

Press Release

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## The meetings tourism sector has greatly recovered

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***After a cautiously optimistic return by the end of 2021, the business tourism industry was able to recover and gained enormous momentum in the second half of 2022, with great expectations for growth and reactivation during 2023.***

2022 left a global calendar filled with successful exhibitions and business meetings, and with the widespread adoption of new digital tools. The *2022 B2B Marketing Budgets* study revealed that digital marketing platforms have become crucial for companies – and SMEs in particular – when it comes to marketing, communication with colleagues and clients, and generating new business opportunities.

It is clear that while digital and virtual meetings have their advantages, they cannot replace the experience of face-to-face events when it comes to building and maintaining customer relationships, motivating work teams, staying current on industry innovations, and driving sales. Trade fairs and exhibitions play a vital role in highlighting new trends and technologies, and the personal connections and partnerships forged at face-to-face events cannot be replicated through digital means.

"Throughout 2022," said Fernando Gorbarán, President and CEO of Messe Frankfurt Argentina, "and as our events returned, we witnessed and shared the joy of every exhibitor and visitor who walked the halls of our trade fairs, as at long last they resumed face-to-face contact with colleagues, and closed new deals with customers and suppliers. Our exhibitions exceeded all expectations, with over 92,500 visitors attending – 2022 was a turning point for our industry, and we believe that 2023 and 2024 will be the years when it truly takes off."

Trade fairs and exhibitions have a direct impact on various sectors related to business tourism, such as hotels, transportation, and culinary services. According to data from the *Global Exhibition Barometer* by UFI, the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry, this equates to 2.4 million full-time jobs worldwide.

Another indication of the sector's recovery was the high occupancy rates at hotels in cities that hosted various events. Hotels in Neuquén city, for example, where the AOG Patagonia event took place in August, reported 100% occupancy. Similarly, Buenos Aires gradually regained its pre-2020 figures and performance as a top Latin American city for hosting international congresses, where meetings tourism accounted for 60% of the occupancy of four- and five-star hotels.

### **Another key aspect for the sector's growth and full development is sustainability**

In recent years, various organizations and associations in the exhibition and events industry have signed the Net Zero Carbon Events Pledge, initiated by the Joint Meetings Industry Council (JMIC). By signing the pledge, these organizations have committed to making their events carbon-neutral by 2050 at the latest.

"Our company signed, at a global level, the Net Zero Carbon initiative," said Detlef Braun, Member of the Executive Board of Messe Frankfurt GmbH. "That is to say, to achieve carbon neutrality, as was presented at the 2022 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Egypt. There is a commitment to work on this concept by 2030 – we are committed to the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Charter of Diversity. Our goal is to transparently measure sustainability, and reduce the events' carbon footprint."

This global trend is setting the standards that must be met by cities and destinations in the MICE tourism industry. Nowadays, companies decide where to host their events based on whether the potential location meets certain sustainable requirements. Countries that want to be part of the meetings tourism circuit must adapt to these standards – particularly emerging ones that are striving to establish their presence.

"Every change harbors opportunities for advancement and growth," said Gorbarán. "What happened in 2022 gives us all cause for hope. Even in these new, globalized times, international emblematic events continue to be key platforms for fostering economic growth."

The complete, updated event calendar can be consulted at [www.argentina.messefrankfurt.com](http://www.argentina.messefrankfurt.com)

#### **More Information:**

[www.argentina.messefrankfurt.com](http://www.argentina.messefrankfurt.com)

#### **Press kit and visual material:**

<https://ar.messefrankfurt.com/buenos-aires/es/prensa/material-prensa.html>

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**Background information: Sustainable Messe Frankfurt**

The Messe Frankfurt Group is one of the world's leading trade fair, congress and event organisers with their own exhibition grounds. With a workforce of some 2,200\* people at its headquarters in Frankfurt am Main and in 28 subsidiaries, it organises events around the world. Group sales in financial year 2022 were around €450 million\*. We serve our customers' business interests efficiently within the framework of our Fairs & Events, Locations and Services business fields. One of Messe Frankfurt's key strengths is its powerful and closely knit global sales network, which covers around 180 countries in all regions of the world. Our comprehensive range of services – both onsite and online – ensures that customers worldwide enjoy consistently high quality and flexibility when planning, organising and running their events. We are using our digital expertise to develop new business models. The wide range of services includes renting exhibition grounds, trade fair construction and marketing, personnel and food services.

Sustainability is a central pillar of our corporate strategy. Here, we strike a healthy balance between ecological and economic interests, social responsibility and diversity.

For more information, please visit our website at: [www.messefrankfurt.com/sustainability](http://www.messefrankfurt.com/sustainability)

With its headquarters in Frankfurt am Main, the company is owned by the City of Frankfurt (60 percent) and the State of Hesse (40 percent).

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\* Preliminary figures for 2022