

# The European Union Pavilion at Expo Milan 2015



MILANO 2015  
FEEDING THE PLANET  
ENERGY FOR LIFE



European Union

Official Participant

## EU Participation at Expo

*Growing Europe's Future Together for a Better World* is the European Union's motto for its participation in Expo Milan 2015, the 99<sup>th</sup> universal exposition which will pose the challenge of how to feed the planet. The European Union institutions are taking up this challenge by showing the world how the Member States can work side by side to ensure a safer, more sustainable future in Europe and beyond, particularly as regards food and the environment.

Over the six months of Expo, the European Union is putting the themes of food security, environmental sustainability, growth and employment in the spotlight thanks to extensive scientific debate taking place at more than 200 events. These occasions for dialogue are bringing together scientists, researchers and academics from all over the world. The EU Pavilion is the outcome of intense work on the part of the JRC (Joint Research Centre) in Ispra (Province of Varese, Italy), the European Commission's in-house research centre. The JRC's mission is to use accurate, independent research to provide Europe with the necessary tools to tailor its policies towards sustainability and security for its citizens in terms of food, energy and the environment.

## The Scientific Committee

As Expo 2015 opened its doors, FAO statistics revealed that 805 million people worldwide suffer from hunger and more than two billion are suffering from undernourishment. What is more, the number of people suffering the ill effects of poor diet is growing. The universal exposition represents a unique opportunity to debate these issues. It is an occasion to get the general public thinking, but above all to channel research towards solutions that are crucial to dealing, in the medium and long term, with problems affecting far too many of the world's people.

Aware that this is a hugely important challenge, the European Union knows that it has a key role to play in identifying solutions. It has therefore established a scientific committee (the Expo 2015 EU Scientific Steering Committee) bringing together researchers from various European countries. Chaired by Franz Fischler, the former European Commissioner for Agriculture, this committee issued a document entitled *The role of research in global food and nutrition security*, on which the European Commission has organised a public consultation online.

This consultation on the role of research in global food security (<https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/Expo2015-Research>) was launched by the European Commission on 13 April 2015. Its purpose is to gather different viewpoints from people working in the sector, from members of the public and from the scientific community on the role that research should play in responding to the challenges linked to food security and access to food for all the world's people. Europe is in this way launching a public debate to inspire future socio-political choices closely linked to the issues that Expo 2015 will be tackling over its six-month duration. The questions put to the public are based on the discussion paper drawn up by the scientific committee made up of internationally renowned experts. The paper analyses the relevant research and innovation challenges, focusing in particular on areas in which the EU can lend its own added value to addressing the changes needed. The online consultation will be open for contributions until 1 September 2015.

## The story of Alex & Sylvia

The European Union Pavilion enjoys a prime spot right at the heart of the Expo site. It is based within the Italian Pavilion, just across from Palazzo Italia and a stone's throw away from the Tree of Life. This location is no coincidence, but rather a conscious decision by the Italian and European authorities to highlight the very close ties between the EU, Italy and all the Member States.

The European exhibition space is spread out over three floors: the ground floor is given over to the 'Visitor Experience'; the first floor houses offices, a 99-seat conference room and a press room with space for up to 28 people; the top floor is a spacious terrace overlooking Lake Arena and the Tree of Life that will be used for receptions and get-togethers.

On the ground floor, visitors are guided through a story illustrating the themes of the Pavilion: the food chain, nutrition and environmental sustainability. The images focus mainly on wheat and bread, so highlighting the importance of these products in European culture and the development of European civilisation. Visitors to this part of the exhibition space will meet two characters, Alex and Sylvia. Sylvia is a researcher, Alex a farmer, and they are the stars of an animated film devised especially for the European exhibition space. Their role in the film is to allow visitors experience the history of the EU as they have never experienced it before. Theirs is the story of two neighbours who are very different to each other and whose relationship has its fair share of ups and downs. They serve as a metaphor for the European Union's motto, *United in Diversity*.

The story, entitled *The Golden Ear*, seeks to answer the following question: is it possible to achieve food security through close cooperation, not only between different countries but also between science and farming, between innovation and tradition?

The short animated film is the result of a joint effort between the various professionals involved in the film production and it took more than a year and a half to complete. It involved 38 000 hours of work and more than 50 experts including producers, directors, multimedia editors, animators, VFX supervisors, 3D modellers, 3D lighting designers, 3D texture experts, music composers, sound effects experts, production coordinators and assistants.



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## Entrance

The first thing visitors to the EU Pavilion notice is the smell of bread; they are overcome by it as soon as they enter. The reason for this powerful smell is explained later during the show. While waiting for the show they are reminded of the most important milestones of the European Union.



▶ **1950 - The Schuman declaration**

Signed on 9 May 1950, the Schuman declaration will lead to the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community in 1952.

▶ **1957 - The Treaty of Rome**

This Treaty led to the founding of the European Economic Community: a project to support and rebuild the economies of Europe, prevent war and ensure peace.

▶ **1962 - The Common Agricultural Policy**

A crucial step towards building a common agricultural market to address the shortage of food.

▶ **1973 - The first European enlargement**

The European Union's process of enlargement begins with the accession of Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom.

