

PRESS RELEASE

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FOREXPO 2021 has already more than two thirds of reserved exhibition space

Initially scheduled on 17-19 June 2020, FOREXPO was postponed to 16-18 June 2021, due to Covid-19 pandemic. The fair will welcome European forestry and logging professionals on the open-air exhibition space of nearly 40,000 m² in Mimizan adapted to the health measures of the moment. This 26th edition focuses on the woodworking professions, which, account for 440 000 jobs, in France alone, and is part of the sector's economic recovery plan. More than 25,400m² of exhibition space have already been reserved for nearly half of the number of expected exhibitors.

Mimizan, a central focus of the wood sector's challenges in Europe

This is the fourth time that Mimizan will host **this four-yearly trade fair, which was launched in 1962** and renamed FOREXPO in 1990, on a 70 ha site in the heart of the largest cultivated forest massif, under outdoor reception conditions which will fully comply with the health distancing rules imposed by the Covid. For the 30th anniversary of the FOREXPO format, **nearly 400 exhibitors** (including 17% of foreigners and 500 international brands) are expected on the 3km loop that is now the traditional visiting circuit of the fair. **Nearly 40,000m² of exhibition space are no longer divided into 5 zones but 6:** soil work and reforestation, logging, transport and logistics, wood energy and services. In 2021, the sixth "public works" pole will group together all earthmoving, roadworks and handling equipment. A demonstration arena will be set up next to it, part of which will be entirely dedicated to "zero emission" machines. This 26th edition is expected to attract an ever-increasing number of visitors, 30,000 people, who will focus on **a unifying theme, that of the woodworking trades.** "FOREXPO is a whole team, a small group that, by combining its skills, hopes to make this show the unmissable event for our industry. For this edition, our ambition is twofold: to provide more services to exhibitors and visitors in order to strengthen our position as France's leading exclusively professional forestry exhibition and to bring men and women, mainly young, back to the heart of forestry and logging. Despite mechanisation and innovation, decision-making will always remain human in the face of economic and environmental challenges" says Eric Dumontet, Director of Forexpo. **Since the postponement of this 26th edition, Forexpo has already booked 130 stands for 192 exhibitors (i.e. 25,400 m² of floor space) out of the target of 392 exhibitors.**

The woodworking professions: jobs with a future

With 16.5 million ha of forests, France is the third largest forest nation in the EU. The timber industry has 60,000 companies and provides **440,000 jobs in France:** 51,000 employees in forest management, logging and sawing, 236,000 employees in wood processing (furniture panels, paper, and cardboard), 138,000 jobs in wood processing (carpentry, joinery, design). Above all, it offers **many opportunities to young people**, irrespective of their education level.

The woodworking professions, which are all too often unknown to young people, offer a wide range of possibilities: from logging, which gives nature lovers the opportunity to work outdoors, to engineering offices where designers design furniture and houses, to sawmills and wood workshops for those who enjoy direct

contact with the material. These professions, transformed thanks to the many innovations in the sector, are experiencing **full employment and rapid career development**. Since VSEs (very small enterprises) with fewer than 10 employees account for 80 % of the sector, it is possible to be autonomous and versatile, and quickly start to work in a self-employed capacity, which is a much sought-after criterion for young workers. However, **more than that, the timber sector satisfies an important motivation among young people, which is to work in the heart of nature**. In fact, the third Talents Barometer of the Boston Consulting Group (published in January 2020) shows that among the sectors favoured by young people in their job search, the environment comes out on top with 76% of the votes and is gaining ground every year.

The wood sector, an activity-protecting environment

This 26th edition is part of the Economic Recovery Plan for the sector, which will be enacted by the Finance Law and which foresees among other things: the reindustrialization and/or consolidation of industries already present, short circuits, circular economy... This plan insists on the need to plant more forests adapted to climate change, such as maritime pine in the South-West, adapted to the soil and climate.

Thanks to a sustainable and reasoned logging, the French forest is developing. **Wood is a renewable and recyclable material** that has assets at every stage of its life cycle. As a thermal insulator, **it helps to reduce energy costs in construction**. In its natural or transformed state, **1m³ of wood captures one tonne of CO₂, making the air healthier**. Finally, for 1kg of material produced, **wood consumes 4 times less energy than concrete, 60 times less than steel and 30 times less than aluminium** (source: Onisep).

Turning towards a climate approach, the recovery plan insists on the need to reforest with species adapted to regional soils and which are not subject to climate change. These are arguments that raise awareness among young people who are increasingly mobilised for environmental protection.

FOREXPO is the European trade fair for forestry and logging established in 1962. It has been held since 2012 in the heart of the Landes de Gascogne, in Mimizan.

Some figures (2016):

392 exhibitors including 68 foreign exhibitors

500 international brands

Nearly **40,000** m² of exhibition space

28.000 visitors

15 countries represented

The wood sector covers activities in agriculture (forestry and logging), industry (woodworking, furniture manufacturing, paper industry, packaging industry) and construction (joinery, carpentry, parquet production and panelling, etc.).