

# EMILIA-ROMAGNA

## The past, present and future of Made in Italy

Italy's most outward-looking region successfully blends its legendary tradition of manufacturing excellence with the country's strongest innovation capabilities

Strategically located as the bridge between North and South Europe, the Central-North Italian region of Emilia-Romagna is among the country's most vibrant, wealthy, productive and outward-looking areas: although its population of 4.5 million people is just 7.6% of Italy's total, it generates 13.4% of national export revenues.

"Emilia-Romagna is Italy's top region for per-capita exports, one of its key industrial engines and a leader in high-value sectors. One driver for my administration is protecting this manufacturing strength," reveals the region's President Michele de Pascale. "Our industries achieve the highest levels of quality, complexity, specialization and innovation, making us one of the most advanced places in Italy. In automotives, for instance, our luxury brands and motorsport sector is globally unique and linked into the aerospace industry," he continues. "Emilia-Romagna is synonymous with agri-food quality and transparency as well. When you buy balsamic vinegar, Parma ham, Parmigiano-Reggiano or another of our many Protected Designation of Origin goods, you know where the crops have been grown, the livestock raised and the product made."

The region is also a European leader in ceramics, pharmaceuticals and biomedical equipment, textiles and fashion, and specialty industrial machinery for sectors such as packaging. What all these industries and more have in common is the

MICHELE DE PASCALE  
PRESIDENT

**"We would welcome more US investors in Emilia-Romagna, an open region and inviting destination."**

ability to blend legacies of traditional excellence with world-class creativity. Emilia-Romagna ranks first among Italian regions for innovation according to the European Union's Innovation Scoreboard and its research and development spend is 13.1% of the national total.

Its rich innovation ecosystem contains seven universities, including the University of Bologna, the oldest university in the Western world. It also has over 90 R&D centers, "Technopoles" and "Clust-ER" hubs for collaborative private and public bodies in specific sectors, more than 40 incubators and accelerators and around 1,100 entrepreneurial startups. De Pascale highlights an important node in this ecosystem: "DAMA Technopole in Bologna is one of the EU's three hubs for supercomputing innovation. It hosts major infrastructure, including Leonardo, one of the world's most powerful supercomputers."

Beyond the region's advanced manufacturing prowess, it is receiving increasing attention from international travelers. "Emilia-Romagna



The 15th-century Torrechiara Castle just outside Parma, one of the region's cultural and historic gems.



Michele de Pascale  
President

has a network of art cities with UNESCO World Heritage recognition: Bologna, Modena, Parma, Ravenna and Ferrara. They boast deep historical and cultural heritage, without the overcrowding of cities like Rome, Florence or Venice," he

says. "We also have our Riviera Romagnola with seaside resort towns such as Rimini that are renowned for beach and sports tourism. Inland, we have two national parks and the Po River Delta — natural environments of exceptional beauty. Our business tourism sector is strong too."

The region has four airports and is at the crossroads of all Italy's main highways and high-speed rail lines, making it extremely easy to visit. "We also have a large cruise terminal in Ravenna under construction," adds de Pascale. "We're already seeing more US visitors arriving here and exploring Emilia-Romagna before continuing on Mediterranean cruises."

**Top-5 region in Europe for FDI strategy**  
One factor that draws tourists, international residents and investors to the region is an outstanding quality of life — its public healthcare system is extremely strong, for instance. In 2023, Emilia-Romagna became the first Italian region to pass a law aimed at attracting and retaining specialized global talents by helping them launch professional or research careers or to undertake high-level training. "We want to attract brains and have put forward a unique plan to do that," he

explains. "Finding housing is one concern people have, along with the need for more international schools."

Emilia-Romagna is also among the top-five large European regions for its foreign direct investment strategy, according to the Financial Times' FDI. It currently hosts about 1,700 international companies, which benefit from a business-oriented local government that provides assistance and incentives over and above those supplied by the central Italian government. "We support international investors by facilitating procedures too, ensuring they aren't intimidated by Italian bureaucracy," de Pascale insists.

The US is the region's biggest non-European partner in both investments and trade. "Our relationship with the US is part of our culture and DNA — if you consider family origins and traditions, there are perhaps more Italians living in the US than in Italy. Part of my family emigrated to New York, for example. In the US, you eat Italian, dress Italian, drive Italian, which makes it a unique and crucial market for us," he states. "We appreciate our strong ties and we would welcome more US investors in Emilia-Romagna, an open region and inviting destination for investment."

## Partnership with the US is a regional priority

Emilia-Romagna seeks to deepen collaboration in both established and emerging industries

In 2024, Emilia-Romagna's companies generated about \$200 billion, around 50% of that coming from exports. "We're the only Italian region that can claim such a high percentage," says the region's Vice President and Councilor for Economic Development and Green Economy Vincenzo Colla. "Our strength is in designing and manufacturing niche quality products; we would be lost in mass-market sectors."

The most avid consumers of Emilian-Romagnol excellence are in the US, which imported goods worth \$12.2 billion in 2024, an increase of 74% over the previous decade. That represents 12.5% of all Italy's exports to the US, with the region's motor vehicles, machinery, agri-food, pharmaceuticals and fashion being some of the in-demand product groups.

The US is also the most prominent non-European investor in the region. At present, it hosts about 220 US-owned companies with turnovers of more than \$1.1 million, which together bring in annual revenues of nearly \$14 billion and employ in excess of 23,000 people.

The largest single investment came in 2016, when Philip Morris International opened a \$1.7-billion fully automated factory for its smoke-free products. The tobacco giant further embedded itself in the region in 2022 by launching a manufacturing institute where local univer-



Vincenzo Colla  
Vice President and Councilor for Economic Development and Green Economy

sities and startups are accelerating innovation in its smokeless ecosystem.

"We have US companies in ceramics, biomedical and in many other sectors. I want to keep them all and gain more, which is why the region recently passed a law to attract and retain investments," Colla states. As well as the region's



Axiom's AX3 space mission took the region's research projects into orbit.

well-established industries, he reveals emerging areas in which Emilia-Romagna-US links are growing and promising opportunities exist.

"For example, we have excellent partnerships in aerospace, a sector with great growth potential. An illustration of the diversity of these is an agreement with Axiom that took our research and development into orbit on the AX3 space mission: food company Barilla studied food preparation, healthcare group GVM tested remote monitoring of the human body and luxury vehicle specialist Dallara researched materials like carbon fiber and titanium," he describes. "Another important investment area for us is the blue economy. For instance, we have luxury yachting and nautical industry expertise, while our universities are researching to areas such as purifying and reusing water in agricultural and industrial systems."

Plenty of opportunities exist for companies concerned with data and automation, thanks to Emilia-Romagna's status as a key European hub

for supercomputing and artificial intelligence, while the region's green economy sector is growing rapidly and now numbers over 7,000 firms.

"We support investments in areas like process and production sustainability, the circular economy and electric mobility," discloses Colla. "Our energy plan includes every source of renewable generation and green technologies. The new technologies, energy and sustainable economic development agency ENEA is researching next-generation nuclear in Emilia-Romagna, for instance, and we're part of the biggest European investment in carbon capture and storage."

Colla points out that the region has also fostered close research and academic relationships with US universities such as the University of Virginia, MIT, the University of Silicon Valley and Columbia University. "These are not new collaborations. Like all our US partnerships, we strive to expand and strengthen them over the long term."

### EMILIA-ROMAGNA'S ECONOMIC STRENGTH IN NUMBERS



There are **387,188** regional companies registered in the Emilia-Romagna region.



Exports from Emilia-Romagna totaled **\$97.2 billion** in 2024.



Mechanical engineering, food and fashion are among the biggest exporting sectors.



Emilia-Romagna's **9** exhibition centers welcome about 2 million visitors a year.



Motor Valley is home to iconic brands like Ferrari, Lamborghini and Maserati.



In 2023, Emilia-Romagna exported **\$13.6** billion worth of cars, **17.4%** of Italy's total.



Famous foods from Emilia-Romagna include balsamic vinegar and parmesan.



**44** foods and wines have protected origin status, **40%** of Italy's total.



Bologna hosts Leonardo, the world's **10th** most powerful supercomputer.



The region is number one in Italy for R&D expenses: **13.1%** of the country's total.



# Bologna: Capital of the knowledge region

Emilia-Romagna’s capital has carved out a new identity founded in knowledge, industry, internationalization, culture and carbon neutrality

Once referred to as Italy’s best-kept secret, Emilia-Romagna’s capital is increasingly taking its rightful place on the global stage. “Over the past 13 years, I’ve witnessed Bologna’s transformation. Once known mainly for its university, the city is now internationally connected through its cultural heritage, manufacturing sector, tourism and global trade events. Our exhibition center is among the top three in Europe,” says the city’s Mayor Matteo Lepore.



Matteo Lepore  
Mayor of Bologna

Founded in 1088, the University of Bologna — the oldest university in the Western world — is a major influence on a city with a population of about 1 million. “Thanks to the university, Bologna is one of the youngest cities in Italy — of its 100,000 students, about 70,000 live here. It shapes the city’s identity and energy,” he notes. “We’re known as the ‘City of Knowledge’ because of this strong academic presence and our numerous public and private research centers. This includes DAMA Technopole, Italy’s national computing hub. Innovation is central to our development.”

The capital has a long civic tradition in digital innovation. In the 1990s, it was the second city in Europe to offer citizens free internet and email access. “Today, with the Technopole, we’re advancing citizen science and a democratic approach to artificial intelligence and supercomputing,” Lepore notes. “We’re also developing a landing hub for AI and tech startups, using the Technopole to foster a strong digital innovation ecosystem. This area is a key pillar of our city’s future.”

