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XYLEXPO 2014: A GOOD EDITION

The analysis of figures and the results of surveys carried out among exhibitors and visitors confirm first impressions about the success of the biennial event.

Six weeks have passed by since **Xylexpo 2014** closed its doors and there is plenty of evidence – from several sides – of the good results of the exhibition. Comments by opinion leaders, press releases of major exhibitors, articles of magazines all over the world tell about an event that has succeeded in giving real answers to the industry, although it represents a mirror of a market that is not certainly offering its best conditions.

The substantiality of the organization has been much appreciated, especially the choice to offer a “transparent fair”, sharing information, principles and goals with exhibitors and visitors. An approach that has been awarded with results.

Let's sum up the main figures: Xylexpo, the biennial international exhibition of woodworking technology and furniture industry supplies held on May 13-17, 2014, Tuesday to Saturday, in the Milan Exhibition Center Fieramilano-Rho, covered **26.176 square meters of net exhibition surface** (18 percent less than 2012) and hosted **440 exhibitors** (minus 14.7 percent). There were 321 exhibitors from Italy and 119 from abroad, with Germany in the first place (51 companies), followed by China, Spain, Austria, Great Britain and the Czech Republic, and all the others.

*“There is not so much to add about these figures”, commented **Lorenzo Primultini**, president of the exhibition. “All the most important international operators of the industry attended Xylexpo, with only very few exceptions – which can be counted on the fingers of one hand. All decided to have smaller booths: that is why we decided to take just three halls, to the benefit of visitors, who found a complete exhibition offer within an area that was easier to visit”.*

Satisfaction also on the exhibitor side: the exhibition area of Fieramilano-Rho recorded **15,250 “unique visitors”** (over 44 thousand overall attendees during the five days of the event), 7.1 percent more than 2012.

30 percent came from **foreign countries**: 22 percent from **Europe**: the highest attendance rates were from France (11 percent of all European visitors), followed by Switzerland (7.6 percent), Germany (6.8 percent), Poland (6,0 percent), Spain (5.3 percent) and Croatia (4.2 percent).

5 percent of visitors came from Asia and Oceania, 2 percent from Americas (one third from Brazil) and 1 percent from Africa (as much as 78 percent from countries facing the Mediterranean). As far as the general trend is concerned, it is worth stressing the **8.5 percent growth of foreign visitors** compared to 2012, with the excellent result of **continental Europe** (plus 12.7 percent), the already mentioned **Africa** (plus 16 percent) and **Americas** (plus 1.8 percent).

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*“This Xylexpo edition confirmed to be a must event for operators from mature markets – commented **Dario Corbetta**, director of the exhibition – but it also exerted significant appeal to emerging markets, in the areas of the world where the wood processing and furniture industries are showing increasing interest for the most advanced technology”.*

Also the figures of **national visitors** show different trends: as much as 85 percent of visitors came to Milan from Northern Italy; 38.5 percent from Lombardy, 13.2 percent from Veneto, 11.3 percent from Piedmont, 8.4 percent from Emilia Romagna, 5.2 percent from Marche, 4 percent from Friuli-Venezia Giulia. The numbers of visitors from Central and Southern Italy are less relevant, whereby these figures reflect the current economic picture in Italy, but also indicate a higher concentration of “technological” companies in the North of Italy, with few exceptions. And maybe this suggest the opportunity to evaluate a different version of Xylexpo in this part of the country.

Let’s conclude with some remarks about the **results of the survey among exhibitors**. 85 percent said to have reached – fully or mostly – the goal for which they had decided to attend Xylexpo. 69 percent showed satisfaction for the number of visits to their booths, as much as 82 percent for the quality of visitors, two figures that do not require further comments. 80 percent of the companies exhibiting at Fieramilano-Rho were satisfied with the organization.

The first results of the **survey on visitors** – which, due to the extension of the sample defined by organizers, is still under process and it will finish at the end of July – have encouraged organizers for the good outcome of the event: the exhibition offer was judged as “satisfactory” or “very satisfactory” by over two thirds of the operators, 87 percent of them said they have reached the goal of their visit fully or mostly, and as much as 95.6 percent will surely or most likely be back to visit Xylexpo in 2016.