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MILAN GLASS CAPITAL OF THE WORLD

The VITRUM International Trade Show (5-8 September) and VISION MILAN GLASS WEEK (4-10 September) will occupy the pavilions of Fiera Milano Rho and the streets of Milan with a packed schedule of events – for industry professionals and open to the public – focused on glass, its history, and its applications.

Milan, glass capital: this is the quest of **VITRUM** and of **Vision Milan Glass Week**, two international events promoted by **GIMAV**, a member of Confindustria, that represents Italian suppliers of glass processing machinery, accessories, systems, and special products. For a whole week, the city of Milan will be the theater for one of the leading international glass industry events, accompanied by exhibits, shows, guided tours, exclusive openings of showrooms, workshops, meetings and much more.

Monday, more than 100 initiatives were presented on **4 September at the press conference in the Balla Room of the Sforzesco Castle**. All programs that are part of the **Vision Milan Glass Week** schedule of events and the **23rd edition of VITRUM**, the leading industry trade show held September 5-8 at Fiera Milano Rho, brimming with exhibits by flat and hollow glass processing companies and professionals. The press conference opened with greetings from the **Minister of Enterprises and Made in Italy, Adolfo Urso; City of Milan Councilor for Culture, Tommaso Sacchi; and Manager of ITA (Italian Trade Agency), division of Industrial Technology, Energy and Environment, Antonio Lucarelli**.

Thanks to key support from the Ministry of Enterprises and Made in Italy, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, and ITA, the decision to invest in the magnetism of Milan: **Vision Milan Glass Week**, September 4 to 10, will coincide with the post-holiday return of the Milanese to the city. The goal is to replicate the huge success of **The Italian Glass Weeks special edition in 2022 – proclaimed International Year of Glass by the United Nations – that took place in Milan and Venice and attracted more than 450,000 visitors**.

Two events designed to explore the distinctive features that make Italy's glass supply chain unique: its importance in terms of the economy, workforce and glass industry innovation; the refinement and elegance in the design of **Made in Italy** products; the fine craftsmanship of our artisans, the creativity of the artists, and the history, culture and tradition that only our country can claim.

VITRUM, the not-to-be-missed event where the industry's leading actors meet, exchange ideas, discuss the latest trends and prepare the fertile terrain where innovations for the "glass of the future" germinate and grow.

Vision Milan Glass Week, to dialog with the public at large on site at extraordinary locations dense with meaning, history and traditions that trace back to glass, to glass processing and to the contributions it has brought and brings to architecture, design and our cultural heritage.

"Vision Milan Glass Week is a very broad-based event that will enliven the city of Milan with a vast calendar of programs and activities. It is also an opportunity to highlight, through new perspectives, the collections of the city's cultural institutions and engage an increasingly vast and varied audience," remarked Milan's Councilor for Culture, Tommaso Sacchi. Through programs that explore the beauty and versatility of glass in all its

many facets, Glass Week becomes a catalyst for innovation and dynamism that weaves together culture, industry and technology.”

The press conference also highlighted the extraordinary industrial component that supports the Made in Italy glass supply chain. However, it is not easy to total the sector's numbers because it is a very disparate category that is traditionally divided into flat and hollow glass, glass wool and fibers, and glass tube. While, along the supply chain separate stages of production, transformation, processing technologies, and special products for glass can be identified.

An estimate of the sector's numbers was proposed and it appears that – considering the sector represented by GIMAV, technologies and special products, that with approx. 8,000 employees had a turnover of nearly 3 billion euro in 2022 and, projecting the available data (2019) for production and processing, represented by Assovetro, it adds up to approx. turnover of 5.7 billion euro with an estimated employee count of about 16,000 – **the glass industry constitutes total revenues of close to 9 billion euro and directly employs about 24,000 people.**

“The numbers show that the glass industry, despite facing problems tied to international uncertainties, crises and rising costs of energy and raw materials, is a healthy industry that continues to grow. Historically, Italy embodies global excellence in glass, a tradition that is rooted in ancient history but that looks to the future with enthusiasm thanks to research and innovation, activities in which our companies continue to invest. The optimization of production processes with an eye to greater economic and environmental sustainability is a key challenge for the coming years. The events at which we will be center stage in the next few days are a must-see showcase for all the participating companies and at the same time, an opportunity for interaction and comparison for industry professionals and to engage with those who visit the many events promoted across the city. We intentionally chose to align our historic trade show with Vision Milan Glass Week, an event that is becoming a highly anticipated appointment for connoisseurs of design and Made in Italy items, with the aim of proposing Milan, city-symbol of design, as the glass capital. For a week, discussion, sharing and dialog will be the star players in the traditional framework of the fair, in the city's streets, in showrooms and in spaces specifically open to the public for the occasion. One more opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of a material that is part of our lives and our daily routines,” points out **Dino Zandonella Necca, GIMAV and VITRUM President.**

Meaningful words from **Gabriella Del Signore, founder and managing director of Ghenos Communication**, who stated: *“We at Ghenos Communication and TDH, decided to support VITRUM for the second consecutive year because we are convinced that glass is the natural, sustainable and 100% recyclable material par excellence, a raw material used more and more in product design and in architecture. To highlight our focus on areas related to environmental protection, during this edition of Milan Glass Week we also decided to stage a space inside our Tricolore Design Hub dedicated to the clients, companies, designers and architects that have consistently chosen glass for their creations.”*

Among the speakers, **Lucia Masutti – General Director of Glass Group** emphasized just how proud *“Glass Group is to be able to participate in this new edition of VITRUM, with its contribution to the world of flat glass processing. We believe that VITRUM is an enormous opportunity for Italy's glass industry, an international showcase for a supply chain that is constantly challenging itself to grow and create a culture of cooperation. VITRUM is an institution to defend and acknowledge as a hub for exchanging ideas that must consistently be more actively engaged and promoted by all the industry's Italian actors.”*

During the press conference, **Gianni Scotti – President of CoReVe**, also spoke, placing the accent on glass recovery and recycling, on the importance of the industry from both a societal and economic perspective. *“Glass is the quintessential material, 100% recyclable, infinitely – features that make it valuable in both environmental and economic terms. Once again, Italy superseded the EU target of 75% (set for 2030) with a recycling rate of 80.8% in 2022. Thus marking a substantial increase in glass recycling in our country of 4.2%*

vs. 2021. What we define as environmental accounting of glass recycling is without a doubt in the black. Nonetheless, behind this positive trend looms a specter that threatens to jeopardize the work accomplished in recent years. We are experiencing an abnormal rise in the price of cullet that is driving manufacturers to consume more virgin raw material, reducing the secondary raw material used in the production of glass packaging. It is worthwhile remembering that glass is the preferred packaging for high-quality Italian food and beverage products exported around the world. The result is a dangerous reversal of the trend: until a few months ago, Italy's glassworks employed up to 95% secondary raw material to sustainably produce new glass packaging, they are now encouraged by the lower cost of virgin raw materials to consume more soda, silicon and carbonates, resulting in fewer environmental benefits."

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