Another pillar is its industrial might. Bologna and the city of Modena are Emilia-Romagna’s economic powerhouses, and the capital is home to over 100,000 businesses, ranging from multinationals to small entrepreneurial firms. It has

especially strong footholds in exporting manufacturing, agri-food, science and healthcare sectors, which benefit from its central location and excellent transport networks. “Bologna is now the third-leading city in Europe for international manufacturing investment, for example,” he states. “We welcome foreign investors and have an office in the city that supports and facilitates investors and talent. As well as our industrial sectors, opportunities are open in the airport, logistics and real estate sectors. In the latter, we’re redeveloping former industrial areas with a focus on sustainable and affordable housing.”

New arrivals will find an incredibly multicultural metropolis. As Giovanni Molari, the rector of the University of Bologna, points out: “Internationalization is very important to the city and



Built during the Middle Ages, Bologna’s leaning Twin Towers are iconic landmarks.

our university. Last year, we saw a 25% increase in international students, who now make up over 10% of our student body, a significant rise. With in that total, nearly 550 US students are currently studying with us.”

### Strong cultural and green credentials

As part of the city’s urban development strategy, Bologna’s council has chosen to invest heavily in the UNESCO Creative City of Music’s culture and creativity, a fact that is evidenced by its painstaking restoration of the UNESCO-listed porticos that line around 2.5 miles of the capital’s historic center, and its plans for restoring its unique medieval Twin Towers. The city is also adept at blending heritage with contemporary culture — as an illustration, an ancient bakery now houses an outstanding museum of contemporary art.

A second core element in its urban strategy is sustainable living and protecting its surrounding countryside, which includes the Apennine mountains, hills and agricultural plains.

“For example, the council has signed a city contract with over 100 public and private entities, all committing to achieving carbon neutrality by 2030. The total investment involved amounts to nearly \$13 billion, with each partner contributing through their own sustainability projects. This multi-stakeholder governance model aligns efforts across sectors — public transport companies, for instance, have shifted strategies, while

automotive giants Ducati and Lamborghini have joined to accelerate their green transitions. It’s a collaborative platform that drives innovation and is shaping a new sustainable identity for Bologna,” asserts Lepore. “By 2030, all transport in Bologna will be electric or carbon neutral, and two new tram lines will be completed. We’ve also launched a \$580-million plan to install solar panels on 300

MATTEO LEPORE  
MAYOR OF BOLOGNA

“Bologna is now the third-leading city in Europe for international manufacturing investment.”

municipal buildings, making them fossil fuel-free within four years. This is the first project of its kind in Italy.”

He is convinced that the evolving city offers an ideal destination for international investors: “One of Southern Europe’s innovation hubs, Bologna is a city of knowledge and quality of life. Choosing Bologna means choosing an efficient Italian city where you can raise your family and grow both personally and professionally. It’s a city for investment — and for living well. If you are looking to invest in Italy, Emilia-Romagna and Bologna are top choices.”

That community-based philosophy has engendered close collaboration between industries, universities and research centers, Sassi believes, noting that this has given rise to a large ecosystem fostering knowledge exchange, innovation and high specialization across different sectors. In addition, the region is a heavy investor in research, innovation, high-quality education and skills at every level, working closely with institutions to align training with industry needs.

With significant input from Confindustria, the region has also introduced legislation for attracting, retaining and supporting young global talent. “Our goal is to stay at the forefront of innovation and ensure Emilia-Romagna remains a competitive, productive and future-ready region,” explains Sassi. “As a result of this focus, our companies have been able to build on their expertise in areas such as mechanics and electromechanics to target emerging industries like aerospace.”

At the same time, Emilia-Romagna supports the digital transformation of businesses through initiatives such as Bologna’s big-data and supercomputing center, which is managed by the Cineca university consortium. Cineca’s DAMA Technopole is one of three major data hubs, the others being a meteorology center and the laboratories of the Italian National Agency for New Technologies, Energy and Sustainable Economic Development, ENEA.

“That demonstrates the region’s commitment to sustainability. It actively supports companies investing in both advanced and green technologies,” she says. “For over a decade, Emilia-Romagna has been investing in renewable energy and circular economy programs. Many of our companies have made strong progress and, today, our manufacturing sector has impressively low emissions — a substantial achievement for such an industrial region. Emilian-Romagnoli ceram-

ics, for example, have reached outstanding levels of sustainability.”

Nearly 200 US businesses have joined Emilia-Romagna’s vibrant industrial ecosystem. “Philip Morris International is a great example of a successful greenfield investment and there are numerous other strong illustrations of direct US investment. More of the region’s companies are now investing in the US too, an effort Confindustria Emilia-Romagna has supported together with the US Consulate,” states Sassi. “We believe

ANNALISA SASSI  
PRESIDENT  
CONFININDUSTRIA EMILIA-ROMAGNA  
“Our manufacturing sector has impressively low emissions — a substantial achievement for such an industrial region.”

this exchange benefits both economies and communities, creating valuable opportunities for growth on both sides. The US is a great nation with dynamic people, companies and markets, and many of our companies work closely with US businesses. We share a similar mindset, which makes collaboration open, clear and effective. Emilia-Romagna is a dynamic region and we value having equally dynamic partners.”

Sassi would encourage more US investors to consider Emilia-Romagna: “Quality of life and healthcare are excellent, it’s safe, and our institutions work to ensure inclusivity, equal opportunities and strong support for working women. And we put the private sector and manufacturing at the center of our economy, with a strong focus on innovation, digitalization and sustainability.”



Valerio Soli  
CEO, Marchesini Group

One of its priorities is constantly reducing emissions generated and energy consumed by its solutions, and it creates machines that can handle any type of packaging including, for instance, paper tray and recyclable components. “In our clients’ sectors, the consumer and product safety always come first, so we don’t demonize any material. We fully support the industry, recognizing the crucial part plastic and other materials play in their products,” notes Soli.

To guarantee its workforce’s skill base remains at the forefront of its industry, Marchesini Group has links with schools, universities and technical institutes, and it invests heavily in training. “Our people are what make the group function.



Therefore, training and caring for them is at the heart of our strategy. Since they tend to stay with us long-term, we believe it’s vital to contribute to their professional growth,” he stresses. “We’ve always valued the people in the companies we’ve acquired too. Our acquisitions in the region have never been made for financial reasons — aligning values and a greater connection with other high-tech companies have been central.”

Looking forward, the group aims to reach over \$1 billion in annual revenues via three growth pillars. First, it intends to expand organically by investing substantially in research and development to enrich its range of cutting-edge solutions. Second, it aims to make further mergers and acquisitions in Italy, Europe, the US or elsewhere. “The commonality in these will be technological excellence and firms that can strengthen our product portfolio,” he discloses. “Third, we’re planning to open more subsidiaries abroad to ensure we’re alongside our multinational clients.”

Soli is a firm advocate of dose international collaborations: “The US, for example, is a very important partner for us. Despite recent turbulent months, we believe in the North American market and in our relationship with the US. We will not only maintain our support for the North American market, we will expand it and we will always be on the side of our customers: the American people.”



The Roman Tiberius Bridge in Rimini.

# The soul-stirring beating heart of Italy

Emilia-Romagna stands out as a high-quality tourist destination offering a unique blend of authentic cultural, natural, gastronomic, sports, wellness and business experiences

In 2024, Emilia-Romagna welcomed more than 4 million international visitors, a record figure reflecting the rising awareness that the high-quality destination is “the Beating Heart of Italy,” a unique environment where passion, tradition, innovation, warm hospitality and a comprehensive blend of attractions meet.

“Located literally at the heart of the country, Emilia-Romagna contains an incredible variety of unforgettable experiences,” confirms the region’s Councilor for Tourism, Commerce and Sport Roberta Frisoni. For example, it offers rich cultural and historic heritage, spectacular natural landscapes, fantastic foods and wines, sport is a key element of its identity, and it hosts world-famous industries and events. Furthermore, by strategically building an authentic, experience-based tourism model that connects industry, culture, gastronomy, nature and sport, Emilia-Romagna is increasingly attracting not only leisure tourists but also business and health travelers.

Its renowned architectural treasures span over 2,000 years, from Etruscan remains to Art Nouveau masterpieces. The majority are clustered on or near the ancient Roman Via Emilia road that runs through the region and links evocative ruins, enchanting castles, stunning villages and 11 breathtaking art cities. Three of those are UNESCO World Heritage sites: Ravenna for its glorious early-Christian mosaic-encrusted churches, Ferrara that is known as “the City of the Renaissance,” and Modena, which holds magnificent 12th-century structures. Other highlights include Parma’s 16th-century Palazzo della Pilotta, the UNESCO-listed medieval porticos in the region’s capital, Bologna, and the outstanding Roman remains in Rimini’s pedestrianized center.

In addition to architectural wonders, Emilia-Romagna’s vibrant cities abound with culture, as befits a region where the golden voice of Luciano Pavarotti rose, Giuseppe Verdi composed operas, Leonardo da Vinci was inspired and Federico Fellini created his most memorable films. The region’s cultural heritage and equally absorbing contemporary artistic innovators are lauded in a year-round program of festivals, events and itineraries, as well as in copious permanent spaces.

Emilia-Romagna’s landscapes are also open for discovery at any time of the year. It is among the greenest, most biodiverse parts of Italy, containing 17 natural parks and encompassing Apennines mountains capped with snow in winter, vast pine forests, ancient woods, rolling hills, plains, saltwater lagoons, Europe’s second-largest wetland area, golden sandy beaches and the clear blue Adriatic Sea. This variety makes it a haven for activities, from skiing to trekking along its 22 pilgrimage and hiking trails, cycling on a network of 10 routes covering the region, golf, climbing, kayaking, diving and surfing. While visitors who just want to unwind can pamper themselves at a tranquil spa resort, such as those in the town of Salsomaggiore, whose thermal baths have attracted guests since Roman times, or in Bagno di Romagna, a mountain town in Casentinesi Forest National Park.

