

Brussels, October 11th 2023

EMECA General Assembly celebrated at Feria Valencia, Spain

- EMECA Members' activity at 2019 level, multiple challenges continue
- Sustainable transition towards net zero carbon emissions main focus
- Metropolitan Expo Athens, Greece, new EMECA member and EMECA Board 2024 elected

The EMECA members met at Feria Valencia premises for their autumn General Assembly. Jorge Fombellida, General Director of Feria de Valencia, and Nuria Montes, Counsellor for Innovation, Industry, Commerce and Tourism for the Region of Valencia, extended a warm welcome to the group of C-level representatives.

The General Assembly took stock of the current state of the industry: *"We are proud to confirm the positive trend and strong performance of EMECA members in 2023. While some member companies already achieved new record business volumes, others forward to 2024, which is forecast to be strong year for many, due to the customary cycle of exhibitions or special effects, like the Olympic Games in Paris. The desire to meet in person is fully back."*, states Roland Bleinroth, EMECA President.

The overview showed that in certain geographies B2B is performing stronger, in others it is B2C. While trade fairs focussing on national or European participants are on an excellent track, some leading international exhibitions report lower attendance levels from overseas destinations. These differences depend also on the respective show topics and the situation in the concerned industry sector. Additionally, long delays in visa applications to attend exhibitions in Europe are reported from several countries.

While most EMECA members report a positive development with regard to turn-over values, the situation is more difficult for the profitability. Major challenges continue to be

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the geopolitical and economic uncertainty, persistent inflation, raising energy costs, high increases in labour costs, talent attraction and staff retention.

In spite of these challenges, the transition towards net zero carbon emissions remains a high priority for the Trade Fairs and Events Industry in Europe. The EMECA members invest in their infrastructure with a particular focus on sustainable energy, lowering carbon-emissions and waste reduction. The implementation of these goals is supported by the global industry initiative *Net Zero Carbon Events* of which EMECA is a gold sponsor. The reduction and elimination of carbon emissions is also driven by European Union and national legislation. The European Exhibition Industry Alliance (EEIA), EMECA and UFI's joint monitoring and advocacy effort in Brussels, assists in steering and mastering this ambitious transition phase.

Guest speaker Nicolas Vigneron, Head of Sector European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO), updated the EMECA Members on its programme for SMEs and invited them to collaborate in raising the awareness of exhibitors, especially start-ups and SMEs, to protect their intellectual property. EUIPO offers cost-free, tailored material and services for multipliers in the framework of its "Ideas Powered for Business" campaign. Pilot collaborations have commenced with several major exhibition organisers.

The second guest speaker, Nuria Lloret Romero, Professor for Informatics at Universitat Politècnica de València, briefed the EMECA members on the latest digital developments and new opportunities for exhibition venues and organisers, focussing mainly on data governance and on trends in AI and cybersecurity.

The EMECA General Assembly voted to welcome a new member starting 2024. *"It is a great pleasure to expand EMECA's scope to south-eastern Europe with a new, dynamic member and leader of the Greek exhibition industry: We extend a very warm welcome to Metropolitan Expo in Athens, Greece,"* says Roland Bleinroth.

Furthermore, EMECA held elections for its Board in 2024. New members to the EMECA Board will be Mario Goffard Negro from BEC, Spain, as VP Communications and Jonas

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Scharf of MCH, Switzerland, as VP Strategy. The already acting Vice President Technical Affairs, Elżbieta Roeske, has been approved for a second term. Corrado Peraboni was confirmed as Treasurer for the next two years. EMECA President Roland Bleinroth thanked all Board members for their contributions and especially the outgoing Vice President Communications, Anne-Marie Baezner, for her dedication over 3 terms as an EMECA Board Member.

Photos enclosed:

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About EMECA

The European Major Exhibition Centres Association EMECA unites 24 leading exhibition venues in Europe, many of which are also exhibition and event organisers.

EMECA Members host and organise nearly 2.000 trade fairs a year globally, out of which 1.550 in Europe on a gross rented space of nearly 38 million sqm. They welcome nearly 500.000 exhibitors and roughly 38,5 million visitors in Europe.

The EMECA Members 2023

Belgium:

Brussels Expo

Poland:

MTP Grupa, Poznan

Germany:

Deutsche Messe (Hannover),
KoelnMesse, NürnbergMesse,
Messe Stuttgart

Russia: Expocentre Moscow (currently suspended)

Portugal:

Feira Internacional de Lisboa

France:

EUREXPO – Centre de Conventions et
d'Expositions de Lyon, VIPARIS, Paris

Switzerland:

MCH Group (Basel, Zurich, Lausanne),
Geneva Palexpo

Italy:

BolognaFiere, Fiera Milano, Italian
Exhibition Group, VeronaFiere

Spain:

Fira de Barcelona, BEC – Bilbao
Exhibition Centre, IFEMA – Feria de
Madrid, Feria Valencia

The Netherlands:

Amsterdam RAI, Royal Dutch Jaarbeurs
Utrecht

UK:

ExCeL London, NEC – National
Exhibition Centre Birmingham

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The EMECA Board 2023

- Roland Bleinroth, EMECA President (Messe Stuttgart, Germany)
- Corrado Peraboni, Vice President Treasurer (IEG, Italy)
- Anne-Marie Baezner, Vice President Communication (Eurexpo Lyon, France)
- Elżbieta Roeske, Vice President Technical Affairs (Grupa MTP Poznan, Poland)
- Maria João Rocha de Matos, Vice President Digital Business (FIL Lisbon, Portugal)
- Ricard Zapatero, Vice President Strategy (Fira Barcelona, Spain)
- Barbara Weizsäcker, EMECA Secretary General

The EMECA Board 2024

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- Corrado Peraboni, Vice President Treasurer (IEG, Italy)
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- Elżbieta Roeske, Vice President Technical Affairs (Grupa MTP Poznan, Poland)
- Maria João Rocha de Matos, Vice President Digital Business (FIL Lisbon, Portugal)
- Ricard Zapatero, Vice President EU Relations (Fira Barcelona, Spain)
- Jonas Scharf, Vice President Strategy (MCH, Switzerland)
- Barbara Weizsäcker, EMECA Secretary General

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