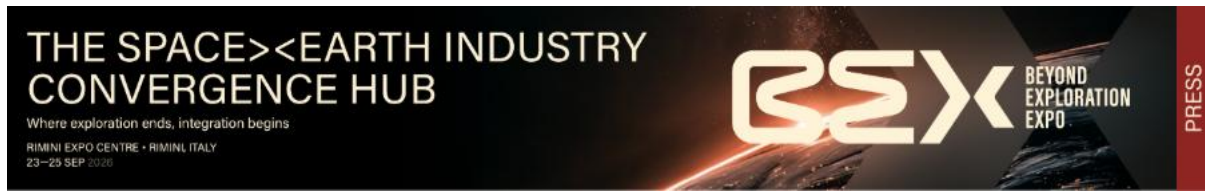


PRESS RELEASE



BEX BRINGS THE SPACE ECONOMY INTO INDUSTRY

From September 23 to 25, 2026, Rimini Expo Centre hosts the first international expo-conference organized by IEG (Italian Exhibition Group Spa) dedicated to the convergence of space technologies and terrestrial industrial sectors.

Rimini, September 18, 2026 - The space economy has entered a phase in which its value is measured on the ground, inside the industrial supply chains that already run on satellite data and technologies developed for orbit. The OECD places global space-related revenues between \$550 billion and \$600 billion in 2025, depending on the scope considered, a figure close to the size of the world semiconductor industry. World Economic Forum projections point to growth reaching \$1.8 trillion by 2035.

The sector's weight shows up above all in its applications. According to the OECD, space systems support more than half of critical infrastructure and services across member countries, from transportation to energy and from communications to the food supply chain, and satellites provide more than 90% of the observations used in weather forecasting. About 70% of the data produced by active Earth observation missions is now openly accessible, a condition that opens the door to application development even for smaller companies.

Italy is the second country in the world, after the United States, to build a dedicated statistical account for the space economy. The survey, covering 2021, attributes 8 billion euros in production and 2 billion euros in added value to the sector, with roughly 23,000 employees. The industrial ecosystem counts more than 350 companies, from large systems integrators to specialized SMEs, alongside a fast-growing startup community. As of June 2026, Italy ranks seventh in the world for the number of actively owned satellites, 53% of which are commercially operated, and sixth for satellites launched since 2019. Italy's civil institutional space budget stands at 0.089% of GDP, compared with an OECD average of 0.065%, and the country remains one of ESA's three largest contributors (OECD, The Space Economy at a Glance 2026).

It's against this backdrop that BEX - Beyond Exploration Expo was created, the first international expo-conference held in Italy entirely dedicated to the space economy and its integration with terrestrial industry, organized by IEG. The event brings to Rimini Expo Centre the upstream space industry, downstream applications built on satellite data, and the terrestrial

sectors finding new solutions and new markets in space: agriculture, food, infrastructure, automotive, health, logistics and finance.

The first edition is built around four areas: science, industry, finance and innovation, taking shape through exhibition spaces, conferences, technical workshops and matchmaking sessions that connect companies, investors, research centers and institutions.

AN INTERNATIONAL, INSTITUTIONAL ECOSYSTEM

BEX is held under the patronage of ASI, the Italian Space Agency, with support from ICE Agency and ESA. The European Space Agency sits on the Technical Scientific Committee through ESA Technology Broker Italy, backs the startup pitch sessions through ESA BIC Torino, and gives companies the chance to request direct meetings inside the Open Innovation District. Italy is home to five ESA Business Incubation Centres, in Turin, Rome, Milan, Padua and Brindisi, one of the most extensive space incubation networks in Europe.

The program involves national and European institutions, among them the European Commission's Directorate-General for Defence Industry and Space, the European Parliament's Committee on Industry, Research and Energy, the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, Italy's Ministry of Economy and Finance, the Ministry of Enterprises and Made in Italy, the Italian Air Force, the Italian Navy, ENAC, ENEA, CNR, CIRA, INAF, AGEA and the Civil Protection Department. The Emilia-Romagna Region, the Tuscany Region and the Republic of San Marino also take part, each hosting its own sessions within the event.

THE EXHIBITION AREAS

The exhibition floor is organized into four sectors: new space economy and in-orbit operations; upstream space industry, technologies and infrastructure; applications and services built on satellite data; and autonomous multidomain systems spanning space, aviation, underwater and ground vehicles.

