**RELAUNCH OF FOOTWEAR AND ACCESSORIES AT EXPO RIVA SCHUH & GARDABAGS:**

**THE SECTOR’S KEY INTERNATIONAL TRADE SHOW TO BE HELD FROM 15 TO 18 JANUARY**

**WITH AN ENHANCED SAFETY PROTOCOL**

**Over 500 companies from more than 30 countries worldwide will bring life to the Riva del Garda marketplace, with new exhibition formats, digitisation and the Innovation Village Retail project, designed to support new entrepreneurs**

*Riva del Garda, 13 January 2022***.** At its forthcoming in-person edition **– set to take place from Saturday 15 to Tuesday 18 January at the Riva del Garda (TN) Exhibition Centre – Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags** is ready to showcase excellence in the footwear and accessories sector, with an extensive and international offer.

The show will be a strong signal for the whole sector, which, despite the difficulties experienced during this period, wanted to reflect the dynamic recovery confirmed by the increased number of participants. Over 520 companies are expected to exhibit at the show, from more than 30 countries worldwide: **Italy, India, Turkey, Spain, Portugal, Germany, Brazil, France, the Netherlands, China, the UK, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Poland, Hong Kong, Belgium, Sweden, Taiwan, Bulgaria, Croatia, United Arab Emirates, Albania, Austria, Greece, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Nepal, Romania, Russia, Slovakia and Thailand.** These companies will offer a range of unique proposals, in an inclusive format open to the needs of the sector’s players.

Various initiatives have been key to making it easier for producers from China, India and Brazil to take part, including **Digital Connection,** a digital platform based on an efficient Artificial Intelligence system, and the activation of **“hybrid” exhibition solutions,** which ensure that companies unable to attend can physically display their samples at the show and manage business negotiations virtually and remotely.

*“The growth in the consumption and imports of footwear and accessories worldwide shows us that operators in this sector – producers and buyers – really need to meet each other to “support” the market’s recovery” -* commented **Roberto Pellegrini, Chairman of Riva del Garda Fierecongressi** - “*In this sense, attending an international event like Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags is an unmissable business opportunity for manufacturing companies. As leading exhibition for volume footwear and fashion accessories, we have adopted an even more rigid safety protocol and supported companies to collect international travel authorisations. Our goal was helping them to overcome the various international travel obstacles in order to be present in person in Riva del Garda with their autumn-winter 2022/2023 collections”.*

The focus on the **theme of innovation** will be key, and will be reflected in scouting activity aimed at identifying the best start-ups to be encouraged, incubated and accelerated; in the last year, this activity found its ideal stage at Innovation Village Retail, the project coordinated by **Alberto Mattiello**, a member of the show’s Scientific Committee.

*“If we think of everything that lies behind the footwear value chain – raw materials, production machinery, communication, distribution, etc. – it is not difficult to deduce the various areas in which research and development policies can be employed. This is what innovation in the fashion sector is all about: having the intuition, ability and determination to imagine something new, optimise processes or reinvent existing ones” -* said **Alessandra Albarelli, General Manager of Riva del Garda Fierecongressi** - “*With Innovation Village Hub, we have chosen to give a voice to those companies, institutions and professionals who have taken up the challenge of innovation. This is a special exhibition area where sector start-ups will have the opportunity to present ten disruptive retail solutions and interface with major industry partners. A dynamic, future-oriented space that highlights our company's recent commitment to innovation at Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags, and, more generally, in all our products”.*

Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags will receive its community from 15 to 18 January 2022 at the Riva del Garda Exhibition Centre (Trento - Italy) in complete safety, thanks to a rigid anti-Covid protocol (<https://exporivaschuh.it/it/covid-free>), the main measures of which include access to the pavilions only with a Super Green Pass, the obligatory wearing of FFP2 masks, compliance with social distancing measures and the continuous disinfecting of hands with sanitiser gel.

The official opening of the show will be attended by **Roberto Pellegrini** – Chairman of Riva del Garda Fierecongressi and **Alessandra Albarelli** – General Manager of Riva del Garda Fierecongressi, alongside **Silvia Betta** – Vice-Mayor of Riva del Gardaand **Achille Spinelli** – Councillor for Economic Development, Research and Employment of the Autonomous Province of Trento.

Register to receive a ticket or sign up for free to the Digital Connection virtual experience here: <https://exporivaschuh.it/it/area-visitatori/signin>.

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