



Friday, 9th November 2018

**“Companies at VISION Stuttgart enthusiastically recommend EC’s ‘Business Beyond Borders’ to anybody wanting to expand their business abroad”**

The European Commission funded initiative “Business Beyond Borders” (BBB) concluded its first cycle of events this week with highly successful matchmaking sessions at VISION Stuttgart, where over 500 business meetings between 247 companies from 35 countries were facilitated.

In one typical post-event testimonial, Matas Plukys of Optogama and the VITEK Cluster (Lithuania), said that the three days of BBB meetings were “very positive” for his company: “Networking is a crucial part of doing business, and the Business Beyond Borders matchmaking sessions are extremely valuable. We have some good business prospects thanks to these meetings, including a possible project collaboration and a partnership in product integration. I definitely recommend BBB to companies wanting to expand their business abroad”.

Secretary-General Barbara Weizsaecker of the BBB consortium partner the European Major Exhibition Centres Association (EMECA) said that “Tailor-made matchmaking events, such as the ones organised by BBB over these two years at ten exhibitions, are crucial for SMEs, and particularly for small companies that are new to the market. The outcomes of the BBB project reflect the quality of the matching and the sessions.”

“At VISION, we had a remarkable number of ad-hoc requests during the event in addition to the pre-arranged meetings, which will again increase the overall results and the concrete cooperation activities triggered by BBB.”

Since January 2017, the Business Beyond Borders project has helped businesses (especially SMEs and clusters), to trade across borders and explore third markets. The sessions at VISION marked the end of BBB’s first cycle, after nine successful events in Madrid, Cape Town, Paris, Milan, Cannes, Santiago, Sydney, Tehran and New Delhi. Over 3000 SMEs and Clusters participated in the BBB matchmaking sessions in 2017 and 2018, resulting in more than 300 new business partnerships.

The BBB event at VISION was organised in cooperation with Messe Stuttgart (after the successful collaboration at AMB Iran in June 2018) and with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Stuttgart Region (CCI Stuttgart Region).

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**Photos** of the Business Beyond Borders (BBB) matchmaking event at VISION 2018 will soon be available at BBB's official Flickr account.

An overview of all the *Business Beyond Borders* events held in 2017 and during the first half of 2018, as well as success stories, can be found on the [Business Beyond Borders ever-growing digital brochure](#).

## NOTES TO EDITORS:

**Business Beyond Borders:** Business Beyond Borders 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 AMB Iran 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.

**About VISION:** The world's leading machine vision trade fair, VISION Stuttgart is the go-to place for component manufacturers, system suppliers and integrators. VISION brings together all key players along with their latest products and innovations. Furthermore, the presence of small, specialised companies provides a complete product and services overview in this area. <https://www.messe-stuttgart.de/vision/en/>