The region’s Riviera Romagnola coastline competes with Europe’s best and provides experiences to captivate everyone, including spaces for total relaxation and joy-filled beaches where families and friends celebrate life.

Maintaining its natural environments is a priority for a region that is a pioneer in slow, sustainable tourism and a spearhead for sustainable urban and coastal regeneration. “Sustainability is central to our tourism strategy,” comments Frisoni. “From Ravenna to Cattolica, nearly 70 miles of coastline have been regenerated over



Roberta Frisoni  
Councilor for Tourism, Commerce and Sport

the past decade. Our seafronts now feature eco-friendly infrastructure, open-air gyms, bike paths, green spaces, inclusive playgrounds and accessible beaches designed for people with disabilities.” The authorities started this process by transforming more than 9 miles of waterfront in Rimini, a United Nations award-winning project that has become a local and international template for balancing tourism growth with climate resilience and inclusivity.

This focus on sustainability is shared by all stakeholders in the sector, including the farmers, fishermen, artisanal producers and winemakers that conserve the traditions behind extraordinary gastronomic delicacies. Emilia-Romagna is a paradise for food lovers and home to culinary

ROBERTA FRISONI  
COUNCILOR FOR TOURISM, COMMERCE AND SPORT

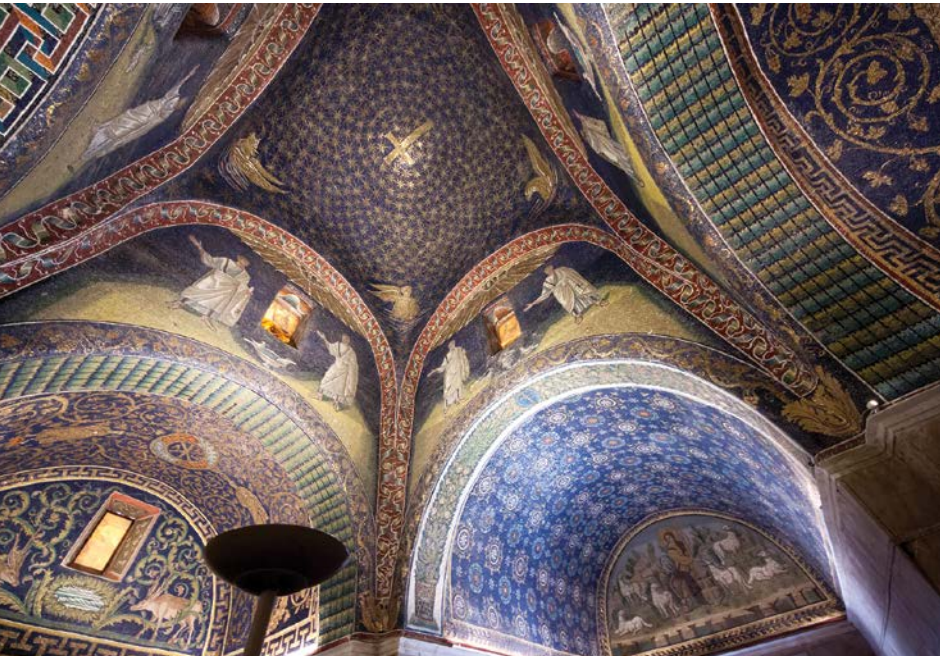
“Routes Europe 2026 will elevate Emilia-Romagna’s profile as a premier destination.”

experiences running the gamut from some of the world’s finest restaurants to street food, cooking schools and food museums. It also has a staggering 44 protected designation of origin and protected geographical indicator products. Each of these carries a story that resonates, with a few illustrations being the poetry of its handmade pasta, the eternal strength of Parmigiano Reggiano, the sparkle of Lambrusco and Sangiovese wines, the calmness of sea-breeze imbued Prosciutto di Parma and the warmth of balsamic vinegar.

### Sports and major events drive growth

Having nurtured industrial icons of beauty, speed and the Italian spirit like Ferrari, Maserati, Pagani, Lamborghini, Dallara and Ducati, Emilia-Romagna has long been described as Motor Valley. So it is the natural location for big annual events like Misano’s MotoGP and Modena’s Motor Valley Fest. More recently, however, the region has become Sport Valley by leveraging its strong sports culture and territory-wide first-class facilities to attract diverse large-scale sporting activities.

“We host top-tier events like the Giro d’Italia, three stages of the Tour de France for the first time in 2024 and Davis Cup tennis last year,” notes Frisoni. So successful was the latter tourna-



The mosaics of the Mausoleum of Galla Placidia in Ravenna.

ment that Bologna has been selected as the location for the Davis Cup 2025 finals, which will take place from 18-23 November in Bologna. Another notable event next June will further reinforce the region’s reputation as a sports destination. “We’re getting ready for Velo-city 2026 in Rimini. The world’s most important cycling event is returning to Italy after 35 years,” she enthuses. Over 400 speakers and 100 exhibitors will attend this summit that aims to shape the future of cycling and sustainable urban development. While there, attendees will be able to study Rimini’s pioneering regeneration initiatives, such as its 122-mile-long Bicipolitana cycling network.

Both Rimini and Bologna are also central nodes in the region’s meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions sector, which includes over 1,000 flexible facilities dedicated to business travel. In 2024, the Global Destination Index named Emilia-Romagna among Europe’s top MICE locations thanks to its venue quality, accessibility, logistics, efficiency, ability to attract international events and the promotion of the sector by the highly respected regional tourism promotion organization APT Servizi, which has close partnerships with convention bureaus and local businesses. Add the region’s famed hospitality, beauty, cuisine, new infrastructure development and excellent transport links into the mix, and it’s no surprise that its MICE sector is growing rapidly.

A cornerstone upcoming MICE event is Routes Europe, which will be held in Rimini from 18-20 May 2026. Over 1,200 delegates are expected at this prestigious forum focused on European flight connectivity, including 100 European airlines, airports, destinations, international tourism organizations and destination marketing organizations. “Hosting the globally recognized Routes Europe 2026 will elevate Emilia-Romagna’s profile as a premier destination in international markets, attracting new investments, fostering strong partnerships and improving our international connectivity,” discloses Frisoni. “It represents a truly extraordinary opportunity to advance an

integrated strategy for our regional airport network: Bologna, Rimini, Forlì and Parma.”

Major efforts are underway to bolster air and rail links. “Bologna airport is well connected internationally, but we also want to strengthen our other airports,” she says. “Our region is already a rail transport hub too: we have direct trains from Germany via Austria to Bologna and the Adriatic coast, all key Italian rail routes pass through Bologna, and we’re centrally located close to Rome, Florence and Venice, allowing travelers to experience the best of the rest of Italy while enjoying all Emilia-Romagna has to offer.”

Investments are going into intraregional transport and tourism infrastructure as well. “Tourism today is about personalized experiences. Our job is to make sure everything we offer is connected, accessible and ready to be enjoyed,” she states. “While Emilia-Romagna is well known, there is still so much for visitors to explore, such as beautiful small towns in the hills and mountains. Our goal is to guide more visitors to these lesser-known areas, where they can enjoy authentic experiences and support local businesses.”

The regional government is also encouraging those companies through, for instance, its Urban Hub initiative that supports small local shops and craftspeople by promoting regional products, and by attracting events to less-visited locations to boost their visibility and economic impact. In addition, it is fostering digital skills and artificial intelligence adoption among small businesses to enhance their online presence and competitiveness, while Emilia-Romagna’s tourism observatory now uses data analytics and telecom data to forecast trends and sustainably manage tourist flows.

Wherever you go in the region at whatever season of year, it will be unforgettable Italy at its purest, welcoming you with open arms. “US tourists and investors are warmly invited to discover Emilia-Romagna’s diversity — its food, culture, coastal beauty and proximity to iconic Italian destinations — and benefit from its growing connectivity and business opportunities,” Frisoni asserts.

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# Streamlined transportation network

Bologna Guglielmo Marconi Airport and Port of Ravenna connect trade and travelers with the region, the rest of Italy and the world

Bologna Guglielmo Marconi Airport (BLQ) is “not only the gateway to Bologna and the Emilia-Romagna region, it’s a strategic entry point to the rest of Italy,” asserts Nazareno Ventola, CEO and managing director of the facility.

The region also has airports in Rimini, Forlì and Parma — which are all working to build up their international traffic — but BLQ is its largest and most globally connected flight hub. “It’s a midsize airport in one of Italy’s most important economic and touristic regions,” details Ventola, noting that BLQ’s express train takes seven minutes to reach Emilia-Romagna’s capital. “Furthermore, Bologna and its airport are uniquely positioned at the intersection of Italy’s high-speed rail and highway networks. The rail system connects us to Rome in two hours, Milan in one, Venice in 90 minutes and Florence in just 30 minutes.”

As a result, the airport’s catchment area extends far beyond the region’s 4 million residents to encompass nearly 11 million people. Florence, for example, relies on BLQ for larger international flights due to that city’s runway limits. “Demand for travel is high, and it’s a strong mix of business, leisure and visiting-friends-and-relatives traffic,” he states. “We welcomed a record 10.8 million passengers in 2024, 8% more than in 2023, and our flight numbers rose by 5.9% last year.”

BLQ’s cargo facility has also seen substantial operational growth in recent years and it is now third-biggest airport in Italy for freight, handling around 51,000 tons of goods annually. “2024 marked our best year ever in traffic, financial performance and infrastructure investment. The strong traffic demand supports our ongoing investment in infrastructure and service quality,” says Ventola.

In 2025, for instance, its operator opened a new multistory car park and it has upgraded BLQ’s passenger terminal too, with one notable change being the introduction of computed-tomography scanners that allow passengers to keep laptops and large liquid containers in their hand luggage while passing through security. “The result is faster checks with waiting times cut by 50%, making journeys smoother and more relaxed for passengers. Only a few airports in Italy currently offer this technology,” he comments. “We’ve also invested heavily in digitalization, which is key to enhancing service quality and passenger experience, and we’ve installed solar energy.”