Alongside these sits the Open Innovation District, the area dedicated to startups, innovative SMEs, universities, research centers, institutions and investors, sponsored by EY. Rounding out the layout is the Casa dell'Astronauta (Astronaut's House), the immersive area recreating the conditions of human life beyond Earth under the concept Building Human Life Beyond Earth.

HOW THE PROGRAM IS BUILT

The conference program is curated by the Technical Scientific Committee, chaired by Giuseppe Sala of the Politecnico di Milano, with input from the event's scientific and industry partners. Sessions run across several venues: the Main Stage for institutional and policy sessions, the Exploration Arena for in-depth vertical sessions, the Pitch Arena for startup and exhibitor presentations, the Think Lounge for short conversations at the Casa dell'Astronauta,

and the Future EO Arena curated by Planetek Italia and D-Orbit. Some sessions take place in the Diotallevi and Ravezzi rooms and at institutional booths.

The program's thematic tracks cover agrifood, Earth observation, space science and terrestrial applications, physiology and health, technical textiles and fashion, industrial diversification and the shift toward the space sector, resource exploitation and sustainability, space law, entrepreneurship and economics, autonomous systems and multidomain operations, new professions, and technology communication.

KEY EVENTS

Opening Ceremony. Wednesday, September 23, at 12:00 PM, the ribbon-cutting opens the event on the Main Stage, with national, European and regional institutions taking part.

BEX Vision Summit. Where Space Meets Industry. Starting at 2:30 PM on Wednesday, September 23, also on the Main Stage, the program's opening session puts the low Earth orbit economy at the center as the leading competitive arena in the shift toward the post-ISS era. Following opening remarks from Corrado Peraboni, CEO of Italian Exhibition Group, speakers include Elena Donazzan and Giorgio Gori, vice-chairs of the European Parliament's Committee on Industry, Research and Energy; Giancarlo Granero, head of the Space Economy unit at the European Commission's Directorate-General for Defence Industry and Space; Colonel Walter Villadei, professional astronaut with the Italian Air Force; Massimo Claudio Comparini of Leonardo and Thales Alenia Space; Jonathan Cirtain, CEO and president of Axiom Space; Vincenzo Giorgio, CEO of ALTEC; and Nicola Corradi of the Barilla Group.

Advanced Manufacturing for Space. From Earth Qualification to In-Orbit Production. On Thursday afternoon, September 24, the Technical Scientific Committee dedicates a three-hour block to the shift from ground-based component qualification to manufacturing directly in orbit. It opens with a keynote from Tommaso Ghidini, head of ESA's Mechanical Department, continues with a session from the Lombardia Aerospace Cluster on interconnected supply chains, bringing in perspectives from technical textiles, automotive, medical technology and defense, and closes with a look at the requirements for entering the space sector, from certification to insurance models and risk management. This closing segment includes the presentation of the Unioncamere-Dintec-BEX report on Italy's European aerospace patent portfolio, a read on patent trends and the country's innovation clusters.

Space Finance Arena. Where Capital Meets Space Innovation. On Thursday morning, September 24, organized by BEX with Plug and Play, the session opens with remarks from Leonardo chairman Francesco Macri and brings together entrepreneurs, investors, banks and public financial institutions. It moves through a mapping of available capital, a discussion of the criteria and timelines behind space startup funding, two direct case studies of companies sharing their growth stories, and a reverse pitch in which investors present themselves to companies. Participants include EY, ASI, ESA, the E. Amaldi Foundation, SDA Bocconi, SACE, Intesa Sanpaolo, Primo Space, TLI Space and SpaceFounders. The session closes with a look at opportunities under ESA's INCUBED program.

Technology Transfer Between Space and the Underwater Environment. On Thursday morning, September 24, BEX and ASI compare two domains that share extreme conditions, remote operations, system autonomy and safety requirements, with a closer look at deep-sea ecosystems and dual-use applications.

Space and Urban Farming. On Thursday morning, September 24, ENEA brings to the Exploration Arena the state of the art in growing crops in controlled, isolated, resource-limited environments, with a focus on Antarctica's Concordia Station, recognized by ESA as one of the closest Earth-based analogs to long-duration human space missions. The session includes a live link to the station, with speakers including Walter Villadei and researchers from ENEA, CNR and Kayser Space.

Biospace economy. CNR ISOF dedicates two sessions, on Thursday, September 24, and Friday, September 25, to the relationship between space research, biotechnology, medicine and pharmaceuticals, from radiation-shielding materials to health-monitoring sensors, through to in-orbit biomanufacturing and its impact on Earth-based health systems.

