

Brussels, 27<sup>th</sup> of October 2025

**EMECA General Assembly gathered on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2025 at Fiera Milano, Italy**

- EMECA Members optimistic about sales growth in 2025 and 2026
- Reaction to multiple ad hoc challenges due to the geopolitical environment and uncertainty, including intensified diversification of exhibition topics, other events and services, and international business
- Investments in decarbonisation, venue refurbishment and new multifunctional spaces continue at high level and pace
- New EMECA Board members elected for 2026

This autumn, EMECA Members from across Europe gathered at Fiera Milano for the General Assembly. The leaders of the EMECA Member companies enjoyed extraordinary hospitality at the Fiera Milano Rho venue, as well as in the city of Milan (see attached photo). EMECA President Elżbieta Roeske underlined the strategic importance of the exhibition sector: *“We reaffirm our commitment to a strong and united European exhibition industry. Our activity contributes substantially to innovation and competitiveness, we provide the platforms for start-ups, scale-ups, small and large, new and traditional companies. It boosts the strategy of the European Union. Since last spring, the challenges have multiplied. Our members react with investments, diversification and adapted international strategies which bring about innovation and new business opportunities. The European exhibition industry remains a dynamic and trusted partner for companies, regions and policymakers alike”*, states Elżbieta Roeske, EMECA President.

The exhibition business in Europe continues to be directly impacted by the fast paced **global geopolitical and economic changes**. The Russian attack on Ukraine, the Israel-Gaza war, US trade policy, tariffs and other rapid changes have immediate impact on many industrial sectors. This then applies to shows held in Europe, as well as to exhibitions organised by EMECA Members at other global destinations.

EMECA AISBL

Rue de l'Amazone 2  
B-1050 Brussels  
Tel +32 2 535 7250  
info@emeca.eu  
www.emeca.eu

As a consequence, glocalisation and re-regionalisation are accelerating. While business in China is slowing down, EMECA Members are diversifying their international target markets, dispersing their risks and investing into new markets like Saudi Arabia, South East Asia or Latin America. Exhibitions by European organisers in the US continue to thrive and be profitable. Besides these adjustments, they aim at increasing efficiency of the international business by systematically leveraging the potential from cross selling, bringing European clients to shows abroad and vice versa.

**Price increases for energy, salaries and services** add pressure to the exhibition venues' and organisers' activity and profitability and are also impacting exhibitors and visitors' bookings and spending.

Elzbieta Roeske adds: *"During the General Assembly, the EMECA Members engaged in an interactive scenario planning workshop. This innovative team exercise sharpened strategic thinking, planning, crisis preparedness and resilience competences, most appropriate for the times of substantial changes we experience currently."*

On an upbeat note, exhibitions, conferences and other innovative events covering **new and emerging industries** continue to grow, mainly in strategic sectors that support greater European independence, such as defence, cybersecurity, pharmaceuticals and deep tech. The intensive **diversification of portfolios** beyond trade fairs and congresses towards sports and entertainment continues at fast pace. Fiera Milano will be hosting several activities of the *Winter Olympic Games Milano Cortina 2026* in their premises, such as Speed Ice Skating, Ice Hockey, and the central Broadcasting Centre. Fira Barcelona and IFEMA Madrid are engaged with Formula 1, while Excel London and Brussels Expo offer immersive experiences, just to mention a few examples.

Additionally, EMECA Members aim at steadily increasing the **share in sales of services**, many of which are digital. Furthermore, investments in digitalisation, better data, individualised services (including AI) and security/cybersecurity are continuing steadily, while it is difficult to recruit staff with the respective digital profiles.

The lack of adequate **direct air connectivity for second-tier European cities** remains an important factor impacting large events and even resulting in lost opportunities for hosting. The unfortunate long wait times for exhibition and other **professional event**

**visas** in major European countries are another risk factor for events in **Europe** and for its **reputation as a business destination**.

EMECA Members are continuing the **path of sustainability** in alignment with the goals of the Paris Agreement. They invest heavily into renewable energy solutions like photovoltaic systems, often producing more energy than their own needs and upgrading the EMECA venues in energy efficiency and operations, such as reducing traffic and improving logistics by smart systems and public transport. A recent AUMA study proved that exhibitions are an extremely effective business tool, saving international attendees up to eleven individual journeys and substantially reducing emissions.

EMECA supports the industry's global initiative, **Net Zero Carbon Events**, which provides guidance, best practices and concrete tools, such as CO<sub>2</sub> measurement methodology and education, to help the industry achieve its ambitious goals. The European Exhibition Industry Alliance (EEIA) monitors legislation and coordinates advocacy efforts at EU level in Brussels to support these goals. Regarding this issue, EMECA members emphasised that the exhibition sector requires clear and fair rules, improved financing conditions, as well as **support for investments in sustainable venues, operations, and the transition process**.

During the General Assembly **elections to the EMECA Board** were held: Carlo Costa (IEG Rimini, Italy) was elected Vice President Treasurer starting in 2026. Mario Goffard Negro (BEC, Bilbao, Spain) was confirmed to continue as Vice President Communication for the next two years and Jeremy Rees (Excel London, UK) will join the EMECA Board as Vice President Technical Affairs.

### **Photos enclosed:**

1 - EMECA General Assembly 2025 Milan, group photo

### 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 2025

Belgium:

Brussels Expo

Germany:

Hamburg Messe, KoelnMesse,  
NürnbergMesse, Messe Stuttgart

France:

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

Denmark:

Bella Center (Copenhagen)

Greece :

Metropolitan Expo (Athens)

Italy:

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

The Netherlands:

RAI Amsterdam, Royal Jaarbeurs  
(Utrecht)

Poland:

Grupa MTP (Poznan)

Russia: Expocentre Moscow (currently  
suspended)

Portugal:

Feira Internacional de Lisboa

Switzerland:

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

Spain:

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

Turkyie:

Istanbul Expo Center

UK:

ExceL London

### The EMECA Board 2025

- Elżbieta Roeske, President (Grupa MTP Poznan, Poland)
- Corrado Peraboni, Vice President Treasurer (IEG, Italy)
- Mario Goffard Negro, Vice President Communication (BEC, Spain)
- Maria João Rocha de Matos, VP Strategy & Digital Business (FIL Lisbon, Portugal)
- Arnaud Burlin, Vice President EU Relations (VIPARIS, France)
- Jonas Scharf, Vice President Technical Affairs (MCH, Switzerland)
- Barbara Weizsäcker, EMECA Secretary General

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## PRESS RELEASE

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### Press and media contact

Ms Barbara Weizsäcker, EMECA General Secretary

Tel. +32 25357250

[press@emeca.eu](mailto:press@emeca.eu)

[www.emeca.eu](http://www.emeca.eu)

EMECA collaborates with UFI in the [European Exhibition Industry Alliance](#) (EEIA).

EMECA is member of the [Joint Meetings Industry Council](#) (JMIC) and sponsor of [NZCE](#).



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