Bologna Guglielmo Marconi Airport is located just a few miles from the capital.



Nazareno Ventola  
CEO and Managing Director  
Bologna Guglielmo Marconi Airport

BLQ is served by all major European carriers that connect it to every important airport hub in Europe, and it receives plenty of direct intercontinental flights. “The main gap is a direct US connection, making Bologna the largest unserved Italian destination for North America,” says Ventola. “However, with our strategic location and easy access to Venice, Milan and Florence, we believe this route will soon become a reality.”

**A vital maritime node in Italy’s economy**  
Emilia-Romagna’s main seaport, Port of Ravenna, is based in a historic city that is both a growing tourist hotspot and a center for industries such as engineering, logistics, oil and gas and, increasingly, sustainable technologies. “It’s a multipurpose port with multinationals operating along



Francesco Benevolo  
Extraordinary Commissioner, Port System  
Authority of the Central-Northern Adriatic Sea

its quays on one side, and canals, fishermen’s huts and amazing countryside on the other,” explains Francesco Benevolo, extraordinary commissioner for the Port System Authority of the Central-Northern Adriatic Sea, which manages Port of Ravenna. “We’re a leading port for steel, animal feed, building materials, ceramics, fertilizers, grains and many other goods, and we’re Italy’s sixth-largest port.”

Benevolo notes that investment projects recently completed or in the pipeline have opened up opportunities in logistics, manufacturing and trade for investors. “We have about 500 acres of open space suitable for production facilities and logistics areas at the heart of the port, all connected to road and rail networks and close to docks. We also have a special logistics zone and aim to

## CONNECTING EMILIA-ROMAGNA TO THE WORLD



In 2024, Bologna Guglielmo Marconi Airport welcomed a record **10.8 million** passengers.



The Port of Ravenna is the 6th largest port on Italy’s **5,000 miles** of coastline.



A new cruise terminal will open in 2026 with capacity to welcome **400,000** passengers.



Bologna is at the intersection of Italy’s highway and high-speed-rail networks. Most major cities can be reached in **2 hours**.

create a customs-free zone. Anyone operating in these zones will enjoy tax benefits,” he discloses. The authority is also working with Emilia-Romagna’s president and Ravenna’s mayor to create a regional logistics platform that interconnects the port’s sea-rail-road network with Emilia-Romagna’s other seaports, freight terminals and airports. The port is generating opportunities in areas like hotels, recreational facilities, nautical tourism and cultural initiatives too. “In 2024, our re-launched cruise port recorded over 270,000 passengers. We expect to welcome around 400,000 to our docks annually from 2026, because Ravenna Civitas Cruise Port, owned by the US’s Royal Caribbean Group, is opening a new cruise terminal. It’s an environment-friendly building of great architectural significance,” Benevolo states. “Ravenna boasts world-class heritage — there’s great potential in tourism.”

With all stakeholders committed to the development plans for the port, regional logistics platform and Ravenna’s tourism, the climate for investment is ideal, he asserts. “I advise investors to seize the opportunities that are built on strong institutional collaboration,” suggests Benevolo. “The Port of Ravenna, with its extraordinary geo-economic positioning, many projects underway and central role in Italy’s port landscape, is open to discussions with anyone interested in investment projects.”



Leonardo, managed by Cineca, was funded by the EU and Italy’s government.

# Europe’s data hub

An integrated supercomputer and AI factory make Bologna a global leader in computing

In 2022, Emilia-Romagna became one of the European Union’s and the world’s main centers for data and artificial intelligence (AI) when Bologna switched on its Leonardo supercomputer, currently the 10th most powerful supercomputer globally. The \$140 million project was funded by the EU’s European High-Performance Computing Joint Undertaking (EuroHPC) project and the Italian Ministry of University and Research. EuroHPC announced this year that Leonardo will soon receive a \$33 million upgrade and an extension — Lisa — that will be the first EuroHPC computing partition designed specifically for AI workloads.

“Bologna is now home to one of Europe’s three pre-exascale supercomputers, alongside Barcelona in Spain and Helsinki in Finland. The EU has decided to invest heavily in big data and AI: Leonardo consists of thousands of interconnected modules capable of billions of operations per second. Its capacity for data management is growing and will remain a work in progress for years, supported by funding to help firms in the region to use this infrastructure,” reveals Roberto Righetti, director of Attractiveness Research Territory in Emilia-Romagna (ART-ER), the agency tasked with developing Emilia-Romagna’s innovation, knowledge, attractiveness and internationalization.

The EU chose to locate Leonardo in Emilia-Romagna’s capital because of the capabilities and experience of Cineca, a university and research consortium that has long overseen Italy’s largest collection of data-management systems in the city. Cineca is now managing Leonardo alongside its other computing infrastructure at the DAMA Technopole hub for digital innovation in Bologna.

“DAMA Technopole covers 34.6 acres in the north of the city and it’s a major investment. Our team at ART-ER is managing the site’s de-

velopment and it already hosts substantial infrastructure,” says Righetti. This includes not just Leonardo, but also the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts and the National Institute of Nuclear Physics’ data centers, and they will soon be joined by Italy’s most powerful quantum computer to date and a United Nations’ university center that will use the supercomputer’s power to study sustainability and migration. The latest addition to the ecosystem opened in September: the IT4LIA AI Factory. This investment of about \$490 million is one of the EU’s first platforms dedicated to the technology and it is also being powered by Leonardo. As Righetti is keen to stress, DAMA Technopole’s integrated infrastructure will support the EU’s goal of making big data accessible to businesses of all sizes. “While the Technopole’s research capabilities are hugely important, helping firms access and use these advanced machines is both crucial and challenging. One of ART-ER’s key future roles will be to guide companies in collecting and managing data to fully benefit from this technology.”

At the new factory’s launch, the region’s President Michele de Pascale said: “The operational start of the IT4LIA AI Factory project represents a strategic achievement for Emilia-Romagna and the entire country. Bologna’s Technopole, with its cutting-edge infrastructures such as Leonardo supercomputer, confirms itself as the beating heart of European innovation in supercomputing, AI and advanced research. It’s a unique infrastructure, today enriched by a new, essential element, the result of collaboration between institutions, science and business. IT4LIA AI Factory is a tangible model of technological development serving the community and enterprises, capable of generating knowledge, opportunities and high-quality jobs. It’s a system of excellence in which the Emilia-Romagna region will continue to invest.”

# Driving Italian innovation

## ART-ER is fueling Emilia-Romagna’s entrepreneurial and collaborative global reach

Ranked as Italy’s most innovative region in the European Union Innovation Scoreboard 2023, Emilia-Romagna is highly rated for commercial sales of innovations, as well as innovations from small and medium-sized enterprises.

“This reflects our entrepreneurs, who are committed to quality and constant improvement. It’s a tradition rooted in our history,” says Roberto Righetti, director of ART-ER, a consortium that brings together the region’s government, universities and research centers. Since its launch in 2019, it has been the driver behind Emilia-Romagna’s innovation ecosystem. “ART-ER stands for Attractiveness, Research and Territory in Emilia-Romagna, three major pillars of our work,” Righetti explains. “In attractiveness, we support national and regional investment incentive schemes, helping firms that want to establish or expand in Emilia-Romagna’s key sectors. In research, we coordinate the region’s network of specialized labs, connecting them with businesses to foster innovation. Territory means anchoring innovation initiatives in real places, with each one being tied to a city, plan and infrastructure.”

This approach, coupled with prioritization of innovation by the region’s government and universities, has enabled close collaboration between academia and industry, and the establishment of Technopole hubs for industrial innovation plus sectoral research clusters. Righetti points out: “Our entrepreneurs and researchers embrace change, strive for excellence and work together while pushing each other to do better. That defines our region.”

Both Emilia-Romagna’s entrepreneurs and its authorities are not only open to problem solving, they are reliable and get results. “For example, one of our latest recent investors, Philip Morris International, was promised a 15-month timeline for its project, which actually launched within 14 months,” he notes. “What matters most to investors is knowing they can plan with confidence in Emilia-Romagna. We don’t overpromise; we deliver.”

One of ART-ER’s roles is promoting sustainability. For example, it manages a \$128 million fund for green innovation and runs the Ecosister Program, the first Italian state-funded project of its kind, where researchers in materials, the circular economy and related fields collaborate on green solutions.

Another priority is helping the region’s entrepreneurs internationalize. In 2015, it opened an Emilia-Romagna Regional Office in the US’s Silicon Valley, through which it organizes programs for startups, businesses and other players in the two regions’ innovation ecosystems. In 2018, it started expanding its US presence. “Today, we have strong collaborative



Roberto Righetti  
Director, ART-ER

ties in research and innovation — in food with New York, health with Boston, automobiles with Detroit and Chicago and aerospace with Texas, for instance,” says Righetti. “Emilia-Romagna’s President and Vice President have encouraged us to deepen these partnerships and I agree. More connection means greater opportunity and clearer understanding.”

ART-ER also intends to continue investing in nurturing collaboration within Emilia-Romagna’s sectors of industrial expertise. “We call these our ‘Specialization Valleys’ — like Motor Valley and Food Valley — each represents a hub of excellence rooted in tradition, innovation and global reach,” he discloses. “Now, we’re developing a new frontier for innovation in the region: Data Valley. It’s cross-sectoral and has the potential to transform industries from manufacturing to healthcare.”

Data Valley is centered on DAMA Technopole in Bologna, home to the Leonardo supercomputer and IT4LIA AI Factory. “The facility supports research and offers local firms access to advanced data management tools to innovate and grow. ART-ER assists companies in leveraging this infrastructure, helping turn data into business opportunities,” Righetti says. “DAMA Technopole aims to attract international firms and researchers working with big data, and Bologna’s location, quality of life and well-connected airport make it ideal for experts and investors. Plus, English is widely spoken here, making collaboration easy.



