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## **EuroBLECH Exhibition Survey: EU countries remain key markets for the sheet metal working industry**

**Next EuroBLECH will be held from 23 – 26 October 2018 in Hanover**

EuroBLECH 2016, held in autumn last year, was regarded as highly successful by the international sheet metal working industry. One of the main themes at the 24<sup>th</sup> International Sheet Metal Working Technology Exhibition was the overall trend for digitisation and automation of production processes. The innovative spirit in the industry sector led to a 2% increase in net exhibition space and visitor numbers compared to the previous event. EuroBLECH 2016 attracted a total of 60,636 visitors from 102 countries. A total of 1,505 exhibitors from 41 countries showcased their products and services on a net exhibition space of 87,800m<sup>2</sup>.

The exhibition survey results<sup>1</sup> which have just been completed, confirm both the exhibition's renowned standing within the international sheet metal working industry and its position as the leading industry event. Furthermore, the survey shows some important industry trends on markets and the economic situation of the industry sector.

Exhibitors assessed the economic situation of the sheet metal working industry as much more favourable than two years ago. In the exhibitor survey almost 70% of the German exhibitors and some 40% of the exhibitors from outside Germany rated the current economic situation as positive; an increase by 6% and 5% respectively compared to the previous event.

According to the exhibitor survey, the main reasons for exhibiting were to attract new customers and approach new markets. Major target markets for manufacturers and providers of sheet metal working machines and solutions were the EU-countries, in particular Germany, followed by other European countries, Asia and the Americas. When asked about key future markets, exhibitors referred to Germany, the USA, China, Russia and Poland.

International business activities are, therefore, a major focus for the sheet metal working industry. With its high degree in international attendance, EuroBLECH 2016 reflected the

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<sup>1</sup> EuroBLECH is an officially controlled trade exhibition, audited by FKM, Society for Voluntary Control of Fair and Exhibition Statistics.

importance of global business contacts: 54% of exhibitors and 39% of visitors were from outside Germany; an all-time record.

Major increases in visitor numbers were registered from EU countries other than Germany (+11%) and from Asia (+46%). Visitor numbers from the Americas had in contrast decreased by a quarter. There were some shifts with regards to the top visitor countries: Italy regained its 3<sup>rd</sup> place in the list of top visitor countries, after Germany and the Netherlands. While Turkey and the USA had slightly dropped behind, Romania is listed within the top 15 visitor countries for the first time and India is also back again in this ranking.

According to the visitor survey a great majority of all visitors to the show are highly qualified and have decision-making and buying capacity: 84% of visitors at EuroBLECH 2016 were decision-makers or involved in the buying process and almost half of all visitors (45%) came to Hanover with concrete investment plans. From outside Germany, the percentage of visitors with the definite intention of buying was even higher (57%). There was an even split between first time visitors and regular visitors. A total of 28% of visitors to EuroBLECH 2016 indicated in the exhibition survey that they were not attending any other exhibition.

Exhibitors and visitors gave excellent feedback on the show overall, the organisation, the marketing and the venue. Three quarters of all exhibitors already confirmed on-site that they intended to exhibit again at the next show.

The exhibition survey revealed that three quarters of all exhibitors and visitors preferred a show duration from Tuesday to Friday. EuroBLECH 2018 will, therefore, be held from 23 - 26 October 2018.

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