



**BOLOGNA  
CHILDREN'S  
BOOK  
FAIR**



**59<sup>th</sup> edition**

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**THE 59<sup>th</sup> BOLOGNA CHILDREN'S BOOK FAIR — 21-24 MARCH 2022**

## **Support from The Italian Trade Agency and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at the 2022 edition of BCBF**

The Bologna Children's Book Fair (BCBF) has always been the pre-eminent Fair for international professionals from the children's publishing sector. With more than 1000 exhibitors from 90 countries and regions around the world, the 2022 edition is finally bringing the children's publishing community back together again in person in Bologna.

The attendance of professionals from the main international markets has been facilitated by the initiatives of the **Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI)** and **The Italian Trade Agency (ITA)**, which promotes foreign trade and the internationalisation of Italian companies. Thanks to the cooperation of the ITA offices in many countries and the funds allocated for the Bologna Children's Book Fair 2022, the Fair has been able to offer a hospitality programme and specific services for selected organisations, thus increasing business opportunities in national and global publishing. But this support is also, above all, a sign of confidence for all those in the sector, after the complex period of the pandemic, serving as an important contribution to the export market and the international promotion of "made in Italy" books and creativity at the Bologna Children's Book Fair, a fundamental reference point as the world's only professional fair specifically for the sector of children and young people.

The activities carried out thanks to the support from ITA and MAECI began with the **Bologna Grand Tour**, the programme of events that took the Bologna Children's Book Fair to four international trade events between October and December 2021, offering opportunities to renew direct interactions and re-establish relationships in-person with overseas companies, an international tour that represented an important part of the post-pandemic recovery.

From the Frankfurter Buchmesse to the Sharjah International Book Fair, taking in also the *Feria International del Libro* in Guadalajara and the *Salon du Livre et de la Presse Jeunesse de Montreuil* in Paris, at each of the four fairs, BCBF was able to showcase the best of illustration and new trends in Italian publishing for children and young people to its loyal community of professionals. In particular, among the activities promoted abroad, BCBF gave the utmost prominence to the quality of Italian publishing and creativity with the illustration exhibition *Italian Excellence*, organised by BCBF in collaboration with MAECI and the Emilia-Romagna regional administration, that toured fairs and cultural venues in the city centres of many countries. Also presented on all four occasions was the exhibition *Honour List - The quality of Italian publishing in 70 books for young people*, organised by the Italian section of IBBY (the International Board on Books for Young People), of which BolognaFiere is a founding member.

ITA and MAECI support initiatives are now focused on the **2022 edition of the Bologna Children's Book Fair**, through the organisation of an enhanced incoming participant programme that comprises a delegation of more than 100 high-profile

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specialised foreign professionals from 70 countries and regions, and the creation of business areas and events specifically for them, as well as an intense matchmaking programme organised in cooperation with AIE.

One such initiative is **Spotlight on Africa**, the first focus on Africa at the Children's Book Fair, which provides an in-depth analysis of a booming market that could be of significant interest for Italy and its publishing professionals, hosting operators from several African countries. Furthermore, the **World Lounge** is a collective exhibition space hosting a large delegation of foreign publishers from different countries, brought about as a result of detailed scouting activities carried out in cooperation with the ITA offices.

**BolognaBookPlus**: the new initiative created in collaboration with AIE (the Association of Italian Publishers) and dedicated to general publishing, represents a new opportunity for meetings and the trade in rights between Italian and international publishers in every sector. This initiative is of particular strategic value as it underlines Italy's role as a global publishing market; here too the collaboration with ITA has made it possible to expand the public of international professionals present in Bologna.

Another new feature also made possible thanks to ITA, is the **Italian Illustrators' Lounge**: set within the Illustrators' Survival Corner. The Lounge is a professional space for illustrators and is curated by Mimaster Illustrazione. Its focus is on meetings between Italian illustrators and foreign publishers through portfolio review sessions. Finally, inside the new **Comics Corner** is a meeting place for Italian and foreign publishers interested in the latest developments in the Italian comics market, which is expanding rapidly in all world markets. A special Buyer Area, created in cooperation with ITA, is hosting B2B meetings between the major players in the sector.

These initiatives are complemented by important networking events and a meeting organised by AIE to present data on Italian publishing – both general and children's – to the foreign delegates attending the fair: the appointment offers an overview of the Italian book market through the latest data on production, sales, reading behaviour, imports/exports of rights, as well as the presentation of in-depth market research conducted with the support of ITA and MAECI, for the promotion and internationalisation of Italian publishing.

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