Technical Textiles for Space. On Thursday, September 24, Confindustria Moda presents its White Paper on technical textiles for space, developed as part of the National Aerospace Technology Cluster, followed by case studies from Italian companies.

Large Constellations and Space Traffic Management. On Wednesday, September 23, the Department of Aerospace Science and Technology at the Politecnico di Milano addresses the sustainability of orbital activity, space traffic management, and the technical requirements introduced by Italy's new space law, with satellite operators, INAF, Thales Alenia Space, Telespazio and the Aerospace Operations Command.

Space Law. On Thursday, September 24, CIRA leads a discussion on the limits of national regulation when applied to a domain that, by its nature, falls outside the jurisdiction of any single state, with contributions from AIAD, academia, Italy's Ministry of Economy and Finance, and the Presidency of the Council of Ministers.

Autonomous Systems. The track dedicated to unmanned operations runs across all three days, covering regulation and decision-making autonomy with ENAC and the Politecnico di Milano's Drone and Advanced Air Mobility Observatory, the use of satellite data and drones for public safety and emergency management in a Technical Scientific Committee session, and advanced air mobility. Flight demonstrations are also scheduled in the demo area, courtesy of Abzero, Protodynamics and Dronezone.

Astronaut's Home and Think Lounge. Over the three days, the Think Lounge hosts short conversations on life in orbit and technology transfer to terrestrial sectors, with Walter Villadei and the companies behind the initiative. It kicks off Wednesday, September 23, with Dallara and EY, comparing the technological challenges of space with those of high-performance engineering. In the afternoon, Walter Villadei talks about daily life in orbit, from physical adaptation to training routines, and ALTEC, together with Astrospace, traces the journey of food into space. Thursday, September 24, is the busiest day: it opens at 10:00 AM with Food as Stardust, a journey through the history of food in space, from the formation of matter to the latest studies on taste perception and food preparation for astronauts, along with a look at the potential impact on the terrestrial food industry. Next comes a conversation between Motor

Valley and the Piedmont Aerospace District on two industrial cultures within Italian automotive and their respective paths toward space; NTT DATA Italia addresses mental preparation and data interpretation in high-pressure operational settings; Technogym presents the physical conditioning and recovery strategies that prepare the body for microgravity. The day closes with Artisia by Barilla exploring food as micro-architecture, between 3D printing and new consumption rituals, ahead of the evening Space Cocktail, featuring a tasting of the Spaghetti 3D, winner of the Compasso d'Oro award. Meanwhile, Electrolux Professional envisions the kitchens of future habitats, drawing on its own experience in extreme environments. On Friday, September 25, Spacewear walks through the procedures for putting on and removing a flight suit.

Space Voices. On Friday, September 25, an unconventional session brings together science communicators, creators and exhibiting companies to discuss the role of science communication as a gateway to career paths and business opportunities.

Innovation Communication Lab - From Technology to Market. On Thursday, September 24, from 4:00 to 5:00 PM in the Exploration Arena, Confindustria presents a four-part path on how to communicate, tell the story of, present and sell innovation. Giovanni Caprara of Corriere della Sera opens with a look at communicating complex technologies, Andrea Barchiesi addresses storytelling and reputation as a competitive lever, Gaspare Civiero covers how to present innovation to clients, investors and international partners, and the session closes with a discussion among all the speakers on how to get research to market.

Space for Energy or Energy for Space? On the Exploration Arena stage, Friday, September 25, from 10:00 to 11:00 AM, ENEA spotlights the role of advanced energy systems in space and defense missions, from compact nuclear reactors to radioisotope power systems, from high-performance batteries to materials for integrating multiple energy sources. Speakers include Francesco Lodi on the SELENE project, Gabriele Piantadosi of ENEA, Luca Bono of Be2Hub, Jakub Sevecek of Stellar Nuclear, and Davide Loiacono of NEWCLEO. A dedicated segment looks at the role of artificial intelligence and Earth observation in forecasting and diagnostics for renewable energy plants.

AI and Resilience at the Frontier of Space Operations. On the Main Stage, Friday, September 25, from 12:00 to 1:00 PM, CINECA and the Bruno Kessler Foundation examine the integrity and resilience of AI-based systems as applied to mission design, autonomous operations and downstream applications of space data. Speakers include Marco Folegani of MEEO, Francesca Bovolo of the Bruno Kessler Foundation, General Roberto Del Vecchio of the Italian Defense General Staff, Davide Silvestri of SIDEIUS, and Luca Marzegalli of EY.

