



Press release

The EPHJ-EPMT-SMT Trade Show launches its 17th edition against the backdrop of an upturn in watchmaking and considerable support for industrial innovation

With stable participation and more than 20,000 Swiss and international visitors expected, the EPHJ-EPMT-SMT Trade Show will open its doors at the Palexpo convention centre in Geneva from 12 to 15 June. Several new aspects to the programme of Switzerland's biggest professional trade show have been announced, including the opening conference by the Chairman of Innosuisse, André Kudelski, which will underline the organisers' support for innovation in all high-precision fields.

Geneva, 17 May 2018. The organisers of the EPHJ-EPMT-SMT Trade Show launched their 17th edition at the heart of the federal capital, Berne, in the presence of Nicola Thibaudeau, a member of the Innosuisse Board and CEO of MPS Micro Precision Systems AG, and Benoît Dubuis, director of Fondation Campus Biotech and chairman of Fondation Inartis.

This 17th edition will definitely be under the sign of the good watchmaking figures for the first quarter of 2018. *"We haven't seen such a quarterly increase since June 2012, with a rise of more than 10% in our watchmaking exports at end-March 2018,"* explains Alexandre Catton, director of the EPHJ-EPMT-SMT Trade Show. *This upturn obviously affects subcontracting of watchmaking and jewellery, which are at the heart of the Trade Show, and this explains the gratifying participation levels for this 17th edition, with new Swiss and international exhibitors registered. Many of these new exhibitors offer innovative solutions in the fields of laser machining, management of machine tools with minimal set-up time, nanotechnologies, micro-injections, bioelectronics, automation, robotics, electro-discharge, manufacture of watch movements, ethical fine jewellery and synthetic diamonds or responsible recycling of special waste, to name but a few examples."*

The exhibitor area will be the same as in 2017, as the organisers do not want to expand further to keep the Trade Show on a single site and single level at Palexpo to welcome more than **800 exhibitors**. Outside Switzerland, the registered exhibitors

come from 17 countries, and foreigners represent around 20% of the total. One-quarter of these exhibitors come from German-speaking Switzerland, mainly the cantons of Berne (130), Zurich and Solothurn.

20,000 professional visitors are expected from around sixty countries: CEOs, purchasing managers, marketing managers, research and development directors, negotiators, artists, designers, heads of production, etc.

Whether they work in the field of watchmaking and jewellery, microtechnology or medtech, the players in the Trade Show have one thing in common: high precision and innovation. With nearly **300 companies active in the medtech field**, the EPHJ-EMPT-SMT Trade Show is unquestionably the largest gathering in Switzerland dedicated to this universe of medical technologies.

Industrial innovation in these high-precision sectors will be the organisers' main concern for this 2018 edition, with several new departures in this area:

- The start-up village becomes a **European hub** for start-ups, with increased participation of emerging young companies
- These start-ups will benefit from a space to introduce themselves and showcase their products
- In partnership with Fondation Inartis, the launch of the "**Watch Medtech Innovation**" challenge to discover, finance and support new interdisciplinary projects based on use of collective intelligence

The Chairman of Innosuisse, the Swiss agency to encourage innovation and strengthen the competitiveness of Swiss SMEs, **André Kudelski**, will open the 2018 edition with a conference-debate on 12 June about Switzerland's real capacity for innovation.

The following day, 13 June, will be Women's Day with two round table discussions dedicated to both the role of women in modern industry and the questions that all young entrepreneurs ask, in order to avoid the famous "Death valley" where many great ideas have disappeared for want of the necessary financing and support.

Another star guest at the EPHJ-EPMT-SMT Trade Show will be **Richard Orlinski**, one of the most fashionable contemporary artists. He will take part with other renowned designers in a round table dedicated to new trends in watch design.

"It's often the designers who condition the work of subcontractors, without whom great ideas on paper could not materialise. Only the talent and know-how of subcontractors can transform an idea into a product. This is why it is important to be familiar with trends and inspirations among designers, as these influence the future activity of companies upstream and downstream of the finished product," explains Alexandre Catton. Be there on 13 June at 3.30 p.m.!

A large number of innovations and exclusive previews have already been announced. The best of them will be recognised by the traditional **Exhibitors' Grand Prix**.

Please see www.ephj.ch for further information

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