

Press release

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## “Trade fairs are essential for a healthy and successful economy”

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**Trade fairs pave the way for economic upswings and are a key to prosperity – this is something that Nicola Beer, Vice President of the European Parliament, and Wolfgang Marzin, President and Chief Executive Officer of Messe Frankfurt GmbH, both emphasised when they met at the home base of Germany's biggest trade fair organiser. Beer also spoke forcefully about the importance of international trade fairs to a strong, stable and healthy economy.**

Ever since early 2020, the international trade fair industry has been facing huge challenges posed by the coronavirus pandemic. When trade fairs were shut down, the marketing, communication, order and networking platforms that are so essential to every industry for establishing and maintaining customer relationships and generating sales disappeared almost overnight. “Trade fairs are international showcases and strongholds for their industries, and they make a major contribution to economic prosperity,” said Beer. “If trade fairs and congresses cannot take place, this has consequences not only for exhibiting companies, but for the entire economy – and these are significant in scope. Trade fairs are essential for a healthy and successful economy.” That is why the European trade fair industry needs policymakers to send a clear signal that events can resume. Spain, Great Britain and the Netherlands have already demonstrated that major events such as trade fairs and congresses are possible once again. Germany is particularly important to international business, and it needs to show the political courage necessary to permit a full reopening of the trade fair industry on the basis of the experience gained in hygiene and testing concepts throughout Europe.

According to a study by the renowned ifo research institute, events at Messe Frankfurt generated immense purchasing power amounting to €3.6 billion annually nationwide in the past, not to mention a total of €657 million in tax revenues. The cancellation and postponement of trade fairs also has a huge secondary impact, not only on hotels, restaurants and bars, but also on transport and service providers and retailers. According to the ifo study Messe Frankfurt's events safeguard over 33,000 jobs throughout Germany.

“As mirrors of the economy, trade fairs have repeatedly been confronted with crises – now they are set to reprise their role as stabilisers of the economy. That is because trade fairs are where our oldest and most valuable currency is traded: trust,” said Marzin. He noted that although digital and hybrid event formats have once again demonstrated the

flexibility and diversity of trade fairs during the crisis, “Lasting trust can only be created in person. Close partnerships cannot develop in a purely digital arena.”



Wolfgang Marzin, President and Chief Executive Officer of Messe Frankfurt GmbH, und Nicola Beer, Vice President of the European Parliament (Image source: Messe Frankfurt / Jean-Luc Valentin).

According to calculations made by AUMA – the Association of the German Trade Fair Industry – on the basis of a study by the ifo research institute, trade fair cancellations caused by coronavirus measures have already resulted in a negative economic impact of some 40 billion euros in Germany alone. And as Jörn Holtmeier, Managing Director of AUMA – the Association of the German Trade Fair Industry noted, “This figure does not even begin to account for all the business deals that never happened because the events didn't take place.” Some three-quarters of exhibitors have bemoaned the impact of trade fair cancellations on their acquisition of new customers. Trade fairs make it possible to vividly present innovations and emotionally address all the senses – opportunities that are not available elsewhere.

That is why trade fair organisers, exhibitors and their service providers are now looking for a clear signal that trade fairs will be allowed to resume. Impressive safety and hygiene concepts, state-of-the-art ventilation systems, safely configured exhibition halls and new forms of visitor management guarantee maximum safety for trade fairs and congresses.

#### **Press information and photographic material:**

<http://messefrankfurt.com/journalisten>

#### **Background information on Messe Frankfurt**

Messe Frankfurt is the world's largest trade fair, congress and event organiser with its own exhibition grounds. The Messe Frankfurt Group employs around 2,500\* people in a total of 30 subsidiaries. The company generated annual sales of approximately €250\* million in 2020, following sales of €738 million in 2019. Even in difficult times caused by the coronavirus pandemic, we are globally networked with our industry sectors. We have close ties with our

industry sectors and serve our customers' business interests efficiently within the framework of our Fairs & Events, Locations and Services business fields. One of the Group's key USPs is its closely knit global sales network, which extends throughout 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 expanding our digital expertise with new business models. The wide range of services includes renting exhibition grounds, trade fair construction and marketing, personnel and food services. Headquartered in Frankfurt am Main, the company is owned by the City of Frankfurt (60 percent) and the State of Hesse (40 percent).

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

\* preliminary figures 2020