

UFI updates figures on the global hit that exhibitions and trade shows have suffered due to COVID-19

- Global exhibition business to contract by 60% compared to 2019
- €158 billion (USD 180 billion) of total output and 1.9 million jobs affected in exhibition and tourism-related activities
- €260 billion (USD 296 billion) of contracts between exhibition participants not generated

Paris, 20 July 2020 – UFI, The Global Association of the Exhibition Industry, is today releasing an updated COVID-19 damage assessment for the global exhibitions and trade show industry, covering the full year of 2020.

Globally, industry revenues for the first half of 2020 dropped by two thirds on average, compared with the same period last year. Looking at 2020 as a whole, it is currently expected that revenues will represent only:

- 44% of those from 2019 in Europe and North America,
- 39% in Asia-Pacific,
- 33% in Central and South America,
- and 31% in the Middle East & Africa.

These numbers are based directly on the results from the UFI Global Exhibition Barometer released last week, which assessed the level of activity of companies for the first half of 2020, and their expectations for the second half of 2020.

Exhibitions have a direct impact on the territories where they are held. The total output not produced – for the exhibition industry itself (venues, organisers, service providers) and for all the industries that benefit from participants' expenditure (accommodation, restaurants, transport) – is estimated to be a minimum of 158 billion euros (USD 180 billion):

- €52 billion (USD 59 billion) for Europe,
- €67 billion (USD 76 billion) for North America,
- €35 billion (USD 40 billion) for Asia-Pacific.

This translates into 1.9 million jobs affected globally.

Exhibitions are strong communication channels for companies to develop their business. The lack of exhibitions, combined with the fact that many international trade fairs have been postponed, has put a hold on contracts being drawn up between exhibitors and visitors because they meet at exhibitions. Based on current predictions, a minimum of €260 billion of contracts were not signed, though some of them have hopefully just been delayed.

“The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the exhibition industry is severe. Despite gradual reopening in many parts of the world, many companies in the exhibition industry face huge revenue drops and profit loss. This also impacts all participants who sign contracts on the showfloor. It is important that governments, local authorities and the industry work together to facilitate the reopening of exhibitions, and primarily B-to-B events, as they have a critical role to play in the recovery of economies and societies,” says Kai Hattendorf, UFI Managing Director and CEO.

The 25th UFI Global Barometer survey, released on 16 July 2020, can be downloaded at www.ufi.org/research. In line with UFI's objective to provide vital data and best practices to the entire exhibition industry, it is available for free.

Attachments:

- [Global exhibition industry damage](#)
- [Exhibition industry damage by region](#)

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 88 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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