



## Great success for the WMF event in Tirana: Italy and Albania strengthening connections between their innovation ecosystems.

On March 15 the WMF International Roadshow landed in Tirana, Albania, for an event dedicated to connecting the different innovation ecosystems and strengthening the bridges between the two countries. The event, organized by WMF - We Make Future, International Trade Fair and Festival on Tech and Digital Innovation was attended by startups, tech and innovation realities, and several representatives of Albanian institutions, including Minister for the Protection of Entrepreneurship Edona Bilali, Mayor of Tirana Erion Veliaj, and Deputy Italian Ambassador to Albania Luigi Mattiolo. During the day, a startup competition selected the three Albanian startups that will fly to Italy next June to participate in WMF 2023.

Bologna, 23/03/2023

Great success for the Albanian stop of the **WMF International Roadshow**, held on March 15 in Tirana at the Maritim Hotel. An event, organized by **WMF - We Make Future** in collaboration with **Albania Economia**, **Moneys Magazine (Moneys Media Group Ltd)**, and the **Italian Chamber of Commerce in Albania - CCIA**, entirely dedicated to generating new connections between the innovation ecosystems of Italy and Albania. The program offered keynotes, analysis of success cases, panel discussions, and a startup competition featuring the best of Albania's active and energetic innovation ecosystem. The three winning startups will take part in the WMF, International Fair and Festival on Technological and Digital Innovation organized by Search On Media Group, scheduled on **June 15-17, 2023 in Rimini, Italy**.

The event in Albania is part of the WMF International Roadshow, the traveling project started in 2021 with the aim of creating a **bridge of international cooperation** and strengthening connections between innovation ecosystems around the world.

The Tirana stop registered a great interest and turnout, with a wide presence of **prominent institutional figures** including **Albania's Minister for Entrepreneurship Protection Edona Bilali** who commented, "*The future is just around the corner, and it has the look of technological and digital innovation all over it, and we as a government have decided to welcome it without reservation,*" says **Bilali**. "*That is why we have chosen*





*to get on board, together with other 49 other countries, on the train of the WMF, the largest international event on digital innovation worldwide [...]. I am happy to be in the company of these energetic people today and to witness the empowerment journey that will take them to Rimini in June at WMF, International Fair and Festival on Technological and Digital Innovation. So many thanks to WMF, Albania Economy, Moneys Magazine, and the Italian Chamber of Commerce in Albania. Special thanks to the most innovative ambassador, Fabrizio Bucci, and to Erion [editor's note: Veliaj, mayor of Tirana], who transformed Tirana into an incredible internationally recognized digital hub."*

During the opening remarks, **Cosmano Lombardo CEO of Search On Media Group and creator of the WMF** added, "We are delighted to have brought WMF to Albania and to have come in contact with this vital ecosystem of innovation, full of potential and projects destined to create a positive impact on the community," and continued, "with these international events we make the WMF ecosystem available to local innovative projects, in order to concretely support their development and industrialization. With this in mind, the three best startups selected here in Tirana will be with us at WMF next June, where they will be able to meet investors, realities, and players from all over the world. For us, the WMF International Roadshow is a tool that operates as a bridge between countries that together create an Innovation Valley, where institutions, startups, and citizens can work alongside to respond to the great global challenges lying ahead. We are confident that the success of this first event in Tirana will lead us to collaborate again in the future, on new events and projects."

Institutions present during the event included Italian **Deputy Ambassador to Albania** Luigi Mattiolo, **Mayor of Tirana** Erion Veliaj, **Director of Tumo Center** in Albania Shqipe Berisha, and representatives of large companies such as the CEO of **Coca-Cola Albania-Sicily** Luca Busi, the CEO of **Armundia Group** Gianluca Berghella, and **Huawei** Head of Marketing Ecosystem and Operation Stefano Nkazi. Also participating were representatives of **Search On Media Group**, the mother company of WMF - We Make Future, such as WMF Head of Global Partnership Vito Esposito, and WMF Head of Innovation team Giuseppe Oppedisano. The event was presented by Albanian producer and presenter Blendi Salaj.

A must-see event of the day was the startup competition that saw **14 of the most promising startups from the Albanian ecosystem** compete on stage presenting their innovative projects.





The top 3 selected startups will fly to Italy next June to participate in WMF 2023 where, depending on their ranking, they will be able to take part in pitch sessions on the **Startup Stage**, attend with their own desk inside the **Startup District**, the exhibition area dedicated to startups, and participate in **B2B meetings** organized with investors from all over the world.

The 1st runner-up was **Codon**, a startup working in healthcare with cloud-based technology; the 2nd runner-up was **LekoTech**, which has a focus on the complete digitization of the car industry with the goal of revolutionizing the work process; and the 3rd runner-up, was **ConsciESG**, a fintech startup working on a platform designed to provide institutional investors with direct access to accurate ESG analysis and scores.

All three Albanian startups will have the opportunity to present themselves at the WMF International Fair, which, in the past edition, welcomed over **36,000 attendees** from 49 countries, more than **300 exhibitors**, and over **1,300 startups and investors** from around the world.

The WMF International Roadshow will stop next in **Prague**, Czech Republic on **April 19**, and then in **Berlin**, Germany on **April 27**, before resuming in the second half of the year with the already confirmed **Zagreb** (Croatia), **Belgrade** (Serbia), and **Thessaloniki** (Greece).

## Useful Links

- [WMF event in Tirana](#)
- [WMF official website](#)
- [WMF International Roadshow](#)

## WMF - We Make Future, International Fair and Festival on Tech and Digital Innovation

The next appointment with WMF, the international event entirely dedicated to the innovation ecosystem, is scheduled on June 15, 16, 17, 2023, at the Rimini Expo Centre. Once again, the event will bring together the very best of digital and social innovation, leading market players, startups and investors, institutions, universities, and non-profit associations. With more than 36,000 attendees in 2022, more than 700 speakers and guests from around the world, 1,000 startups, and 77 educational stages, now towards its 11th edition the WMF is a reality with a global identity, a catalyst for innovation for concrete, collective improvement. The event is created and produced by Search On Media Group





# International Trade Fair and Festival on Tech and Digital Innovation

#WeMakeFuture

## **Search On Media Group**

Since 2004, the company has aimed to spread digital culture by managing and coordinating communities, supporting sharing activities, and carrying out strategic and operational consulting, with the Search On Consulting Department, in the field of Digital Marketing and Digital Transformation for large companies.

From the experience and professional assets of Search On Media Group, were later born the Education Business Unit, which organizes and curates the WMF and other training events, and the ibrida.io platform, which hosts online, hybrid, and offline events in a highly customizable and flexible environment.

## **For information and materials**

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