

## UFI releases figures showing global economic impact of exhibitions

- Exhibitions generate €275 (US\$325) billion in total output globally
- Exhibitions contribute €167 (US\$198) billion to global gross domestic product (GDP)
- They support 3.2 million jobs around the world

*Paris* – 23 April 2019: For the first time, the total global economic impact of exhibitions has been calculated. With a total output of €275 (\$325) billion in business sales annually, the exhibition sector is on a par with sectors such as machine tools or medical and surgical equipment.

UFI, the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry, worked with Oxford Economics to produce the ‘Global Economic Impact of Exhibitions’ report, which was also supported by SISO (Society of Independent Show Organisers).

“This truly is a first for our industry,” says UFI President Craig Newman. “This new data will support us when we talk to stakeholders about our industry, especially as it’s broken down into the direct, measurable economic impact per exhibiting company – right down to the economic value of every single square metre of venue exhibition space. And on top of that, it makes me proud to work for our industry, knowing that we are securing over three million jobs.”

Based on UFI exhibition metrics, the model developed by Oxford Economics provides results for the world and also regional data for Africa, the Asia-Pacific, Central and South America, Europe, the Middle East and North America.

### Key findings

The report shows the far-reaching impact of the exhibition sector, which generates €68.7 (\$81.1) billion in direct GDP and contributes a total economic impact of €275 (\$325) billion. This ranks the sector as the 56th largest economy in the world, larger than those of countries such as Hungary, Kuwait, Sri Lanka, and Ecuador.

In 2018, approximately 32,000 exhibitions directly involved 303 million visitors and over 4.5 million exhibitors across more than 180 countries. The total impact of €167 (US\$198) billion in global GDP includes the direct spending and jobs that are specifically involved in planning and producing exhibitions, and for participants and exhibitors to travel to exhibitions, as well as other exhibition-related spending. Following the ISO definitions, an exhibition, show or fair is defined as an event where products, services or information are displayed and disseminated. Exhibitions differ from conferences, conventions, seminars or other business and consumer events, and exclude flea markets and street markets.

Europe was the largest market in terms of visitors, welcoming 112 million in 2018. This represents 37% of global exhibition visitors in 2018. North America ranked second, with 91 million visitors, followed by the Asia-Pacific with nearly 82 million visitors.

In terms of total GDP, North America ranked first with over €78.2 (\$92.3) billion of total GDP attributable to the exhibitions sector. This accounts for nearly 47% of the sector’s global impact. Europe followed with €48.6 (\$57.3) billion of total GDP, representing 29% of the sector’s global impact.

Overall, exhibitions globally generated €60,700 (\$71,700) of total sales per exhibiting company and €7,900 of total sales per square metre (\$870 per square foot) of venue gross indoor exhibition space.

### Research will continue

As with every piece of global UFI research, such as the Global Barometer or the World Map of Venues, this study on economic impact allows country and market profiles to be added, using the same metrics. UFI has secured an arrangement with Oxford Economics that allows industry associations who are UFI members to have specific profiles for their home markets added to the report.

Kai Hattendorf, UFI Managing Director and CEO, says: “We are happy to be able to provide this new set of data which highlights the impact of the exhibition industry. The methodology can be used at national level wherever needed, and we hope that it will contribute to consistent data across the world for this important element of economic impact.”

David Audrain, SISO Executive/Managing Director, comments: “SISO is very pleased to have partnered with UFI in funding the production of this report. Having reliable statistics is key to measuring the growth and impact of the Industry. We hope that organizers from around the world will use this data to showcase the value of this industry to their stakeholders and governments.”

### **Global Exhibitions Day to highlight the economic impact**

The research was timed to provide the data during the run-up to Global Exhibitions Day 2019 on 5 June. Around the world, exhibition industry professionals, companies and associations, are organising a multitude of events and activities to highlight the critical role the industry plays in driving and fostering the growth of regional, national and international economies. More information is available at [www.globalexhibitionsday.org](http://www.globalexhibitionsday.org).

### **How to access the full report**

In line with UFI’s mission to provide vital data to the entire exhibitions industry, the full ‘Global Economic Impact of Exhibitions’ report is available free of charge on the UFI website at [www.ufi.org/research](http://www.ufi.org/research).

Attached:

- Cover of the ‘Global Economic Impact of Exhibitions’ report
- Infographic: ‘Global Economic Impact of Exhibitions’ main results

**Note to editors:** The attached infographics highlight some core results announced in this release. They are free to use with copyright UFI.

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About UFI - The Global Association of the Exhibition Industry: UFI is the leading global association of the world’s tradeshow organisers and exhibition centre operators, as well as the major national and international exhibition associations, and selected partners of the exhibition industry. UFI’s main goal is to represent, promote and support the business interests of its members and the exhibition industry. UFI directly represents around 50,000 exhibition industry employees globally, and also works closely with its 60 national and regional association members. More than 780 member organisations in 86 countries around the world are presently signed up as members. Over 1,000 international trade fairs proudly bear the UFI approved label, a quality guarantee for visitors and exhibitors alike. UFI members continue to provide the international business community with a unique marketing media aimed at developing outstanding face-to-face business opportunities.

About SISO - SISO members include companies, corporations and other for-profit entities that own, produce or provide full-service management of face-to-face trade shows, consumer shows, expositions, conferences and events. SISO membership is a combination of large corporations and small entrepreneurial enterprises that do business around the world. SISO’s almost 200-member companies produce thousands of events around the world. SISO’s Mission, is to meet the common

needs of our members, by providing peer networking opportunities, education, industry information, streamlined business processes and best practices in the industry. [www.siso.org](http://www.siso.org).

About Oxford Economics - Oxford Economics was founded in 1981 as a commercial venture with Oxford University's business college to provide economic forecasting and modelling to UK companies and financial institutions expanding abroad. Since then, we have become one of the world's foremost independent global advisory firms, providing reports, forecasts and analytical tools on 200 countries, 100 industrial sectors and over 3,000 cities.

Headquartered in Oxford, England, with regional centres in London, New York, and Singapore, Oxford Economics has offices across the globe. We employ over 200 full-time people, including more than 130 professional economists, industry experts and business editors—one of the largest teams of macroeconomists and thought leadership specialists.

<https://www.oxfordeconomics.com/>

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