▶ **1979 - The first European elections**

The first elections of the European Parliament by direct universal suffrage are an important step in European political integration.

▶ **1989 - The fall of the Berlin Wall**

The fall of the Berlin Wall and the Iron Curtain marks the end of Europe's division into two blocs.

▶ **1992 - The Treaty of Maastricht**

Birth of the European Union and the first steps towards the single currency.

▶ **1993 - The single market**

The European single market becomes a reality and ensures the free movement of goods, capital, services and persons throughout the European Union.

▶ **1999 - The Euro**

The single currency comes into existence. Initially used only for accounting purposes, the euro enters into circulation in 2002.

▶ **2004 - The EU's biggest enlargement**

Ten new Member States join the EU in 2004, making it the biggest EU enlargement in terms of population and area. In 2013, Croatia will become the 28th Member State.

▶ **2009 - Treaty of Lisbon comes into force**

This Treaty improves the functioning of the institutions of the Union and reinforces its democratic process.

▶ **2012 - Nobel Peace Prize**

The Nobel Peace Prize is awarded to the European Union for its contribution 'over six decades to the advancement of peace and reconciliation, democracy and human rights in Europe'.

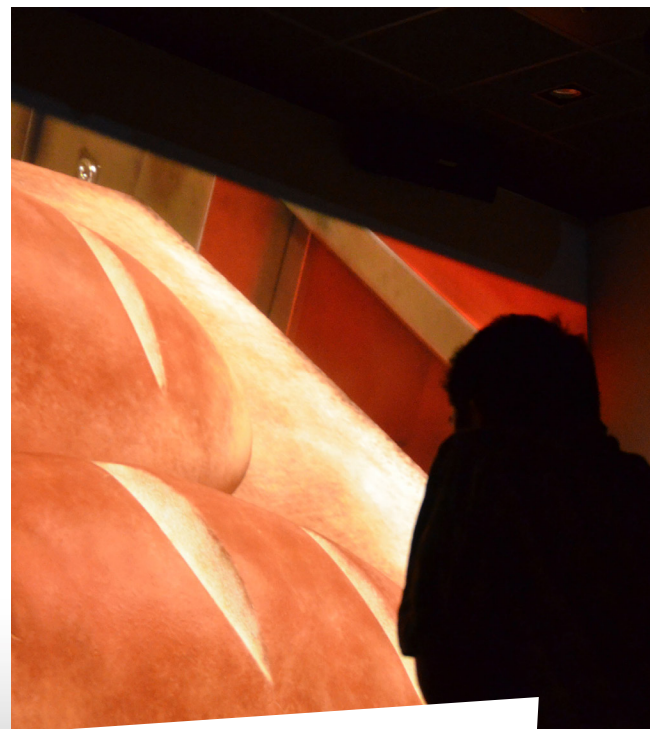
## Pre-show

Visitors first meet Alex and Sylvia, the stars of the short animated film *The Golden Ear*, during the Pre-show, a space where visitors are transported directly into the world of the film's main characters. It consists in a room divided into two, with each side furnished in a different style: on the left, there is a typical country house scene, on the right a researcher's room. A video lasting approximately four minutes tells the story of Alex and Sylvia's lives, from when they are born up until the time when they are about to meet, and shows the most important moments of their lives.



## Show

The short animated film is shown in a cinema allowing 4D projection. The graphics are of very high quality and the special effects in particular continue to amaze visitors. Entertaining moments of the show with which the EU has chosen to participate in Expo Milan 2015 include the floor vibrating as a tractor goes past and when Alex and Sylvia interact with one another including through the behaviour of their dogs, Alfred and Coco, themselves stars of a love story. The audience can literally feel their heads warming up during the scene where the baker's oven is opened, and once again, the smell of bread is in the air. The main scene of the film is when floods hit the small village where the story is set and it starts to rain in the cinema.



## Content Centre

After watching *The Golden Ear* the journey through the pavilion continues in the “content centre” area. The European Union exhibition space is characterised by infotainment, a mixture of information and entertainment. The post-show section is more specifically dedicated to information. Visitors learn about European Union policies by interacting with large touch screen monitors. The room is divided into three sections: production, development and cooperation. Each individual section provides information about activities relating to sustainable agriculture, fisheries, food security that the European Commission and the Parliament carry out on a daily basis as well as on many other topics. As well as reading a short summary and watching a number of information videos, visitors can also enter their email address to receive information on the work of the institutions direct to their personal email account.



## The volunteers

An advertisement for over a thousand young volunteers was posted on the EU institutions' websites. In the end, three times as many came forward. Over three thousand applications to help out at the European Union Pavilion were received and the selection process was highly successful. The volunteers are young people aged 18 to 30 from across Europe with enquiring minds and an interest in the policies of the EU institutions. They are involved in welcoming the crowds of visitors, but above all in raising awareness of the European Union's approach to the issues of food, nutrition and environmental sustainability. They are divided into teams, covering 14 periods of 13 or 14 days each. Each day is split into 3 shifts of a maximum of five and a half hours' voluntary work a day.



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## Contacts

Website: [europa.eu/expo2015](http://europa.eu/expo2015)

Events calendar: [europa.eu/expo2015/events](http://europa.eu/expo2015/events)

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