THE OPEN INNOVATION DISTRICT

The Open Innovation District connects startups, innovative SMEs, companies, research centers, institutions and investors, with a focus on technologies tied to the circular economy, resource efficiency and resilience, and dual-use applications capable of generating impact in both the space sector and terrestrial supply chains.

The project is delivered with EY as main sponsor. Alongside EY, the initiative brings together ANGI (National Association of Young Innovators), ART-ER, ASI (Italian Space Agency), ESA BIC Turin, I3P (the Politecnico di Torino's innovative business incubator), IIT (Italian Institute of Technology), Fondazione MAI, Plug and Play, Primo Space (Primo Ventures SGR) and the Forlì-Cesena Technopole, forming a network that brings together incubation, research, capital and business representation.

Participants were selected through an international Call for Startups. Twenty-five startups were chosen, 22 Italian and 3 international, spread across the event's four exhibition sectors, each with its own space inside the district.

The Pitch Arena stage hosts three dedicated pitch sessions, presented by ESA BIC Torino, the incubation program run by the Politecnico di Torino's innovative business incubator I3P with scientific and technological support from the Politecnico di Torino and the LINKS Foundation.

IEG, together with the initiative's partners, also presents an award to the startups behind the most innovative projects, one for each exhibition sector. Selection is handled by the Open Innovation District's evaluation committee, and the awards ceremony takes place Wednesday, September 23, starting at 5:30 PM on the Main Stage.

The area also hosts activities for students and young professionals, including the roundtable Italy Aerospace Competences: Soft Skills and Complexity Management, which on September 25, on the Main Stage, brings together Alma Mater Studiorum, Politecnico di Milano, Università Federico II di Napoli, the Confindustria Study Center, the Italian Air Force Academy, EIS and SITAEI to discuss the new competency models the aerospace industry now demands, spanning technical skills and soft skills.

BEX, AN OFFICIAL STOP ON THE STATI GENERALI DELLA SPACE ECONOMY

BEX is an official stop on the 2026 Stati Generali della Space Economy, the initiative promoted by the parliamentary Space Intergroup across Italy's space industry districts. The third edition of the Stati Generali takes place Friday, September 25, with a session dedicated to startups, microenterprises and incubators, focused on targeted financial instruments, access to infrastructure, and pathways for collaboration among universities, research centers and large companies.

BEX – Beyond Exploration Expo is the first Italian trade show entirely dedicated to the space economy. Held in Rimini from September 23 to 25, 2026, BEX aims to serve as an international reference hub connecting the traditional (upstream) space industry, downstream applications, and non-space sectors interested in the opportunities offered by space technologies. The event features exhibition areas, conferences, technical workshops, matchmaking sessions, and an area dedicated to startups, universities and research centers.

PRESS CONTACT IEG

head of media relation & corporate communication: Elisabetta Vitali; press office manager: Marco Forcellini, Pier Francesco Bellini; press office coordinator: Luca Paganin; press office specialist: Mirko Malgieri; press office assistant: Julia Andreatta media@iegexpo.it;

MEDIA AGENCY BEX - BEYOND EXPLORATION EXPO: MEP S.r.l.

Leonardo Vivard - leonardo.vivard@mep.it - mob. +39 3897652135 | Valentina Impellizzeri - valentina.impellizzeri@mep.it



FOCUS ON

Italian Exhibition Group S.p.A., società con azioni quotate su Euronext Milan, mercato regolamentato organizzato e gestito da Borsa Italiana S.p.A., ha maturato negli anni, con le strutture di Rimini e Vicenza, una leadership domestica nell'organizzazione di eventi fieristici e congressuali e ha sviluppato attività estere - anche attraverso joint-ventures con organizzatori globali o locali, come ad esempio negli Stati Uniti, Emirati Arabi Uniti, Arabia Saudita, Cina, Messico, Germania, Singapore, Brasile - che l'hanno posizionata tra i principali operatori europei del settore.

This press release contains forward-looking statements and estimates that reflect management's current views, particularly regarding future operating performance, the execution of investments, cash flow trends and the evolution of the company's financial structure. By their nature, forward-looking statements carry an element of risk and uncertainty, since they depend on future events. Actual results may differ, even significantly, from those announced, due to a range of factors including, but not limited to: trends in Italy's out-of-home dining and tourism markets, trends in the jewelry and goldsmith market, trends in the green economy market, movements in raw material prices, general macroeconomic conditions, geopolitical factors, and regulatory developments. The information contained in this release is not intended to be exhaustive and has not been verified by independent third parties. The projections, estimates and targets presented here are based on information available to the company as of the date of this release.