

The event at the Verona exhibition centre until 28 February

PROGETTO FUOCO, 15TH EDITION OPENS: THE WOOD-ENERGY SUPPLY CHAIN GATHERS IN VERONA PICHETTO FRATIN: «A STRATEGIC SECTOR FOR THE COUNTRY'S ENERGY TRANSITION»

The ribbon-cutting ceremony was attended by Deputy Minister Vannia Gava, Regional Councillor Bond, Mayor Tommasi, President of the Province Pasini, President of Veronafiere Bricolo and President of AIEL Brugnoni. Federico Bricolo, President of Veronafiere: «The wood-energy supply chain is represented here in its entirety. It is a strategic sector that is investing heavily in innovation and needs the right regulatory support to grow further and face the challenges of the future»

Verona, 25 February 2026 – The fifteenth edition of **Progetto Fuoco**, the world's most important event dedicated to heating appliances and energy production through biomass, opened this morning and will run until Saturday 28 February at the Verona exhibition centre. From stoves to fireplaces, boilers, barbecues and wood and pellet cookers: the event features **430 brands** from **38 countries**, presenting all the latest market innovations in an exhibition area of 65,000 square metres, spread over seven pavilions and an outdoor area. The event focuses on all the latest market innovations and the most modern technologies based on the use of wood biomass, which is now the main source of renewable energy, used in residential heating by over a quarter of Italian households. The inaugural event of Progetto Fuoco opened with a video message from the Minister of the Environment and Energy Security, **Gilberto Pichetto Fratin**.

«Progetto Fuoco represents a strategic sector for energy transition,' emphasised **Minister Pichetto Fratin**. «Thermal bioenergy from wood is a key renewable source for domestic heating. Almost 9 million appliances currently serve more than 5 million Italian households. It is a sector that generates over £4 billion in turnover with 72,000 employees in 14,000 companies, characterised by innovation, circular economy and environmental responsibility. Of course, all this must be considered in the context of climate and air policies. It is therefore necessary for the systems to be upgraded with the latest technology and well maintained. This sector represents an area of excellence for Italian manufacturing, thanks to our companies and the important role played by events such as Progetto Fuoco. Wood is a local resource linked to the territory and programmable – concluded the Minister- an energy source that, if well regulated and well managed with modern tools, will be with us for a long time to come».

The inauguration event also featured institutional greetings from **Federico Bricolo**, President of Veronafiere, and speeches by **Damiano Tommasi**, Mayor of Verona, **Flavio Massimo Pasini**, President of the Province of Verona, **Domenico Brugnoli**, President of AIEL, **Dario Bond**, Councillor for Agriculture and Forestry of the Veneto Region, and **Vannia Gava**, Deputy Minister for the Environment and Energy Security.

«The wood-energy supply chain is represented here in its entirety» said **Federico Bricolo**, President of Veronafiere. "We have 5,000 products on display, 7 pavilions entirely occupied over 65,000 square metres. And then there are lots of new features, such as the area dedicated to start-ups and technological developments related to artificial intelligence. But there are also many opportunities for discussion with institutions, because this is a strategic sector that is investing heavily in innovation and needs the right regulatory support to grow further and face the challenges of the future».

«Here you can feel the innovation of those who have embraced sustainable development and all the practicality of an entrepreneurial fabric that is not afraid of challenges, that wants to govern the energy transition, not suffer it» said **Vannia Gava**, Deputy Minister of the Environment and Energy Security. «The government is fully committed to supporting the sector with significant investments. Many steps forward have been taken to ensure energy security and air quality. For example, with the Conto Termico (Thermal Account) and funds allocated to the regions for the replacement of old plants, which have led to more than 50,000 interventions for biomass generation and investments of 250 million. We are working together with industry associations such as AIEL, for example on the issue of certification review, because all measures must be shared and the result of teamwork».

«This is a very important sector, which creates jobs and generates wealth, and which we must protect» explained **Dario Bond**, Councillor for Agriculture and Forestry of the Veneto Region. 'For this reason, given the ability of this fair to bring together companies and associations in the sector, I propose to the President of Veronafiere that we set up a sort of open forum with the Region to monitor the sector and provide answers that no one else in Italy would be able to give. If the fire is not fuelled by appropriate policies and incentives, it risks going out»

«This event focuses on an issue that is central to us, namely air quality» emphasised **Damiano Tommasi**, Mayor of Verona. «Trade fairs such as this play a fundamental role in encouraging technological change and focusing on energy efficiency and greater plant safety».

«In recent years, we have seen how relying on a single energy source can be detrimental» explained **Flavio Massimo Pasini**, President of the Province of Verona. 'Wood is therefore once again becoming necessary and economical for many families. The sector represented here is an example of Italian excellence, a key player in the ecological transition and focused on the future thanks to its strong focus on new technologies».

«AIEL has been present at Progetto Fuoco for many years» said **Domenico Brugnoli**, President of AIEL. «This event focuses on the cultural aspect of fire, which is integrated with cutting-edge technology and design. But the political aspect is also important: thanks to Veronafi, in recent months we have been able to meet with Minister Pichetto Fratin, with whom we had a fruitful dialogue on increasing attention to the supply chain and the effective management of woods and forests, which together represent 30% of Italy's territory».

Progetto Fuoco: startups and artificial intelligence protagonists

Tra le novità di quest'anno c'è **Hub AI**, un nuovo format dedicato all'intelligenza artificiale e alle tecnologie emergenti per la filiera legno-energia, realizzato in collaborazione con **Clover Venture**. L'area è stata inaugurata questa mattina alla presenza di **Valeria Santolin**, exhibition manager area B2B di Veronafi. Nell'Hub AI sono presenti sette startup e aziende innovative che propongono soluzioni tecnologiche in grado di supportare le aziende nei loro percorsi di trasformazione digitale applicata all'utilizzo delle energie rinnovabili. **Kemaro** è un'azienda svizzera che presenta un AGV (Automated Guided Vehicles) per pulizia di ambienti industriali, **RUMA** porta un software per la generazione e gestione dei carbon credits, **K-inntech** è uno spin-off dell'Università di Padova che ha sviluppato un dispositivo innovativo per ridurre le emissioni di polveri sottili (PM) emesse dalle stufe a pellet domestiche. Mentre **Spaider.ai** utilizza l'IA per ottimizzare le reti neurali in ambiti ingegneristici, **Maxfone** porta i propri software proprietari di intelligenza artificiale per l'automazione delle funzioni dei macchinari industriali, e **Vitesy** è una startup con prodotti per la purificazione dell'aria. Anche la stessa **Clover Venture** presenta il proprio software Grace, per l'innovazione del settore manifatturiero e a supporto dei processi di open innovation. Il format dell'Hub AI offrirà alle startup un programma di workshop che nell'arco delle tre giornate si concentreranno su intelligenza artificiale, innovazione sostenibile e strategie di crescita, progettati per fornire strumenti concreti e immediatamente applicabili. Le startup presenti avranno inoltre l'opportunità di presentare la propria tecnologia in una pitch session davanti a una platea qualificata di esperti, investitori e stakeholder del settore.

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