# Modena: City of Cars, Culture and Cuisine

The city and its province are packed with natural, historic and cultural treasures, entrepreneurial industries and fabulous food

Just 25 miles northwest of Emilia-Romagna’s main international airport is Modena, a city of around 184,000 people and the capital of a 1,038-square-mile province with the same name, which is one of the most advanced territories in Europe. It is also an increasing tourist magnet. “In the first four months of 2025, our visitor numbers grew more than that of neighboring Bologna — 10.2% versus 7.9% — and our population is only a third of its size,” notes Massimo Mezzetti, mayor of Modena city, who was elected to office in June last year.

There are many reasons why tourists are drawn to Modena. Among these is the extraordinary medieval architecture of the Piazza Grande, Duomo and Ghirlandina Tower, which has been declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Then there are the hundreds cultural events that take place every year in the capital where Luciano Pavarotti was born, globally renowned gastronomy, a remarkable automotive heritage and stunning countryside that runs from the Apennine Mountains to Po River Valley.

Addressing possible issues associated with the city’s growing popularity with travelers is one of Mezzetti’s priorities. “If we want to continue being an attractive city, we need to consider over-tourism, which can destroy the identity of cities. Although tourism brings economic benefits, it must be controlled with intelligence and balanced with everyday life,” he explains. “Affordable housing is another challenge we’ve been tackling and urban planning is important. That’s about the type of houses we build



Massimo Mezzetti  
Mayor of Modena

and where we build them. It’s about public mobility and social spaces. The citizen is at the center of our overall project, we aim to pay attention to development and economic growth without abandoning anyone.” As part of this project, the local council is investing in making culture a fundamental element of the city’s collective future. “Modena is already an Italian leader in theater and we’re investing a lot in theatrical activities, including youth companies developing research in this area,” states Mezzetti. “Another illustration is film. Several large productions



Modena’s Piazza Grande is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

have been made here and more are being filmed, thanks to the support of Emilia-Romagna Film Commission.”

He is adamant that, for Modena, culture is much more than the arts: “Culture is everything that contributes to the community’s identity and permeates our lives. Culture is food and the way we eat. It’s about cultivating beauty and kinder relationships. Culture is even a business ethos based on invention and creativity. The fact that Modena is a thriving manufacturing hub originates from the ability of our companies to combine traditions with innovation and creativity.”

The province specializes in a range of manufacturing industries, which are supported by the local research-centric University of Modena and Reggio Emilia. For example, it is a top European location

MASSIMO MEZZETTI  
MAYOR OF MODENA

**“The fact that Modena is a thriving manufacturing hub originates from the ability of our companies to combine traditions with innovation.”**

for advanced machinery and biomedical equipment, the town of Sassuolo produces the vast majority of Italian ceramic tiles and Carpi town hosts over 1,000 textile, knitwear and clothing companies, including brands like Max Mara.

However, it is probably best known as the heart of the global sport and luxury automotive industry. “In addition to being home to some of the biggest names in manufacturing — Maserati, Ferrari and Pagani — we’re strong in the production of components for the sector,” says Mezzetti. “Customers of all our Made in Italy products know they are buying quality, and that’s been true from the Renaissance period to the present day.”

For Santo Ficili, Maserati’s chief operating officer: “It’s an honor to be based in Modena. It’s a city with a long history of manufacturing luxury products and a large part of the global population linked

to motorsport and prestigious cars is here. You can feel the presence of the automotive industry — the city has it in its veins.”

As Mezzetti points out: “Agriculture, food and wine is another huge strength: Modena has 23 Protected Geographical Indication and Protected Designation of Origin (DOP) products. Balsamic vinegar is our black gold. It’s a tradition that is produced in a wine cellar in an artisanal process, which takes at least 12 years.”

The quality of the vinegar is protected and promoted by Consorzio Aceto Balsamico Tradizionale di Modena. Its president, Enrico Corsini, says: “Modena currently produces around 26 million gallons of balsamic vinegar a year, supporting around 30,000 jobs from grape growing to production. Over 90% of our production is exported, with the US accounting for about 30% of the total. It’s a product deeply rooted in our territory’s history that requires specific know-how and natural conditions found only in Modena.”

Equally famous is Parmigiano Reggiano, which can be made in Modena and four other Emilia-Romagna provinces. According to Andrea Nascimbeni, CEO of 4 Madonne Caseificio dell’Emilia, the award-winning Parmigiano Reggiano cooperative that operates five facilities in Modena: “Quality is our key. That starts with the highest-standard milk, which is transformed by our expert cheesemakers, who control the wheels one by one for 24-100 months to ensure they reach the quality needed to bear the Parmigiano Reggiano name. It’s an excellent natural product with no added preservatives that sells well, exports successfully and leaves a strong impression.”

Modena is open to international investors in any of its industrial sectors and has already received many. “Recently, for example, Mitsubishi built a technological innovation hub here, which will produce Amazon’s self-driving taxis that will be used in the US,” reveals Mezzetti. “Modena is ready to welcome investors with open arms. We have natural, historical and cultural treasures, entrepreneurial Made in Italy industries and fabulous food products. There’s a lot of opportunity here for the future.”

# Uniquely synergistic regional university system

The historic and prestigious University of Parma epitomizes the strength with which Emilia-Romagna connects education and research with industry and societal needs

Emilia-Romagna’s universities play a crucial role in reinforcing and advancing the region’s innovation. A preeminent illustration of this is the University of Parma, which is centered in the city of the same name that lies about 60 miles northeast of Bologna and 80 miles from Milan.

“For us, innovation is about continually meeting the real needs of society by identifying them and providing education that addresses the needs of the workforce. Our greatest commitment is to continually upgrade our courses and respond to changing needs,” says the university’s Rector Paolo Martelli. “Our focus on innovation is also reflected in our dedication to research. We invest millions of dollars every year, not only to fund the research of our scientists, but also to enhance our equipment and facilities, creating optimal conditions for research development.”

Home to about 200,000 people, Parma city is renowned for its vibrant culture and for being Italy’s first UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy, with the stunning countryside around it giving rise to world-famous foods such as Parma and other hams, Parmigiano Reggiano cheese and porcini mushrooms. Unsurprisingly, agri-food is its biggest industrial strength, but it is also highly productive in pharmaceuticals, biotech, automotives, innovative machinery and other sectors.

PAOLO MARTELLI  
RECTOR, UNIVERSITY OF PARMA

**“Many of our students stay in Parma after they graduate because Emilia-Romagna offers excellent job prospects.”**

“It’s a very welcoming university city. The university and local government work together to ensure it is attractive and hospitable,” states the head of a prestigious public institution that first opened its doors in 1412. Today, it educates over 33,000 students a year. “We embrace all fields of knowledge, with courses that span humanities to engineering, mathematics, physics, chemistry, pharmacy, medicine and surgery, veterinary medicine and, in particular, agri-food, which is an important area of collaboration for our university,” details Martelli. “Many of our students stay in Parma after they graduate because Emilia-Romagna offers excellent job prospects across various industries — the university, city and region help facilitate access to these opportunities.” The institution has received global recog-



Paolo Martelli  
Rector, University of Parma

ognition for its research quality. For example, 30 years ago, a team of its neuroscientists discovered the “mirror-neurons” system in macaque monkeys, which had a profound influence on the worldwide study of neuroscience and other disciplines. “Mathematics is another area of strength, with our Associate Professor Cristiana de Filippis recently being awarded the European Mathematical Society medal. We’re also recognized for excellence in quantum science and technology, and the relationship between nutrition and health,” notes Martelli. “I would need many pages to list all our top researchers — microbiology, food chemistry, information technology, oncology, sociology, philosophy and many other disciplines at the University of Parma are led by brilliant minds who are, or will soon be, international leaders.”

Its research and technology-transfer activities are coordinated by a unit engaged in constant communication and relationship-building with local companies. “At our campus, we have one of the region’s Technopoles, which are centers fully dedicated to technology transfer,” he says.

As well as partnering with local businesses, the University of Parma collaborates with the region’s other universities. For example, it jointly established Motor Valley University (MUNER) with the Universities of Bologna, Modena and Reggio Emilia and Ferrara in 2017. “It’s a model that brings together our best resources for high-level training in the automotive sector for Italian and international students,” explains Martelli. “We’re currently transferring our experience from MUNER to the agri-food sector. Fooder is a new collaborative organization headquartered



The University of Parma’s main modern campus covers 190 acres.

in Parma that was created by the same four universities for training, research, innovation and the development of new ideas in agri-food. It has a holistic approach, encompassing all disciplines of food science, with a careful eye toward sustainability. The Emilia-Romagna region and its leading food companies are also closely associated with Fooder — it’s a unique model of synergy between universities, institutions and businesses all focused on agri-food.”

In recent years, the university has been welcoming more students from the US and other countries, thanks partly to its involvement in MUNER and now Fooder. “MUNER attracts

students because brands like Ferrari, Lamborghini, Maserati, Ducati, Dallara and others are in our region and Emilia-Romagna is the leading Italian region in the food industry too, so an agri-food regional university system is highly attractive,” he states. “In addition, our students are not mere guests in Parma, they are an integral part of the city’s daily life — Parma has been named European Youth Capital for 2027. Coming to Parma also means joining one of Italy’s most advanced and productive regions, and being part of a wide collaborative network of institutions and research centers that spans just the region, but the whole of Europe.”



Piazza Roma has long been the citizens of Modena’s favorite gathering place.



# Local governance rooted in place

The region’s cities all have distinct profiles and needs, but their mayors share the same goal: creating vibrant, inclusive and green urban hubs

Emilia-Romagna contains nine cities with over 100,000 residents. Each has an elected mayor and council that have responsibilities in areas like urban planning, transport, education, culture, welfare, the environment and economic development. The regional government works collaboratively with these bodies, as it is determined to oversee a united administration that brings decision-making close to every citizen. Below, mayors from three cities describe some of their urban development projects, which are founded in their communities’ distinct characteristics.

