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### Exhibitions in Poland in 2015

- ❖ **The largest exhibition market of the Central and Eastern Europe is in the black once again**
- ❖ **New statistical parameters of the market are the response to the needs of exhibition organizers in terms of providing good marketing arguments to encourage persuade clients to exhibitions as tools of internationalization and development of export**

Exhibitions in Poland are doing well - this is confirmed by statistical data of this market. Increased knowledge of entrepreneurs concerning the importance of exhibitions for the development of their businesses and the economy, as well as the modern, professional exhibition and conference infrastructure guarantee continuous interest in participation in exhibitions in Poland expressed by Polish and foreign exhibitors and visitors. It is worth being at exhibitions in Poland - it is simple a must.

It doesn't matter that west of us Poland has a neighbour like Germany - the unquestionable leader of the exhibition industry, the market with the leading exhibitions in the world for various sectors of the economy. Exhibitions in Poland are doing well even though this market is several times smaller. Poland is a steadily developing economy and a country connecting the East and the West - an ideal place for international trade relations in this part of the world. That is why for more than a dozen years Poland has been regularly hosting around 200 trade fairs and exhibitions for numerous industries. It is a mature market where the majority of exhibitions have an international character, however there are also events on the regional level.

The results of the audit of statistical data of exhibitions in Poland carried out by Polish Chamber of Exhibition Industry in cooperation with the auditor CENTREX - the International Exhibition Statistics Union, as compared to 2013 (comparison of statistics every 2 years is the result of the fact that several leading exhibitions in Poland are organized every 2 years), again show the growth of basic market parameters. The audit covered 200 trade fairs and exhibitions organized in 2015. The exhibition space contracted by exhibitors in 2015 was 764,908 m<sup>2</sup>, which is an increase as compared to 2013 (at that time the audit covered 216 events in Poland) by 12.1% (from 682,469 m<sup>2</sup> in 2013). For the sake of comparison, the growth dynamics of the exhibition space in 2012-2014 was 10.1% (an increase from 742,369 m<sup>2</sup> with 221 events to 817,481 m<sup>2</sup> in 2014 with 214 events).

Interesting information emerge from the analysis of statistics concerning exhibitors. The total number of exhibitors at exhibitions in Poland in 2015 grew by 2% in comparison with 2013 (27,810 exhibitors) and it amounted to 28,392 companies. For the sake of comparison, the growth in the number of exhibitors in 2012-2014 was 3.5% (from 27,810 to 28,799). Just like in the previous years, approximately 16% of exhibitors at trade fairs and exhibitions in Poland in 2015 were foreign and 84% were domestic exhibitors. The description of the exhibition market in 2015 for the first time applies a slightly modified division of the number of exhibitors. The audit confirmed that the total number of exhibitors at exhibitions in Poland in 2015 consisted of 23,718 Polish exhibitors and 4,674 "international" exhibitors. What is the origin of the new approach to the methodology of analysing the number of exhibitors? It is worth explaining.

For many years exhibitors were divided into domestic and foreign and the criterion of the division was always the seat of the company provided on the exhibition registration form. In 2015, based on international definitions of UFI and CENTREX, Polish Chamber of Exhibition Industry defined two new statistical parameters for the Polish exhibition market: "a multinational exhibitor" and "an international exhibitor", and the leading exhibition organizers made an attempt to implement them.

It is generally known that the globalization processes affecting the world economy in the recent years have influenced the strategy and the directions of development of many leading European enterprises, including those which consider exhibitions an important instrument of marketing and business communication and which participate in them. As a result of strategic decisions taken by headquarters of these companies, more and more exhibitors from abroad who take part in exhibitions in Poland, set up and currently have the seats of their subsidiaries or branches in the territory of Poland, and when deciding to participate in exhibitions in Poland such exhibitors register their participation already as Polish companies.

