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Sydney Chamber chief calls BBB matchmaking “a unique opportunity” to strengthen EU/Australia trade ties

The *Business Beyond Borders* (BBB) activities at CeBIT Australia 2018 were praised by the Hon. Patricia Forsythe, Executive Director of the Sydney Business Chamber and speaker at the European Night: “*Sydney is both a strong and vibrant business centre and economy, and we have a part to play in the global world, including stronger ties with Europe. Activities like this European Night and the BBB matchmaking sessions are a unique opportunity to strengthen these ties and increase the number of business partnerships at CeBIT*”.

Taking place during the 17th edition of CeBIT Australia (15th – 18th May), the first BBB event in the South Pacific and Oceania region focused on companies in the business technology and ICT sector. Over the course of CeBIT, BBB facilitated hundreds of one-to-one matchmaking meetings booked between 268 companies representing 27 countries.

The proposed Free-Trade Agreement (FTA) between the EU and Australia was also praised as “a big step forward for EU-Australia business” by Tim Goulain, Policy and Networks Director of the European Australian Business Council (EABC), during the “*Business Beyond Borders*”-organised European Night networking session at CeBIT Australia:

“Australia and the EU are like-minded trade, investment and business partners. The proposed FTA agreement will be a big step forward for EU-Australia business relations. The EU is Australia’s second largest trading partner; its third largest export destination; and its second largest services export market. A vast number of businesses are following the negotiations closely”, stated Mr. Goulain during the panel discussion at the European Night.

Coming from Lithuania, Marius Domasevicius of Teltonika considered the matchmaking sessions at CeBIT to be very positive for their company: “*We had some great meetings and managed to strike some deals, and even sell some of our products during the trade fair. It was very fruitful for us*”. Likewise, Katrine Narkiewicz, the Founder Lawyer of virtual law firm, KMI Legal, founded in Sydney, said: “*CeBIT Australia’s European Night, organised by Business Beyond Borders, brought together an inspiring group of speakers and supporters of the EU and Australia alliance*”.

The BBB matchmaking event at CeBIT Australia took place two months after the first official mission to Australia and New Zealand undertaken by the European Commissioner for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, [Elżbieta Bieńkowska, who has previously praised](#) the great business opportunities for SMEs and other companies facilitated by this EC-funded initiative.

“*Business Beyond Borders*” helps businesses, especially Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and clusters, to trade across borders and explore third markets. It has held six successful international events (in Madrid, Cape Town, Paris, Milan, Cannes and Santiago) where over 250 new business partnerships have been agreed. The BBB event at CeBIT Australia was organised in collaboration with Deutsche Messe and the New South Wales Business Chamber.

The next BBB matchmaking events will take place at AMB Iran (26th-29th June, Tehran, Iran), Renewable Energy India (18th – 20th September, New Delhi, India), and VISION (6th – 8th

November, Stuttgart, Germany); and will be aimed at companies operating in the metal-cutting technology, renewable energy, and machine vision industries, respectively.

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Contact: Ana Oliveira, LOWeurope: bbb@loweurope.eu

Photos of the Business Beyond Borders (BBB) matchmaking event at FIDAE 2018 are now available at [BBB's official Flickr account](#).

NOTES TO EDITORS:

Business Beyond Borders (BBB): BBB is a European Commission initiative to help EU businesses, especially Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and Clusters, operate internationally with the ultimate goal of increasing economic growth within and outside Europe. A series of matchmaking events are being organised at HOST to bring together SMEs and representatives from relevant clusters, with potential trading partners from Europe and abroad with the aim of assisting businesses to access new international markets.

The Business Beyond Borders Consortium is represented by:

- **[EUROCHAMBRES](#):** The Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry represents over 20 million businesses in Europe – 98% of which are SMEs – through members in 43 countries and a network of 1700 regional and local Chambers.
- **[EMECA](#):** The European Major Exhibition Centres Association unites 22 leading exhibition venues in Europe. They provide businesses with an excellent infrastructure and outstanding information networks. The 22 EMECA Members organise and host 1,769 exhibitions a year, both in Europe and all over the globe, with more than 350,000 exhibitors and over 41,5 million visitors.
- **[UFI](#):** The leading global association of the world's tradeshow organisers and exhibition centre operators, as well as the major national and international exhibition associations. UFI represents 700 member organisations in 83 countries around the world. Over 900 international trade fairs bear the UFI quality label.
- **[LOWeurope](#):** A strategic communications consultancy based in Brussels, with a network of associates across Europe. LOW specialises in creating policy-rich events; managing complex programmes; PR and all types of marketing communications; and EU-related public affairs strategy.

CeBIT Australia: CeBIT is the one-stop shop for all of the latest business technology solutions in Australia and the wider Asia Pacific region. It brings together a community of business technology professionals keen to discover the latest cutting-edge technologies and services. CeBIT attracts buyers from enterprises, governmental bodies, SMEs and start-ups. The trade exhibition is a showcase platform for over 350 innovative organisations, and allows attendees to keep up with the latest insights and developments in business technology.