### The reference for Mediterranean tourism

Sparkling Rimini on the Riviera Romagnola has been a prime destination for leisure and business tourists for decades, and its popularity with international travelers has increased since British Airways started flying to Rimini airport from its global hub London Heathrow. “Rimini stands out because it offers everything, and it’s alive all year round. It’s the ideal place for an enriching experiential vacation that blends the sea, beaches, art, culture, history, nature and exceptional cuisine,” enthuses its Mayor Jamil Sadegholvaad.

A key priority for him is ensuring the sector develops sustainably. “Our main strategy has been to support and promote quality tourism. We’re taking a comprehensive approach covering environmental, urban and social aspects, aiming to be the point of reference for Mediterranean tourist locations,” he explains. “One of our two main investment focuses has been regenerating and redeveloping our historic center, especially our important Roman structures. In 2021, we also inaugurated the Fellini Museum, which is gaining international attention.”

JAMIL SADEGHOLVAAD  
MAYOR OF RIMINI  
“Social inclusion is an obsession for us. Rimini has always seen tourism as a tool for social democracy.”

Sadegholvaad’s second major focus has been transforming the city’s seafarot road into a pedestrianized area with spaces for sports, social activities, play, wellness and meeting friends that both residents and tourists have lauded. 8 miles of this project have been completed so far and an extension is in the pipeline. “Our goal is to be a sustainable city, where many cement and asphalt spaces are turned into areas for living, and people move around on cycles and scooters rather than in cars,” he says.

Another pillar of his administration is inclusivity. “Social inclusion is an obsession for us. Rimini has always seen tourism as a tool for social democracy — it’s always contained a wide range of hotels, from 5-star to more affordable options, for example,” he reveals. “This year, we created a number of free beaches that are fully accessible, even for people with disabilities. We believe this was an important decision, because everyone has the right to take a vacation.”

**Preparing for expanding industries**  
Further up the Adriatic coast, the university city of Ravenna’s economy has traditionally revolved around its substantial multipurpose port and offshore oil and gas. “Now, Ravenna is making a transition toward sustainable energy, driven by



Rimini’s Mayor Jamil Sadegholvaad has prioritized the regeneration of the resort city’s unbeatable coastline.



Jamil Sadegholvaad  
Mayor of Rimini

national and international investments. They’ve been attracted because the city is home to globally recognized oil and gas firms and has a strong industrial base of companies with unique experience, skills and capacities in the energy sector,” reveals its Mayor Alessandro Barattoni.

Examples of investments include energy infrastructure company Snam choosing to host a new offshore regasification terminal in Ravenna’s waters. Aimed at diversifying and expanding Italy’s energy sources, the unit received its first delivery of liquefied natural gas from the US in July. Ravenna has also been selected as the site of one of the world’s largest carbon capture and storage projects, which is seeking to permanently store emissions from local industry in depleted offshore gas fields.

Another priority growth sector for the mayor is tourism. Next year, Ravenna will become a major departure port for Mediterranean cruises as a result of a new cruise terminal that is being developed in partnership with Royal Caribbean Group. “Ravenna is a truly beautiful city and eight of our monuments have been designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Stepping inside these churches, you find breathtaking mosaics and gold covering ceilings and walls — they’re unparalleled,” he states. “In addition to artistic treasures, Ravenna offers incredible beaches, parks, an extraordinary system of saltwater lagoons, our newly redeveloped maritime park linking beaches with pine forests, cultural events that play a fundamental role in shaping Ravenna’s identity and world-class gastronomy.”

Believing that both culture and sport are essential for tourism and his community, Barattoni’s administration has invested in local, national and international sporting and arts events, including the renowned Ravenna Marathon and Ravenna Festival for opera and classical music. “Our long-term goal is to ensure Ravenna is vibrant every season. We’re investing heavily in the city center to keep it populated with local residents as well. Our city should be a living, working, sustainable hub that tourists can enjoy alongside residents,” he insists. “We’ve also invested in schools and



Alan Fabbri  
Mayor of Ferrara

childcare to make the city a destination for young professionals, and strengthened the University of Ravenna, attracting more young people, fostering a dynamic academic environment and encouraging them to build their futures here after graduation. Today, Ravenna is truly a city for all generations, a city that honors its past while embracing a forward-looking future.”

21st-century Renaissance city  
Inland from Ravenna is a Renaissance city whose mayor was comfortably reelected for a second five-year term last year. “Ferrara is a unique city that can grow and develop without losing its identity and beauty. We’re investing in that vision and the results are beginning to show,” Mayor Alan Fabbri says in explanation of his victory. “Ferrara is now a very different place, with a robust and varied economy, international artists, scientific experts who set Italian standards, and new areas for cultural events. It’s more beautiful, accessible, lively and safe. We’ve also worked hard on our pride and sense of belonging. We live in a UNESCO World Heritage Site city — that’s something to be proud of. But there’s always room for improvement and my approach is to keep striving, continuing what we’ve started.”

ALAN FABBRI  
MAYOR OF FERRARA  
“Ferrara is a unique city that can grow and develop without losing its identity and beauty. We’re investing in that vision.”

One of Fabbri’s achievements was successfully lobbying for Ferrara to be included in Emilia-Romagna’s upcoming simplified logistics zone, which will establish an intermodal transport and logistics network linking the Port of Ravenna and various regional industrial hubs, with tax incentives available for firms operating in those hubs. “This will have significant implications for our companies,” he states. The city’s businesses are



Alessandro Barattoni  
Mayor of Ravenna

predominantly in agriculture and, to ensure they take full advantage of the new zone, his administration has set up a support system that unites the municipality, trade bodies and companies. “We’ve also involved the University of Ferrara and Ferrara Industrial and Technological Center, one of Italy’s three main chemical production sites,” Fabbri adds.

ALESSANDRO BARATTONI  
MAYOR OF RAVENNA  
“Ravenna is truly a city for all generations, a city that honors its past while embracing a forward-looking future.”

His council has also bolstered quality and diversification in tourism, particularly in terms of culture. “For me, culture is an essential economic driver for Ferrara. We’ve tried to make the city more vibrant, and I think we’ve succeeded. It now has an annual program of events for a wide range of audiences,” he says. “We’ve redeveloped abandoned spaces like our waterfront Darsena area and assembled a team of professionals to create mega events too. The next one will be in June 2026, featuring Vasco Rossi, the greatest Italian rock star of all time. 100,000 people are expected.”

One way he has helped make the city more livable is by introducing a unique-in-Italy hydrogen bus and refueling system. “Environmentalism plays a key role in my political platform. Last year, for example, we launched a \$43-million plan to reuse industrial water at a local petrochemical plant, which is reducing water consumption by 53%,” he discloses. Ongoing sustainability projects include making public spaces greener to reduce heat islands, a new urban park and extended cycle paths.

Fabbri offers his opinion on what it takes to be a good mayor: “It’s vital to connect with people and understand their real needs. You need to love and understand the city, work hard, keep your feet on the ground and improve everyone’s lives.”

be temporarily leased; and Moonlight, which transforms slabs into luminous surfaces.

The group’s latest development, Alchimia, was created with the Dutch firm VBH and integrates audiovisual technology into ceramics. “It transforms walls in homes, offices and public spaces into immersive, sensory experiences. For the first time, ceramics can conceal and reveal screens and audio-visual systems on command — the slab is no longer a static material,” Minozzi enthuses. “We develop solutions like this by working with architects, designers and developers, turning their needs into inspiration for innovation.”

FEDERICA MINOZZI  
CEO, IRIS CERAMICA GROUP  
“We transform ceramics into cutting-edge surfaces that enhance daily life and the way spaces are experienced.”

Iris Ceramica Group also has close bonds with stakeholders such as universities, research centers and entrepreneurs. “Partnership is crucial. True transformation can’t happen in isolation: it requires a shared vision, common values and dialogue,” she discloses. “By sharing knowledge, we generate a genuine collaborative ecosystem — this is how we can design a more sustainable, inclusive and future-oriented society.”

Sustainability is as much of a guiding principle for the group as innovation is and it has long embraced the ethos “Economy = Ecology” that links growth to environmental, social and governance values. The H2 Factory project — the world’s first ceramics industry powered by green hydrogen developed in partnership with Edison Next — is a pioneering project that represents a concrete step in the group’s path toward decarbonization. The factory was built within the Castellano hub — Reggio Emilia — following the highest design standards for the production and storage of green hydrogen using solar energy and rainwater. In July 2024, with the pi-

lot plant, the first ceramic slab was produced using a blend of green hydrogen and natural gas.

“Our groundbreaking H2 Factory is the world’s first ceramic plant designed to run entirely on self-produced green hydrogen. We aim to expand this technology to our plants in the US and Germany,” says Minozzi. “Furthermore, Stonepeak is one of the first flooring companies in the US to achieve ISO 14064-1 Organizational Carbon Footprint Validation. This highlights our commitment to transparency, environmental responsibility and sustainable practices. It also consolidates our role as a leading pioneer in industrial standards and green building solutions.”

Although Iris Ceramica Group operates on a global scale, the Italian spirit remains its cornerstone. Staff at its US branches and showrooms act as ambassadors for its home-country’s creativity, ensuring each tailored project combines global vision with Italian artistry, craftsmanship and flair. “We’re proud to bring Italian excellence to the US through beautiful ceramic surfaces, cutting-edge technologies and sustainable processes,” Minozzi asserts. “Our mission is clear: shaping a future where design, innovation and responsibility come together to create better lives for generations to come.”



The Dallara Stradale road-legal sports car offers drivers the thrill of racing.

