

EEIA releases documentation on economic measures taken by EU and European governments to support exhibition industry to mitigate COVID-19 crisis

- Report shows EU and national governments' support for businesses and the economy in general
- Report also covers action taken by the exhibition industry to provide support to communities through the COVID-19 crisis

Brussels, 31 March – The European Exhibition Industry Alliance (EEIA), which is a partnership between UFI, the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry and EMECA, the European Major Exhibition Centres Association, is today releasing documentation that lists support from the EU and national governments in Europe for businesses in general, and the exhibition industry in particular.

“By gathering and sharing examples of general financial measures and dedicated support for the exhibition industry already implemented across Europe, we want to encourage other governments and policymakers to offer the same in their respective markets”, says Barbara Weizsäcker, Secretary General of EEIA and EMECA.

Positive actions have already been implemented by the EU, as requested and communicated from EEIA, UFI and EMECA, whereby the three EU institutions collaborated to approve and put in place a such financial support swiftly. Additional EU funding will be made available to the EU Member States. The documentation may serve to the exhibition industry across Europe for their respective national advocacy efforts.

The exhibition and business events were the first to be shut down and will open with delay due to the longer planning and preparation time for such events. Therefore, the industry is specifically concerned by the effects of the coronavirus measures. Nonetheless, exhibitions and trade fairs are a fast-track to economic recovery once the coronavirus crisis has passed and will deliver the best return on investment for companies to access markets again.

The report also lists examples from across Europe of how the exhibition industry is providing support in this crisis, with initiatives such as converting exhibition halls to temporary Covid-19 emergency hospitals. “This shows how our industry is linked to their local communities, putting concrete actions in place with dedicated staff during crisis situations like the pandemic now”, says Kai Hattendorf, UFI MD/CEO.

This information is available at www.ufi.org/coronavirus. Similar documentation for Asia-Pacific, Middle-East Africa and the Americas are currently under preparation and will be available from the UFI website.

About EEIA – The European Exhibition Industry Alliance is a cooperation between the European Members of UFI, the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry and the Members of the European Major Exhibition centres Association EMECA. Its aim is to represent the common interests of the European exhibition industry towards the European Union Institutions and other relevant stakeholders in Brussels. It promotes the impact of the sector, monitors EU issues and advocates the sector's common interests in order to maintain a favourable operating environment within the EU and globally.

The EU and geographical Europe represent the largest region in the exhibition world.

496 exhibition venues with a minimum of 5.000 sqm of gross indoor space are located in Europe representing 48 % of the world capacity; there are about 1,100 exhibitions venues worldwide. 13,700 exhibitions per year are organised in Europe out of almost 32,000 exhibitions taking place per year worldwide; European exhibitions represent nearly 44%. 110 millions of sqm net exhibition space were occupied worldwide in 2011, 53 million of which in Europe thus representing 49%. 1.4 million exhibiting companies welcome 260 million visitors per year in Europe.

About UFI – The Global Association of the Exhibition Industry: UFI is the global trade 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 more than 50,000 exhibition industry employees globally, and also works closely with its 60 national and regional association members. More than 800 member organisations in 89 countries around the world are presently signed up as members. Around 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.

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About EMECA – The European Major Exhibition Centres Association EMECA unites 24 leading exhibition venues in Europe. It was formed in 1992 to focus attention on the economic impact that the exhibition industry achieves throughout Europe. Members are convinced of the active role they have to play in bringing together the international trading community. The EMECA exhibition centres strive to provide exhibitors and visitors with an excellent infrastructure and first-class information networks. In Europe they play an active part in the development of local trade. Outside Europe they help European companies come to terms with market globalisation and adopt appropriate initiatives, such as introducing exhibitors to foreign tradeshows, setting up new fairs and transferring technology to emerging markets. EMECA is an important economic factor in Europe. The EMECA venues organize over 1,800 exhibitions a year with more than 410,000 exhibitors and 42 million visitors on a gross rented display area of roughly 37 million square meters. According to their own estimates, the exhibiting companies generate a turnover of some 800 billion Euros through exhibitions.