



Press release

## The EPHJ-EPMT-SMT Trade Show opens its doors with spirits high

**With more than 800 exhibitors and 20,000 visitors from the industry in Switzerland and abroad, the world's leading trade show dedicated to watchmaking, jewellery, microtechnology and medical suppliers opened its doors this morning in a positive mood.**

Geneva, 18 June 2019. Opened by Ms Marie Gabrielle Ineichen-Fleisch, Secretary of State and Director of SECO, and Mr Pierre Maudet, State Councillor for the Canton of Geneva, the EPHJ-EPMT-SMT Trade Show in Palexpo brings together the very best of the world of high-precision against a more favourable economic backdrop where watch exports seem to have stabilised at a satisfactory level.

This year, Palexpo plays host to 815 exhibitors from 18 countries, which is roughly the same figure as 2018. More than 20% of these exhibitors are international, mainly coming from Europe and especially from France (10.6%) and Germany (3.7%).

At a Swiss level, the best represented canton is Neuchâtel (162), followed by Bern (126), Geneva (91), Jura (83) and Vaud (71).

Among these 815 exhibitors, 734 have declared activities relating to watchmaking, on one side or other of the finished product, 478 work in microtechnology and 384 in medical technology. This demonstrates that many exhibitors have diversified and are active in multiple high-precision sectors.

The 6 nominations for the Exhibitors' Grand Prix 2019 confirm this observation, as their innovations could be applicable to watchmaking, microtechnology or medical technology. The Grand Prix awards will be given out tonight at the Exhibitors' Evening.

At a time when many major watchmaking shows are rethinking their format, the EPHJ-EPMT-SMT Trade Show is staying focused and remains the leading international show for suppliers to the watchmaking and jewellery and high-precision industries. "Let us not forget that the exhibitors to the big watchmaking shows in Basel and Geneva become the visitors to the EPHJ-EPMT-SMT Trade Show," explains Alexandre Catton, Director. "We are a B2B model which is different, and this is what sustains our development."

It is also worth remembering that the EPHJ-EPMT-SMT Trade Show is not only about business and exhibiting, it is also a place for reflection and discussion which shapes the future of the high-precision

industry. This year, the Round Tables will be discussing the phenomenon of vertical integration among suppliers who, in order to keep their production chains under control, are gathering more and more industrial expertise and diversifying their know-how. The impact of Industry 4.0 and finance and succession solutions for SMEs will also be up for discussion. A Junior Round Table will close the week by addressing popular issues of continuous professional development in watchmaking and the various disappearing trades in the sector.

The Jura Grand Soirée will take place on 19 Juin, followed by one in Neuchâtel on 20 Juin in the presence of the authorities for the respective cantons. This is an opportunity for these watchmaking cantons to celebrate their commitment to the EPHJ-EPMT-SMT Trade Show.

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