# Motor Valley, where speed was born

Home to many automotive legends, Motor Valley is the global reference point for premium, exclusive and racing vehicles

Known as Motor Valley or the land where speed was born, Emilia-Romagna stands out for its exceptional luxury and high-performance automotive sector, which has given rise to titans such as Maserati, Dallara, Ferrari, Lamborghini, Pagani and Ducati. It is also one of the region’s most important industries. “People know our iconic brands, but behind them is a network of over 15,000 companies generating \$15 billion a year in business. From major players to small firms, each is a leader in its niche. For example, if you want the best titanium screws, you go to Poggipolini in Bologna; for top exhaust systems, Duerre Tubi Style in Maranello is the global reference,” reveals Andrea Pontremoli, president of Motor Valley Development, an association that represents the sector’s leading companies and organizations.

As he points out, the Motor Valley cluster extends beyond Emilia-Romagna’s borders. “Our ecosystem spreads into Piedmont, Lombardy and Veneto. Many world-class partners like Alfa Romeo, Pirelli and Brembo are based in these regions. It’s a truly unique industrial system,” says Pontremoli. “We all work together with one goal: shaping our own future and setting trends for the worldwide industry. That is the true spirit and essence of Motor Valley.”

One demonstration of this was 2017’s launch of Motor Valley University, which brings together the knowledge and research skills of local automotive brands with those of the renowned Universities of Bologna, Modena and Reggio Emilia, Parma and Ferrara. “Together, we have, for example, designed master’s programs in fields like racing car design, supercars, electric and autonomous vehicles, and superbikes — specialties that didn’t exist before,” he explains. “These programs have attracted students from around the world. If you want to study motorsport, superbikes or supercars, Italy is the place to be.”

ANDREA PONTREMOLI  
PRESIDENT, MOTOR VALLEY DEVELOPMENT  
“People know our iconic brands, but behind them is a network of over 15,000 companies generating \$154 billion a year.”

To further inspire upcoming generations of professionals, the association runs Stem Racing competitions in local schools, which see teams designing, building and racing small Formula One (F1) cars; has created the Innovation Farm to train technicians in advanced engineering skills; and overseen the setting up of an international MBA in motorsport and supercars at Bologna Business School. “We’re also fostering research and innovation through initiatives such as the Motor Valley Accelerator, a non-profit supported by companies and the government, which is currently nurturing 45 startups,” she adds.

Members of the association are supporting young talent in their own countries too. One illustration is Dallara, the biggest multinational Italian race car manufacturer, which has recently launched a partnership with Purdue University. This will provide students on the university’s motorsports engineering program with hands-on training in fields such as aerodynamics, thermodynamics, design and controls at Dallara’s US headquarters near Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

### A magnet for investors and tourists

Emilia-Romagna’s automotive experience, capabilities and focus on innovation has made it a prime destination for investors. “Motorsport, supercars and superbikes are the fastest-growing segments in automotive, so attracting outside investors is crucial to keep up with global demand,” he says. “Everything here is connected — from Motor Valley University to Europe’s largest supercomputer that is in Bologna and available to our companies, which is a great resource for anyone wanting to invest in the future.” Pontremoli is convinced that opportunities for US investors are particularly interesting: “The US has tremendous digital expertise, which is exactly what we need. It is also our biggest export market, so combining our know-how with its technology and capital is the perfect bridge.”

Motor Valley attracts tourists as well as investors, with 2.65 million visitors flocking to its four racetracks, 15 dedicated museums, 19 open-to-the-public private collections and factories, plus sporting and trade events last year. “It’s our way of sharing what we do and who we are. We want visitors to experience how we enjoy life together,” he states. “Emilia-Romagna’s racetracks, for instance, are huge marketing platforms: Imola hosts F1 for cars and Misano hosts MotoGP for bikes. Another expanding tourist segment is buyers of our amazing cars who want to drive them fast on proper tracks — people are coming not just to see, but to feel and thrill themselves.”

The biggest date in the sector’s calendar is May’s Motor Valley Fest in Modena. At this four-day event, senior executives from the cluster and



Andrea Pontremoli  
President, Motor Valley Development

across the world, as well as universities and start-ups, discuss the future of cars and motorcycles, reveal their latest developments and explore new innovations that could transform the industry.

### Italian passion, performance and luxury

Among the Motor Valley ecosystem’s most prestigious members are automotive giant Stellantis’ Italian brands: Alfa Romeo and Maserati, which share extensive legacies — 115 years in the case of Alfa Romeo and 110 for Maserati. “It’s an honor to lead two such iconic brands with extraordinary histories. Their stories are deeply rooted in Italian heritage,” asserts Santo Ficili, Alfa Romeo’s CEO and Maserati’s chief operating officer.

Each brand has its own identity and appeals to different customers. “Alfa Romeo operates in the premium segment, with a focus on Italian passion, performance, sport and design — symbolized by its red heart,” he explains. “Maserati, by contrast, is a luxury brand, founded in elegance, craftsmanship and grand touring that offers personalized vehicles to discerning customers worldwide. It’s an artisanal product, 100% ‘Made in Italy’ from design to production. A unique jewel within Stellantis and the group’s only true luxury brand, we’re firmly committed to preserving Maserati’s handcrafted, Italian character.”

Alfa Romeo’s headquarters are on the edge of Motor Valley in Turin, Piedmont, an area with a long history of manufacturing large volumes of premium cars. Maserati’s are in Modena, at the heart of the ecosystem. “Modena breathes luxury and performance. That energy is concentrated here, and it’s reflected in the talent we attract, people who are not only skilled, but deeply passionate about our two brands,” says Ficili. “It’s a unique place where companies like Pagani, Dallara, Lamborghini and Ducati coexist — not as competitors, but as part of a shared culture.”

Likewise, there is no competition between Maserati and Alfa Romeo. Although they share the same corporate values, their organizational setups reflect their distinct roles in Stellantis’ portfolio. “Both brands benefit from dedicated management teams and tailored strategies. For example, we manage and support Maserati’s worldwide operations in Modena. Given that brand’s exclusive volumes and customer profiles, it makes sense to have a centralized structure that works closely with its dealer network and clients,” he states. Alfa Romeo, which operates at higher volumes, is supported through regional offices in Europe, North America, South America, Asia-Pacific and India, which are customized to suit their market dynamics and dealer networks.

SANTO FICILI  
CEO, ALFA ROMEO AND  
CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER, MASERATI  
“Modena breathes luxury and performance. That energy is concentrated here, and it’s reflected in the talent we attract.”

The two do, however, take full advantage of the strong financial, industrial and technological foundations Stellantis provides across its 14 global commercial and passenger-vehicle brands. “This scale gives us the long-term strength we need to grow in the luxury and premium segments,” Ficili says. “Our strategy is to evolve each brand by building on its individual legacy.”

Alfa Romeo’s current best-in-class lineup ranges from compact crossovers to high-performance models. “I’m extremely satisfied with the brand’s performance. It’s grown by 20% year-over-year, made significant product progress and its network is performing well. Alfa Romeo’s future is built on consistent delivery and passion-driven innovation, and we’re focusing on key growth segments, such as B-SUVs and C-SUVs [subcompact and compact crossovers],” he reveals. The new Alfa Romeo Junior fits into B-SUV segment and has already received over 55,000 orders, far exceeding expectations. In the C-SUV sector, the Tonale is gaining traction in



GranTurismo, like all Maserati’s cars, is a Made in Italy benchmark for luxury.

Europe and further afield. Meanwhile, the Giulia compact sedan and Stelvio mid-size luxury SUV — although no longer brand new — are selling strongly thanks to their exceptional handling and comfort, with their high-performance Quadrifoglio versions being particularly appreciated.

Fully electric and hybrid versions of the Junior have been well received, as has the plug-in hybrid Tonale model. “An electric Alfa Romeo will always feel like an Alfa Romeo — emotional, dynamic and performance-driven. That’s our priority. We’re ensuring the electric versions deliver a driving experience aligned with our DNA and the Junior Elettrica is proof that we can bring Alfa Romeo qualities into the electric-vehicle space without compromise,” insists Ficili. “The industry is evolving. While we are committed to sustainability, we recognize the current need for flexibility. That’s why we’re offering electric, plug-in hybrid and even traditional internal combustion engines. It’s about meeting customer expectations and doing so responsibly.”

Maserati’s portfolio continues to set the benchmark for the automotive industry. It includes Grecale, the “everyday exceptional” SUV, the grand-tourer GranTurismo, the GranCabrio convertible and the road-legal version of its GT2 sports car. The most recent additions are the top-of-the-range McPura coupe and convertible, super sports cars incorporating F1-technologies, the brand’s famous 630-hp Nettuno V6 engine, a carbon-fiber monocoque and butterfly doors. “McPura is an evolution of the already-excellent MC20, with refined aesthetic enhancements. The public response is very positive and visibility online has been high,” he says.

Like Alfa Romeo, Maserati has widened its portfolio in response to evolving market demands by introducing all-electric vehicles under the Folgore name. “We’re one of the very few brands offering EVs at this level of luxury. The GranCabrio Folgore, for instance, is the only fully electric four-seater convertible on the market. Its performance is outstanding,” Ficili enthuses. “The GranTurismo, GranCabrio and Grecale Fol-



Santo Ficili  
CEO, Alfa Romeo and COO, Maserati

gore are tailored to meet the expectations of customers seeking a luxury electric sports car. The technology behind them is cutting-edge.”

The US is a major market for both Alfa Romeo and Maserati, with North America representing around 30% of the latter’s total sales. “The recent implementation of tariffs has introduced uncertainty, but it has also brought some clarity. With duties now clearly defined at around 15%, we expect the market to stabilize soon,” he reassures. “We see strong potential in North America and remain committed to this crucial market.”

