foreign press office
Flaviana Facchini RP**
+ 39 339 6401271
flavianafacchini@gmail.com

Fiera Milano S.p.A.
+39 02 4997 7134
fieramilano@fieramilano.it
fieramilano.it

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BIT 2025: the International Tourism Exchange confirms itself as a reference point for anticipating travel trends

Milan, 10 July 2024 - With the high season just around the corner, as per tradition the **International Tourism Exchange**, organised by **Fiera Milano - next edition [at Fieramilano in Rho from 9 to 11 February 2025](#)** - **takes** stock of the most interesting trends for operators, while the team continues to work on **consolidating the parterre of exhibitors**, which grew by 7% in the last edition.

A veritable **observatory on the sector**, which confirms the event as an unmissable moment of **knowledge sharing** both in the exhibition area and in the **programme of meetings and in-depth discussions**: from regenerative tourism to the key role played by events and the impact of digitalisation, **[the anticipations of the last edition have become this year's trends](#)**.

Towards BIT 2025: a scenario of recovery

Globally, 2023 ended with **1.29 billion international arrivals**, a strong growth compared to 2022, when they had been 960 million. And **Europe** confirmed itself as the top destination with **around 700 million arrivals, more than half (54%)** of the total. The tourist expenditure figure is also remarkable: **1.7 trillion dollars** in line with pre-pandemic values (source: *UN Tourism*). Regarding **Italy**, 2023 closed with **133.6 million arrivals (+12.8%** compared to 2022) and **447.1 million presences (+8.5%)** (source: *ISTAT*).

What, on the other hand, is in store for this year? Although the sector will face challenges such as overtourism and rising costs, the overall picture is positive. UN Tourism also estimates further growth in international arrivals in the first three months of the year at **285 million (+19% over 2023)** while, according to the May 2024 survey of the **European Travel Commission**, **75%** of Europeans intend to make at least one trip this summer, **+3%** compared to last year. **Italy** confirms itself as **the most appealing destination (8.4%** of travel intentions) followed by **Spain**



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(8.1%), France (7.1%) e Greece (6.3%), and about half of the travellers will be **repeaters**.

Again according to ETC, the target group most likely to travel are the **over-55s (81%)**, while **solo travellers (61%)** and those **travelling with friends (58%)** are the most interested in **multiple holidays**. And while the importance of the **sun & beach** segment is confirmed, more and more tourists are also looking for **natural beauty (19%)**, **local cuisine (17%)**, **culture and monuments (15%)**.

Another confirmation comes from the **air traffic** data from Italian airports: in May alone there were **20.1 million** passengers (**+13.2%** over 2023) and **over 159,000** movements (**+10.3%**) (source: *Assaeroporti*). Analyst Forward Keys predicts a further **+12%** for international arrivals: the long-haul portion, led by the **United States (+14%** over 2023), is set to grow, as are the proximity markets, notably including **Spain (+44%)**, **Denmark (+43%)** and **Austria (+30%)**.

Looking abroad, the **Welcome Travel Group** observatory reports particular interest in **Egypt, Greece and the Balearic Islands** in the short to medium haul range, while in the long haul range, the queen of the summer is **North America**, followed by **Japan, the Caribbean, Thailand, Madagascar, Kenya and Zanzibar**. Also worth mentioning are **crui**ses, which again in 2024 see **Italy as the leading European destination**, with an estimated **14 million** passengers (it was 13.8 in 2023) and over **5,200 berths** in no less than **60 ports**.

Business development insights based on the trends

Beyond the numbers, thanks to **Fiera Milano** 's constant dialogue with all the stakeholders in the supply chain, the **BIT 2025 Observatory** has identified some of the trends most likely to be converted into business opportunities.

If on the one hand the buzzword is **emotional travel** under the banner of green awareness and the pursuit of spaces and times for wellbeing, on the other hand, monitoring **lifestyle trends** reveals an interest in combining holidays and work in the same trip: workation, bleisure, team bonding and digital nomadism are increasingly used words and these forms of 'tourism' are becoming more and more popular: 12% of Italians intend to practice at least one of these in 2024 (double the percentage in 2023), while 50% say they are generically interested in doing so in the future, with Millennials and Gen Z among them (source: *EY*).



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And these are not the only ones. One of the most notable 2024 innovations is **coolcationing**, the search for 'cool' places to go to on holiday as a response to climate change and global warming, but the whole world of **outdoor, active and nature holidays** is growing in general: from **spiritual walks** to **cycle tourism** - which generated **56.8 million presences** in Italy in 2023, with a return of **5.5 billion euro** (*source: Isnart*) - up to real **adventure** holidays, which in Europe alone translates into **more than 100 million international trips per year** (*source: Adventure Travel Trade Association*).

Events are also in the foreground with major ones such as the **G7** and the summer and winter **Olympics** setting the scene. The latest **ICCA report** indicates that, in just 5 years, Italy has gone from sixth to **first place in Europe and second in the world** for conference tourism, with **no fewer than 7 cities in the global Top 100**. In Italy, the role of Milan stands out. Thanks to one of the largest congress centres in Europe, **Allianz Mico, managed by Fiera Milano Congressi**, it hosts major international conferences.

A formula that is always effective for meeting new challenges

BIT 2025 responds to these themes and challenges with the constant evolution of the exhibition formula, which sees **a new location at Fieramilano in Rho**: the areas dedicated to **Leisure, Italy and World** will benefit from a more linear layout and smoother access, especially on the **day open to the public of travellers** on Sunday 9 February. There will also be a new hospitality area and events with high social potential to engage younger travellers and **Gen Z** in particular.

As usual, the conference programme of **Bringing Innovation into Travel** is also very rich. Just to give a few examples, the role of **continuing education** in the industry will be discussed, with a **focus on the digital sphere and the customer experience**, also in response to the increasing **demand for qualified personnel**.

The spotlight will also shine on **next-generation technologies** such as AI, with its impact on personalising the journey, optimising operations and improving customer interaction.

Sustainability and emotion-driven tourism will also be in the foreground, the former meeting the need to spread good practices and the latter stemming from the growing awareness of travellers.

Macro-themes such as **aviation, luxury, travel risk management**, up to the **scouting of new destinations** to prepare the tourism product of the future will also be on the agenda.



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The date with BIT 2025 is at **Fieramilano in Rho from 9 to 11 February 2025.**

For up-to-date information on the event: bit.fieramilano.it, [@bitmilano](https://twitter.com/bitmilano)