



## **Expo Milano 2015. The Kick Off Date is Only a Week Away But ...**

Emily Hayes (April 24, 2015)



With the Expo Milano 2015 kick off date only a week away, many Italians are concerned that Milan will not be ready to host the 20 million people that are getting ready to file into the city for sixth months, the length of the world's fair. The New York Times is not the only newspaper to recently release an article concerning the many controversies that have permeated the atmosphere of the Expo and Italy's international image.

Milan feels more pressure than ever to host an alluring event, since officials are expecting the Expo to produce \$10.7 billion euros for the city during a stunted growth in the economy. The fair is also providing 19,000 jobs on site and four times as many jobs off the site. The probable success of the Expo could draw more investors to Milan.

However, many critics of the Expo from the start accused the organizers of poor, last minute planning. Projects that were supposed to be included in the Expo are not on the itinerary.



Other newer controversies for the Expo arose over its inclusion of McDonald's and Coca Cola among its list of partners for the fair as official sponsors, since it was meant to focus on Italy's pride in its excellent food. These companies do not fit into the theme of the event: "Feeding the planet, energy for life."

Exhibitors such as [Slow Food](#) [2], a global organization that strives to keep local food traditions alive with supporters in 150 countries around the world, protested the inclusion of McDonald's and Coca Cola in the Expo. Including a fast food company gives fair goers the wrong impression about what is good for the body and good for the planet. They said in a statement that including multinational companies implies "feeding the planet or fattening it, caring for it or depleting its resources, seems to be the same thing."

Companies like McDonald's and Coca Cola would want to be involved in an event that focuses on a healthy lifestyle, in order to make their products seem more appealing and linked to health for consumers.

Expo officials are hopeful that debates, concerts and art exhibitions on the theme of food, as part of the various events, will entice the visitors. The organization said in a statement "with Coca Cola the experience of our visitors will be enhanced through the development of issues such as the food balance."

Corruption scandals ( Seven managers and ex-members of parliament were arrested one year ago for alleged attempts to influence public tenders) provoked the Italian government to appoint an anticorruption commissioner to oversee the major public contracts in Italy, [Raffaele Cantone](#) [3]. This helped improve the speed of the construction, and workers are finishing 53 pavilions for international groups, 150 restaurants, exhibition areas and an arena. Trees, shrubs and flowers were planted, and roads and passes were set up to lead visitors the six miles from Milan's center to the Expo. Construction barriers are up all over the city.

Many shopkeepers in the center of the city have complained that the Expo is too far to benefit from, but shopkeepers close to the site have complained that construction has driven away customers.

Milan citizens are worrying about the traffic that will invade the city, and the stricter limitations because of the necessary security for the Expo.

Others are excited that Milan has chosen [Leonardo Da Vinci](#) [4] as its "hero." The city hoped that the spirit of Da Vinci in the atmosphere of the fair would inspire creativity.

[Palazzo Reale](#) [5], or the Royal Palace of Milan, just opened an exhibition of the iconic Italian artist's work.

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#### **Links**

[1] <http://iitaly.org/files/expomilano2015construction1429906888.jpg>

[2] <https://www.slowfoodusa.org/>

[3] <http://www.ilfattoquotidiano.it/tag/raffaele-cantone/>

[4] <http://www.biography.com/people/leonardo-da-vinci-40396>

[5] <http://www.milanmuseumguide.com/palazzo-reale/>