

AI, Democracy and Power: WMF 2026 to host GovTech Summit on the future of global governance

From June 24 to 26 in Bologna, Italy, global policymakers, institutions and innovation leaders will gather to explore how Technologies and Artificial Intelligence is reshaping governance, democracy and public decision-making. Confirmed European Commission leaders Lucilla Sioli and Michiel Scheffer, Italy's Minister of Health Orazio Schillaci, Turkish Investment Office President Burak Dağlıoğlu and senior international institutional representatives will gather in Bologna, Italy, on June 24-26.

Bologna, Italy, April 14, 2026

As Artificial Intelligence and emerging technologies increasingly shape democratic systems, institutional processes and global decision-making, the question of how to govern this transformation is becoming central to the international agenda. This challenge will be at the core of the [GovTech Summit 2026](#), taking place from **June 24 to 26 in Bologna**, Italy, within WMF – We Make Future, the international B2B trade fair and festival focused on AI, technology and digital innovation. The event is conceived, organized and produced by Search On Media Group and held under the patronage of the Municipality of Bologna, the Emilia-Romagna Region, and the European Commission, and is supported by the **Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI)** and the **Italian Trade Agency (ITA)**, reflecting its role as a platform at the intersection of innovation, policy and international cooperation.

“Technologies are continuously reshaping how institutions function and how decisions are made, making innovation diplomacy increasingly relevant,” said **Cosmano Lombardo**, Founder and CEO of Search On Media Group and creator of WMF. *“It is essential to create spaces where institutions, businesses, research and civil society can engage on the new models emerging from the integration of digital technologies and AI. The GovTech Summit has played this role for four years and today stands as a reference point at both national and international level.”*

Now in its fourth edition, the GovTech Summit marks a shift from discussions on public sector digitalization to a broader reflection on tech policy and innovation diplomacy, exploring the systemic impact of emerging technologies on governance, democratic balances and the relationship between institutions, citizens and information.

Rethinking governance in the age of AI

The 2026 edition will focus on how AI is reshaping the foundations of public authority and institutional decision-making. Among the key themes: the role of AI in influencing public discourse and information ecosystems; the implications for security, justice and investigative processes; the transformation of education and research systems; Europe's role in the global landscape of technological development and regulation; the impact of innovation on economic models, labor and urban development. A central concept in this year's discussion is the “Agentic



State” a framework that captures how AI-driven systems are beginning to influence institutional processes, raising new questions around responsibility, transparency and control.

European institutions and global stakeholders on stage

The Summit will feature high-level participation from European and national institutions. Among those already confirmed or expected to attend:

- **Lucilla Sioli**, Director at the European Commission’s AI Office
- **Michiel Scheffer**, President of the Board, European Innovation Council
- **A. Burak Dağlıoğlu**, President, Investment and Finance Office of the Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye
- **Orazio Schillaci**, Italy’s Minister of Health
- **Anna Ascani**, Vice-President of the Italian Chamber of Deputies

Their presence reflects the growing relevance of GovTech as a strategic domain at the intersection of policy, innovation and international cooperation.

More than 70 speakers will contribute across dedicated stages, representing a wide ecosystem of public institutions, academia, research centers and industry. The Summit will also host international delegations and institutional representatives from multiple countries, including **Türkiye, Greece, Estonia, Slovakia, Palestine, Albania and Serbia**—further reinforcing its global dimension.

A multi-level ecosystem: institutions, research and public debate

The program will be enriched by the contribution of major institutional and research actors, including the **European Parliament**, the Italian **Ministry of Justice**, and the Carabinieri Corps, alongside leading universities and research centers such as the **University of Bologna, Politecnico di Milano, University of Naples Federico II, Bocconi University** and **CINECA**.

European networks and organizations, including **EUMANS**, will also contribute to the discussion, together with think tanks, foundations and media initiatives engaged in the public debate on innovation.

A strategic platform within WMF

Hosted within WMF – We Make Future, one of Europe’s leading international gatherings on innovation, the GovTech Summit is designed as a platform for direct exchange between institutions, businesses and global stakeholders. More than a conference, the GovTech Summit aims to foster concrete connections between public and private actors, encouraging collaboration on policy, innovation and implementation. Organizations, institutions and companies interested in contributing to the program or engaging in the dialogue can connect with the WMF team through the official channels.

Useful Links

- [Govtech Summit](#)



WMF - We Make Future, is the largest International Trade Fair and Festival dedicated to Artificial Intelligence, Technology, and Digital Innovation.

From June 24 to 26, 2026, WMF returns to BolognaFiere (Italy) as a certified international event fully focused on the future of innovation. A global hub for the AI and tech ecosystem, WMF brings together each year the most advanced developments in artificial intelligence, digital and social innovation, alongside leading international companies, startups, scaleups, investors, institutions, universities, and non-profit organizations. With over 73,000 attendees from 90 countries in 2025, more than 700 exhibitors, 1,000+ speakers and guests from around the world, 2,800+ organized B2B meetings, and 3,000 startups and investors involved, WMF represents a unique convergence point for innovation-driven business and policy dialogue.

Its partner network includes organizations managing a combined €1.5 trillion investment portfolio, €304+ billion in assets under management (AUM), \$72.8+ billion in funded transactions, and over 17,000 investment rounds, positioning WMF as a global benchmark event for the innovation economy.

Saudi Makes Future - The Largest AI Exhibition in the Middle East

Saudi Makes Future is the Saudi edition of WMF - We Make Future, a certified international trade fair and global platform for innovation, artificial intelligence, and emerging technologies. Developed through the collaboration between Search On Media Group, WMF - We Make Future, and PNG Saudi, the event will take place December 14-16, 2026, in Riyadh at the Riyadh International Convention & Exhibition Center. Building on WMF's vision, experience, and thematic architecture, Saudi Makes Future adapts the format to a strong AI-driven focus, structured across 14 strategic sectors exploring the impact of artificial intelligence on business, industry, society, and institutions. Aligned with Saudi Vision 2030, the event positions itself as an international platform for dialogue, cooperation, and development, designed for companies, startups, investors, and stakeholders seeking new opportunities for growth, training, and innovation in the Middle East and on a global scale.

Search On Media Group - Humans Leading Innovation Founded in 2004, Search On Media Group works to advance digital culture and innovation by managing professional communities, supporting knowledge-sharing initiatives, and delivering strategic and operational consulting through its Search On Consulting division, specializing in Digital Marketing and Digital Transformation for large organizations. From the expertise of Search On Media Group stem both the Event Agency Business Unit—responsible for organizing WMF and other proprietary and client events—and Hybrid.io, a flexible and customizable platform designed to manage online, hybrid, and on-site events.

Per informazioni e materiale

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