



2019 WAS A GOOD YEAR FOR PALEXPO SA, CHANGE OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS CHAIRMAN TODAY

This morning, the General Meeting of [Palexpo SA](#) said goodbye to Robert Hensler, who has been chairman of the exhibition and convention centre since 2008, and to two directors, Luc Argand and Paul Muller. All three have completed the three four-year terms allowed for in the company's Articles of Association. François Longchamp, former President of the Council of State, was elected chairman of the Board of Directors. William Morris and Maurice Turrettini have been appointed as directors. The shareholders also approved the 2019 annual report, which shows sales of CHF 94 million, stable compared to 2018. The economic benefits created by the 91 events held last year generated direct and indirect spin-offs of CHF 588 million for the canton, an amount that is almost stable compared to the CHF 598 million recorded in 2018. Palexpo SA's 2019 annual report is now available on our [website](#).

A total of 1,276,809 (1,461,895 in 2018) visitors attended just one of the 91 events (99) organised at Palexpo in 2019, welcoming 6,237 exhibitors (6,661). One million m² of gross floor space was rented out during the year (1.15). This slight decline was not reflected in the company's turnover, which remained stable at CHF 94 million, nor in the direct and indirect economic spin-offs for the canton, which amounted to CHF 588 million (CHF 598 million). The hall occupancy rate even rose from 47% in 2018 to 54% last year.

"The solid results recorded in 2019 are thanks to a strategy started several years ago in response to the challenges posed by digitalisation and emerging consumption patterns. While we have also been impacted by the uncertainties of the first half of 2020, the experience has highlighted the importance of the work we accomplished over the past twelve years in implementing this strategy," emphasises Robert Hensler, Chairman of Palexpo SA.

Recent developments, particularly in the field of watch fairs, underline the company's flexibility and responsiveness, which are largely due to the great attention paid by management and the Board of Directors to changes in the economic environment. *"In order to progress in a global and interconnected environment, we also maintain close and regular links with the various players in our sector. Faced with a wide range of uncertainties, encouraging solidarity helps us observe market trends"*, confirms Claude Membrez, Managing Director of Palexpo SA.

Event planning with sustainable development

A pioneer in the field of sustainable development, Palexpo SA obtained a second ISO certification in 2019. In 2019, the company obtained ISO 20121:2012 certification. This was after gaining ISO 20121 certification in 2018 in recognition of twenty years of work implementing the principles of sustainable development within the company. This second standard adds transparency and readability to sustainable management decisions, in particular by allowing for external evaluation of adopted measures.

Changes to the Board of Directors

We would like to give our heartfelt thanks to the outgoing chairman, Robert Hensler, for his work during his twelve years as head of the Board of Directors. Our thanks go out to Luc Argand and Paul Muller as well, who like Mr Hensler have been at Palexpo SA since its creation in 2008 and who are also leaving the Board of Directors. All three helped launch the new structure and define our corporate strategy, which still guides Palexpo SA today.

François Longchamp has been appointed Chairman of the Board of Directors for a term of four years. Mr Longchamp is a former President of the Council of State and was the driving force behind the law that led to the creation of Palexpo SA in 2008 through the merger of Palexpo, Orgexpo and the Fondation de la Halle 6. William Morris and Maurice Turrettini, Chairman of the Geneva International Motor Show Foundation, were elected to the Board of Directors, where they will sit alongside Bénédicte Montant and Claudine Amstein.

[Read the 2019 Annual Report](#)

Palexpo, 2 June 2020

(approx. 4,060 characters with spaces)

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