



**FIERA MILANO**

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## INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY PROTECTION AT FIERA MILANO

*Collaboration between Fiera Milano and EUIPO aimed at raising awareness of intellectual property issues among companies*

*Milan, 04 April 2023.* The trade in counterfeit products constitutes one of the most significant criminal phenomena facing companies and, in particular, impacts those who invest in creativity, innovation and research.

For this reason, Fiera Milano will cooperate with EUIPO (European Union Intellectual Property Office) in order to raise awareness among exhibiting companies on the issue of intellectual property. Fiera Milano thus chooses to become a leading player by personally making a commitment in this sense, since it is aware that trade fairs have always been considered privileged platforms for Research & Development, innovation and for the launch of new products. In particular, start-ups and SMEs represent the majority of exhibitors at trade fairs in Europe.

In doing so, Fiera Milano will also implement, for the first time in the national and European exhibition context, the agreement signed in June 2022 between EUIPO, EMECA, the European association of large exhibition centres and UFI, the global association of the trade fair industry, which provides for the European IP protection agency, offering its expertise through communication, webinars and activities for raising awareness in order to increasingly educate stakeholders and bring greater understanding of why it is essential to protect one's intellectual property. EUIPO has in fact made available for EMECA and UFI members information and dissemination material (videos, brochures, direct links on product websites) to help raise awareness of IP, in particular by promoting the Fund dedicated to SMEs, for a value of 27,1 million euro, aimed at providing financial support to European companies interested in registering their trade marks and designs at the national, European and international level. This initiative is supported by the European Commission in cooperation with national and regional EU intellectual property offices (for more information on the Fund: <https://euipo.europa.eu/ohimportal/it/online-services/sme-fund>).

*"Approximately 36,000 companies pass through Fiera Milano every year, where we host them in our exhibition spaces," says **Luca Palermo, Managing Director and General Manager of Fiera Milano.** "This is an industrial and cultural heritage that must be protected and defended to ensure the competitiveness and recognisability of Made in Italy in the world. These actions further corroborate a number of services we offer our exhibitors, including the possibility of taking advantage of a special Intellectual Property Service, a quick and effective protection desk, which allows for immediate action for protecting intellectual property rights that are infringed or threatened during an event".*

*"Initiatives such as the one promoted at Fiera Milano," said **Valentino Valentini, Deputy Minister for Enterprise and Made in Italy,** "are essential for providing new opportunities for information and support to our SMEs on the protection of intellectual property as a tool for innovation and competitiveness. In addition to these tools, at Mimit we are developing a number of technological tools to enhance anti-counterfeiting and traceability, such as smart labels and blockchain".*

At the national level, in Italy, the Italian Patent and Trademark Office (UIBM) of the Ministry of Enterprise and Made in Italy operates, which has always been alongside national companies and research centres. At the beginning of 2022, UIBM and CFI



**FIERA MILANO**

(Comitato Fiere Industria - Association of Industrial Trade Fair Organisers) signed an agreement with the aim of making companies attending trade fairs aware of the issues of valorisation and protection of industrial property rights as well as the importance and problems of the counterfeiting phenomenon.

*“EMECA, together with UFI and through the EEIA (The European Exhibition Industry Alliance), has been following all intellectual protection discussions at the European level for years,” states **Barbara Weizsäcker, Secretary General of EMECA.** “And we are pleased when these discussions result in concrete actions for the benefit of the companies taking part in our trade fairs. The initiative with EUIPO confirms the commitment of trade fairs to support and protect the intellectual property rights of their exhibitors. In addition to the Exhibition Priority Certificate, this initiative is another important step in strengthening the role of the trade fair as a protected stage for commercial and intellectual exchange, where innovations can find fertile ground for valorisation and development. For this reason, a direct line of communication is always maintained with the relevant national patent offices and EUIPO and we are proud to increasingly facilitate collaborative actions between the relevant actors, as is the case with this concrete initiative today in Milan”.*