

Brussels, October 25th 2024

EMECA General Assembly celebrated at Bilbao Exhibition Centre, Spain

- EMECA Members' turnovers reach record level in 2024
- Main focus on challenges due to the geopolitical environment, continued pressure on margins and the process to sustainable industry solutions
- Quantum Effects launched by Messe Stuttgart wins BELA Award 2024
- Elzbieta Roeske (Grupa MTP) elected next EMECA President 2025-2026

For this autumn's General Assembly, EMECA members gathered at Bilbao Exhibition Centre. The hosts delivered an excellent meeting at BEC and outstanding Basque hospitality (photo attached). *"EMECA members' performance is always an indicator for the entire exhibition industry in Europe. Despite major challenges, revenues have increased in 2024 and are expected to do so again in 2025. Overall, this is a very encouraging development for the European trade fairs industry, even though some sectors and countries show a less positive trend. EMECA members again prove to be most innovative in launching new, successful trade fairs to serve emerging markets and in attracting third-party organisers to their state-of-the-art venues. Overall, the outlook for the leading European trade fair organisers and destinations is, therefore, very positive"*, explains Roland Bleinroth, EMECA President.

The members' overview highlighted current challenges and opportunities. Overall revenue expectations across the membership base is very positive for 2024. The current year is destined to become a record year for EMECA members' exhibition business, despite pressure on margins. Both trade fairs focussing on national or European participants as well as large international exhibitions report increasing attendance levels. Also, international business has developed positively for those EMECA members producing events abroad.

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Major challenges facing the trade show and convention industry include the geopolitical and economic uncertainty, unusually high service-cost increases, raising labour costs and generally talent attraction. Navigating the transition towards net zero carbon emissions, which requires significant additional investments is another challenge facing the sector. Attendees and exhibitor staff alike face reduced air-travel connections and a strong increase in overall travel expenses.

This year's investments in EMECA venues as well as the plans for the following year are at record level, reflecting the need to reach sustainability goals. Fulfilling sustainability legislation and demanding reporting requirements combined with an ever-increasing amount of bureaucracy absorb a significant amount of resources in the trade fairs industry. Therefore, EMECA members appealed to legislators to ensure clear, uniform guidelines and reporting norms across Europe in order to avoid competitive distortions.

The industry's global initiative "*Net Zero Carbon Events*", which EMECA sponsors, aims to provide guidance, best practices and concrete tools to achieve the ambitious goals the industry is striving to reach. The European Exhibition Industry Alliance (EEIA), EMECA and UFI's jointly monitor and coordinate advocacy efforts in Brussels to support these goals.

Guest speakers presented the talent attraction programme for the Basque region, which provides active support to companies in identifying and attracting staff need in the economically thriving region. These comprehensive and innovative efforts have already proven to be successful in attracting young, skilled talents to fill the requirements of successful Basque companies, who would otherwise not be able to fill vacant positions.

The BELA Award 2024, EMECA's award for the best exhibition launch in the previous year, went to Messe Stuttgart for their "*Quantum Effects*", a trade fair and conference for application-oriented quantum technologies. It fulfilled all criteria that EMECA supports with its BELA-Award for new, innovative projects: raising awareness of the innovativeness and attractiveness of the exhibition sector, honour innovation, entrepreneurship and active creation of new exhibitions by external organisers or inhouse launches and hosting

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such new launches in EMECA venues, which provide the best possible success environment. Quantum Effects convinced the jury with a complete concept for a future technology with high economical potential. In a very complex, emerging market, the show and conference integrated leading researchers from around the world, with application-orientated science, political decision-makers and innovative companies. The platform put a special focus on match-making with innovative start-up companies. Quantum Effects implemented innovative programs to attract new talent for these high-tech applications, which will be crucial in securing Europe's future role in this important emerging industry (photo attached).

During the General Assembly, Elżbieta Roeske (Grupa MTP Poznan, Poland) was elected to lead the association as President for the upcoming two years, starting in 2025. She currently serves as Vice President Technical Affairs. Furthermore, Arnaud Burlin (VIPARIS) will join the EMECA Board as Vice President EU Relations. Maria Joao Rocha de Matos (FIL Lisbon) was confirmed for another term for the merged function Vice President Strategy & Digital Business.

On the membership side, EMECA General Assembly had the pleasure to approve Hamburg Messe, Germany, as a new member 2025. *"We are excited to welcome Hamburg Messe to EMECA. In recent years Hamburg Messe has updated its show portfolio and invested significantly in modernising the venue, thereby, securing and enhancing its position as a leading trade show destination in Northern Germany and beyond,"* states Roland Bleinroth.

Photos enclosed:

- 1 - EMECA General Assembly 2024, Bilbao
- 2 – BELA Award winner 2024 Messe Stuttgart, Roland Bleinroth

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About EMECA

The European Major Exhibition Centres Association EMECA unites 25 leading exhibition venues in Europe, many of which are also exhibition and event organisers.

EMECA Members host and organise roughly 1.400 trade fairs a year at their home venues in Europe on a gross rented space of nearly 30 million sqm. They welcome over 500.000 exhibitors and roughly 28,5 million visits in Europe annually.

The EMECA Members 2024

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

Switzerland:

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

Denmark:

Bella Center (Copenhagen)

Spain:

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

Greece :

Metropolitan Expo (Athens)

Italy:

BolognaFiere, Fiera Milano, Italian
Exhibition Group (Rimini, Vicenza),
VeronaFiere

UK:

ExCeL London, NEC – National
Exhibition Centre Birmingham

The Netherlands:

Amsterdam RAI, Royal Dutch Jaarbeurs
Utrecht

The EMECA Board 2024

- Roland Bleinroth, EMECA President (Messe Stuttgart, Germany)
- Corrado Peraboni, Vice President Treasurer (IEG, Italy)
- Mario Goffard Negro, Vice President Communication (BEC, Spain)
- 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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- Maria João Rocha de Matos, VP Strategy & Digital Business (FIL Lisbon, Portugal)
- Arnaud Burlin, Vice President EU Relations (VIPARIS, France)
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