Observing the economic processes in the world and their impact on the development of modern exhibitions, experts and specialized auditors of exhibitions statistics, including CENTREX, had been aware for some time that companies like international corporations running economic activities (as manufacturers or distributors of goods and services) in more than one country, are important clients for exhibitions in this part of Europe. Many of these companies see exhibitions in Poland and the right place to establish new business contacts and to conclude trade agreements. A time had come, therefore, to present the discussed processes through statistical parameters of exhibitions in Poland and in other countries of Central and Eastern Europe. The largest organizer in the regions, including Poznań International Fair and Targi Kielce - members of CENTREX, fully agreed with the new insights of the auditor and the belief that the methodology of analysing exhibition statistics in terms of the number of exhibitors should be modified so that exhibition organizers could have better marketing arguments to persuade clients to the importance of exhibitions as a tool of internationalization and the development of export. After adopting the new methodology of analysing the number of visitors in UFI - the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry and in CENTREX, in 2015, exhibition organizers in Poland accepted and are gradually implementing the definition of the "multinational exhibitor" which allows for identification businesses which run economic activities in several countries among domestic companies. The number of these exhibitors will improve the statistics of foreign exhibitors by offering information about the so-called "international exhibitors". If an exhibition organizer prefers not to use the category of a multinational exhibitor for the purpose of collecting statistical data or the audit, they may choose to do so, however they should be aware of the importance of this category in the context of marketing arguments at their disposal.

Will the new methodology by UFI, so obvious for the markets of Central and Eastern Europe, be fully adopted by the world? The practice will show in the next few years. There are concerns regarding the possibility of its application in the exhibition markets in some parts of the world. The problem may also be the question of tools for controlling the new category of multinational exhibitors. That is why the UFI Associations Committee, a member of which is Polish Chamber of Exhibition Industry, and auditors of exhibition statistics will carry on discussing this topic.

There is one more statistical parameter required for a complete analysis of the results of the exhibition market in Poland in 2015 and it is the number of visitors at exhibitions in Poland. The conducted surveys show that exhibition organizers effectively attract professional visitors at B2B events and general public at consumer trade fairs and exhibitions, which have been gaining popularity in the recent years. Starting from 2010, the number of visitors at trade fairs and exhibitions audited by CENTEX have been exceeding one million. In 2010 it was 1,013,846 and in the following years it was 1,126,267 (2011); 1,162,391 (2012); 1,249,352 (2013); 1,378,209 (2014) and 1,436,083 in 2015. Whereas the increase in the number of visitors in 2015 as compared to the previous year was 4.2% (57,874 visitors), when comparing it with the analogous year 2013, the increase in the number of visitors was as much as by 14.9% (186,731). The result is truly satisfactory and it also proves the fact that exhibition organizers and modern multifunctional exhibition and congress venues can cope with the constantly growing expectations of exhibition clients. At the end an interesting fact which is partially connected with the growing number of visitors at exhibitions in Poland. The analysis of exhibitions in 2015 by sector confirms the continuous domination of exhibitions addressed

to general public, i.e. exhibitions concerning leisure, hobby and entertainment. Such events, following the global tendency, once again stand out against other sectors.

**Contact PCEI: Marzenna Łukaszewicz, Executive Director;** ph. +48 61 866 15 32; [m.lukaszewicz@polfair.pl](mailto:m.lukaszewicz@polfair.pl)  
**Polish Chamber of Exhibition Industry, Bukowska Street 12 (WTC bld., room 122) , 60-810 Poznań - [www.polfair.pl](http://www.polfair.pl)**

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### About Polish Chamber of Exhibition Industry

Polish Chamber of Exhibition Industry, founded in 1993, is the only national organization of Polish enterprises leading their business activity in the exhibition industry. The members of PCEI belong to all categories of players on the exhibition market. They are especially: trade fair and exhibition organizers, operators of trade fair and conference venues in Poland, providers of trade fair services such as designing construction and furnishing of exhibition stands, transport and forwarding companies, organizers of foreign trade fair participations, foreign trade fair representatives in Poland, as well as advertising and marketing agencies, media companies, enterprises offering catering and accommodation services.

The PCEI mission is: to provide a comprehensive platform of co-operation and exchanging ideas and experiences for the Polish exhibition market players, to serve the Polish exhibition industry as an effective platform for lobbying, to promote participation in exhibitions as an effective part of corporate marketing and communication strategy, to create circumstances for improving the industry quality standards, including reliable and transparent exhibition statistics, to offer trade fair marketing education in cooperation with marketing specialists, the university lecturers, to create favourable conditions for the Members to enjoy the benefits of integration and cooperation within the Chamber.

The four main areas of activities of Polish Chamber of Exhibition Industry are: lobbying, actions facilitating the integration of trade fair industry, widely understood promotion of trade fairs and exhibitions - including publications, as well as education in the area of trade fair marketing and promotion of ethical business activities in the industry.

PCEI has been an active member of UFI - the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry since 1996. For many years PCEI has been cooperating on a regular basis with CENTREX - International Exhibition Statistics Union, AUMA - the Association of the German Exhibition Industry and many other foreign and international industry organizations.