The brands will also remain robust supporters of the many Alfa Romeo and Maserati clubs in the US and globally. “These communities preserve and celebrate our heritage, with thousands of enthusiasts around the world. We honor that commitment through services in Modena like certification, restoration and personalized customization, all rooted in our legacy and archives,” says Ficili. “I would like to thank all our customers and enthusiasts for their passion. Whether it’s Alfa Romeo or Maserati, we’re proud to share a piece of Italy with you.”

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# Prosperity powered by nature

Having establishing a robust green economy, Emilia-Romagna is on track to meet its environmental goals

In 2020, leading stakeholders in Emilia-Romagna’s public, business, educational and research communities signed the Regional Pact for Work and Climate, committing to a shared strategy for fostering an innovative green economy, achieving decarbonization by 2050 and transitioning to 100% renewable energy by 2035, among other targets.

The first goal has been achieved: in 2024, with strong governmental support and incentives, over 7,000 firms in the region generated a total of around \$115 billion in revenues from operations in sustainable aspects of sectors like agri-food, engineering, waste, renewables, building materials, water and mobility.

Transport is one of the government’s biggest decarbonization priorities at the moment. “We’re making substantial investments in green mobility and public transportation, in rail, in hydrogen buses, in electric vehicles,” says Vice President and Councilor for Economic Development and Green Economy Vincenzo Colla.

In energy, renewables’ share of the power mix reached 26.5% in 2023. The region aims to be an international hub for green energy technologies and innovation, with some of its focuses being next-generation nuclear, hydrogen, offshore wind, carbon capture and storage, and “agrivoltaics” systems that integrate solar with agricultural lands. “We’re technology neutral, as we think that reliable solutions always come from a blend of applications. A diverse technology mix, including solar, wind, biogas and geothermal, plus storage, will



**Gessica Allegni**  
Councilor for Culture, Parks and Forestry, Biodiversity Protection and Equal Opportunities

make proximity-based energy generation not only possible but economically viable. We also think it’s important to balance tradition and innovation, which is why we see gas as a transitional vector.”

**Preserving and expanding green spaces**  
Protecting the region’s incredible biodiversity is another environmental priority. “We have fantastic green spaces, including two national parks, an interregional park, two UNESCO Natural World Heritage Sites, three UNESCO Man and the Bio-



The region’s glorious countryside gives rise to foods like Parmigiano Reggiano.

sphere reserves and 14 regional parks,” details Councilor for Culture, Parks and Forestry, Biodiversity Protection and Equal Opportunities Gessica Allegni. “Our central goal is for 30% of our land to be protected and 10% strictly protected by 2030. We’re halfway there and aim to accelerate our efforts. We also want to adopt new comprehensive biodiversity legislation, which will help us integrate our vast network of parks and reserves.”

A key concern for Allegni are the 1.3 million acres of forests that cover a quarter of the region. “Trees are a fundamental part of our natural and historical heritage,” she notes. “We’re working to both protect forest biodiversity and increase the value of their natural capital. For example, we currently import most of the wood we use, in particular for buildings. We have an ambitious goal to restore trees that have been lost over time, creating new forests and job opportunities in our plains or low hills. We’re moving forward with this and empowering citizens to join us to make it happen.”

The regional government is also investing in urban reforestation. “We’ve almost reached our goal of planting 4.5 million trees. Our aim is to reduce the impact of polluting emissions and protect urban areas,” she explains.

For Allegni, protecting forests, parks and other natural areas should be seen as an opportunity for the region, rather than a limitation. “Our green spaces are vital places for research and developing skills in various fields, including climate change — a central and urgent issue,” she insists.

GESSICA ALLEJNI  
COUNCILOR FOR CULTURE, PARKS AND FORESTRY, BIODIVERSITY PROTECTION AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

**“We’re working to both protect forest biodiversity and increase the value of their natural capital.”**

“Their protection must be addressed at all levels, because a regional government alone can’t achieve it — often citizens don’t realize how small changes in daily behavior can have decisive effects on the environment and future generations, for example. Building opportunities to increase the skills of our citizens and make them protagonists of this change is essential”

# The gateway to trade with outstanding companies

Italy’s largest trade fair operator is expanding at home and around the world

Emilia-Romagna is a major force in business tourism. In particular, “The trade fair and exhibition sector is a strong economic driver,” says Antonio Bruzzone, CEO of BolognaFiere Group, which dominates the regional industry as one of Europe’s top 10 trade fair operators and the largest in Italy by revenues and international events.

The group’s leadership is underpinned by a portfolio of cutting-edge event complexes in Bologna, Modena, Ferrara and the Puglian capital Bari. The jewel in its crown is Bologna Exhibition Centre, the second-largest facility of its type in Italy that hosts about 40 globally important events every year, such as the Eima, Cersaie and Cosmoprof trade fairs for the agricultural machinery, ceramics and beauty industries respectively, as well as Bologna Children’s Book Fair, conferences, sports events like the Davis Cup tennis finals and big-name concerts.

The center’s size and versatility make such a diverse calendar possible. Covering over 4 million square feet, the world-leading complex includes, among many other elements, the multifunctional Bologna Congress Center and Emilia-Romagna’s largest theatre. “The strength of our event-space portfolio and scale of Bologna Exhibition Centre are key factors in our success. About 20,000 companies a year participate in our events held in Bologna, which are attended by over 1.2 million people,” reveals Bruzzone. “Bologna is a beautiful city, but its greatest advantage is its strategic location with a major airport and central position on Italy’s high-speed rail and highway networks.”

BolognaFiere Group’s operations extend beyond overseeing event facilities to encompass the sector’s entire value chain. “Our three main divisions are involved in managing fairgrounds, organizing worldwide exhibitions, and designing and building trade show stands. We strive to integrate our activities horizontally and vertically, capturing all the value large venues generate by, for example, also handling aspects like catering, parking, logistics and security,” he explains.

Between 2016 and 2024, the group’s turnover grew by 260% to reach almost \$320 million and it expects to generate around \$350 million this



**Antonio Bruzzone**  
CEO, BolognaFiere Group

year. Much of this impressive performance is the result of determined efforts to expand its global network: it is now active in Europe, Asia, and America, has offices in 16 international cities and organizes over 100 exhibitions and trade fairs in 12 countries worldwide each year.

BolognaFiere Group’s most established business-to-business international events concern the beauty industry and are branded Cosmoprof. With its close partner Informa Group, the world’s largest Anglo-American trade fair operator, it has developed Cosmoprof events in Hong Kong, Bangkok, Mumbai, Las Vegas and Miami. They also organize New York Beauty Week together, as well as Beauty Premier branded fairs in Orlando, Anaheim, Columbus and San Antonio.

“Having Informa as a partner and shareholder in our holding company gives us a tremendous platform for understanding and serving these markets,” comments Bruzzone. “Independently, we’ve expanded into the wine sector with events in Mexico City, Ho Chi Minh City and London; we organize the Children’s Book Fair in Shanghai, the second-biggest event for publishing in that sector after the one in Bologna; and in the private label sector, we manage fairs in China and



Bologna Exhibition Centre is the second-largest trade fair venue in Italy.

Poland. As an Italian operator, I would say we’re unique in having such a strong international presence.”

The group’s stand design and installation subsidiary Henoto is also growing around the world with bases in 13 cities from China to the US. “We have two companies in the US: our joint-venture with Informa that is focused on cosmetics events,

ANTONIO BRUZZONE  
CEO, BOLOGNAFIERE GROUP  
**“Bologna is a beautiful city, but its greatest advantage is its strategic location.”**

and Henoto, which generates over \$17 million in that country. It has an office in Manhattan, two large warehouses in Atlanta and New Jersey and smaller ones in Chicago and Las Vegas,” he notes. “The US market is very important for us and central to our growth strategy.”

Another pillar in the group’s strategy for consolidating its position as the leading Italian trade fair operator is continually investing in its Italian

facilities to ensure they remain at the pinnacle of the European offering. This June, for instance, it started constructing a new \$81-million-plus landmark at Bologna Exhibition Centre. Designed by MCA-Mario Cucinella Architects, this state-of-the-art, 269-foot-high multipurpose hall will cover almost 130,000 square feet and hold approximately 10,500 people.

Bruzzone would like US companies to consider Bologna as the ideal trade fair hub for developing business relations in Italy and especially Emilia-Romagna. “We aim to showcase the region’s production systems of absolute excellence when we hold events related to those sectors,” he notes.

“For instance, we organize events for classic cars and motorcycles, always highlighting the craftsmanship and expertise that distinguish Emilia-Romagna’s automotive sector. Cersaie is a world-class fair because the region hosts the world’s largest ceramic production district, Eima originated in Bologna because agricultural machinery manufacturing is concentrated here and, in our agri-food events, we involve many of Emilia-Romagna’s small enterprises in specialized gastronomy. We’re proud to operate in a territory with so many outstanding companies.”

## SNAPSHOT OF BOLOGNAFIERE GROUP



BolognaFiere has a total exhibition space of over **4 million square feet** in the cities of Bologna, Modena, Ferrara and Bari.



It covers the full industry supply chain, including trade fair and event organization, venue management, stand installation and architecture.



The group achieved almost **\$320 million** in revenue in 2024, **260%** more than in 2016.



Cosmoprof Bologna is the world’s leading event for the cosmetics industry, attracting **3,000** exhibitors from **65** countries in 2025.



Bologna Exhibition Centre is linked to a dedicated motorway exit and railway station and has parking capacity for **14,500** vehicles.



BolognaFiere boasts an annual exhibition portfolio of over **100** events in Italy and abroad, directly organized or hosted.



The group is currently constructing a new **\$81-million-plus** landmark hall at Bologna Exhibition Centre, Italy’s 2nd-largest trade venue.



Many events at Bologna Exhibition Centre showcase Emilia-Romagna’s manufacturing excellence.



**Bologna  
Fiere Group**

**ITALY’S  
LEADING  
EXHIBITION  
GROUP.**

[bolognafiere.com/en](http://bolognafiere.com/en)