

Expo 2000 relaunches Turin as a city of events with the Oval and the Lingotto Conference Centre

With the legacy of the Olympics, the capital of Piedmont comes stage-front as a cutting-edge centre for fairs, conferences and events of all types

by Luca Bianco

The Winter Olympics of 2006 put the city of Turin and the whole of Piedmont in the limelight of the international media. Film broadcast by television stations around the world depicted a glamorous city, highlighting the Baroque, Art Nouveau and Neo-Classical buildings of the centre, the squares with their rigorous architecture, traditional restaurants and trendy night spots, the banks of the Po, the parks, the elegant shopping streets and the Alpine peaks. Similarly, it was possible to bring out the best of its natural and cultural resources and fine food and wine.

Thanks to the Olympics, Turin has endowed itself with facilities, infrastructures and services to meet the needs of users, such as those of fairs and conferences, that demand high quality accommodation and services as essential requirements. Piedmont has thus refounded its capacity to host meetings and events.

Expo 2000 for a more international Turin

Expo 2000 Spa has been moving in this direction for many years. Headed by Fabrizio Gatti, the company has been running the city's main conference centre since 1994: the **Lingotto Conference Centre**. The company's majority shareholders are in the

public sector, with 25% held by Piedmont Region plus City of Turin, Chamber of Commerce, Industrialists Union, Anfia and Amma as well as private shareholders with smaller shares. On 28th February 2007 a second increase was voted, reserved for the City of Turin, which will thus acquire 51%.

The **Business Plan**, approved at the beginning of 2006, sets a number of objectives, aimed at the strategic repositioning of the company.

The key goals are: to strengthen the bonds with the institutions and build a path towards internationalisation together; to become a leader, reinforcing the competitiveness of the conference centre integrated with the exhibition facilities; to generate positive economic effects for the region, increasing its GDP; assert its position on the international scene through the creation of a network with stakeholders, opinion leaders and local partners; to run conference and fair tourism along business lines.

Melting Box

The efforts of Expo 2000 are today concentrated on the creation of the "institutional trust" that enables it to become an integral part of the internationalisation process of Turin and Piedmont.



Fabrizio Gatti

This will be pursued in part through the events and projects it promotes, heads or sponsors.

In the spirit of these activities, it has been commissioned by Piedmont Region to co-plan, organize and manage a new international event. This is **Melting Box**, the new fair of equal opportunities and rights for all, to be held from 22 to 24 October 2007 at the Lingotto Conference Centre. The Region is the institutional partner and Expo 2000, with its own investment and fund-raising activities, is committed to covering the difference.

The Italian government has also judged the event to be of national interest and able to represent Italy on the European level. It has also chosen Turin and Piedmont as the location where to present the whole set of activities that the state will co-ordinate for the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All.

The Oval Lingotto

Expo 2000 adds further exhibition spaces with the acquisition of the **Oval Lingotto**.

Built on the industrial site that once hosted Fiat Avio, the Oval was conceived to provide the city with an ice rink suitable for the highest ice sports competitions for the Olympics. However, the Hok Sport Group of London and Studio Zoppini & Associati, which were responsible for the design, also made it ready for post-Olympic use.

The Oval is thus today a cutting-edge facility capable of hosting events and conventions, fairs and conferences of all dimensions.



Auditorium Lingotto