

EXPO REAL 2012 finishes on a high

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Opening with a high of 1,700 exhibitors (2011: 1,610) EXPO REAL 2012 can now also report a rise in the number of participants in this 15th International Trade Fair for Commercial Property and Investment – to a total of 38,000 (2011: 37,000).

These figures underline the show's importance as an international networking platform, as Mike Sales, Managing Director & CIO, Global Property, at Henderson Global Investors, England, confirms: "EXPO REAL is all about contacts; most importantly our clients but also our service providers and not least, it's a great place to spend quality time with our European colleagues."

The market in Germany and its neighboring countries in Central Europe proved to be a particular attraction. Dr. Peter Ramsauer, German Federal Minister for Transport, Building and Urban Development, was clear in his comments at the opening of the show: "The real estate industry is especially important to Germany. It is a mainstay of our economic strength and provides investment and jobs. Real estate accounts for the lion's share of capital assets. That makes EXPO REAL, as Europe's largest real estate trade fair, a central plank in the economy."

For investors from outside Germany, too, EXPO REAL is an excellent gateway to the market. "Germany has always been a 'darling' when markets elsewhere were bearish," says Jörg Banzhaf, CEO Germany of the Dutch real estate project developer Corio. And David Sleath, CEO of the UK-based firm Segro, points out: "There is a large international element which is great but there is also a very German focus, and as Germany is a core market for us it is absolutely critical we are here." Fritz Mihatsch, Head of Project Development & Sales at ÖBB-Immobilienmanagement GmbH, of Austria, agrees: "EXPO REAL has met our expectations; it is the most important trade fair for the South Eastern Europe and Central Eastern Europe regions."

As well as the classical asset categories in real estate, there is also interest in new segments. Last year hotel property celebrated a premiere at EXPO REAL with a dedicated joint stand, which this year doubled in size. A presentation of logistics property premiered this year at its own joint stand. Andreas Fleischer, Regional Director Germany at the Goodman Group, was satisfied: "EXPO REAL 2012 offered us an ideal platform for increasing the attention paid by market participants to logistics properties as an asset class. As an international developer of logistics properties and as a European market leader, we reached exactly the real

estate industry target groups we wanted to reach in Munich."

In the five forums at the fair experts on international real estate came together to discuss the diverse themes that are moving the international property sector at the moment. The emphasis here was clearly on finance. And that will continue to be the main focus, predicted Dr. Wolfgang Schäfers, CEO of IVG Immobilien AG: "Alternative sources of finance and above all innovative financing solutions will continue to set the real estate sector's agenda in the years ahead. But I don't see the squeeze mooted in some quarters as being on the cards."

Other topics, too, were hotly debated, for example sustainability and the energy turnaround. Commenting on this, Dr. Johannes Milde of Siemens, Industry Sector, CEO Building Technologies Division, said: "Energy efficiency is a strong trend – the real estate sector will be increasingly active in this arena in future." Gerd Hauser, Professor of the Technical University of Munich and Director of the Fraunhofer Institute for Building Physics IBP, sees "the building stock and the city in particular as critical drivers of the clean energy revolution. Without it, the clean energy revolution isn't affordable," he said.

As well as discussing business deals, other main objectives of many of the participants in coming to the show were to make contact with and talk to customers and colleagues. EXPO REAL offers the ideal platform for doing just that. Rolf Lange, Head of Corporate Communication and Public Affairs, EDEKA, agrees. For him EXPO REAL again proved to be "an ideal platform, not only for making and developing contacts but also for developing new, concrete project ideas."

Out of a total of 38,000 participants, 18,900 were trade visitors (2011: 19,000) and 19,100 were representatives from the exhibiting companies (2011: 18,000). The top ten countries of origin for the visitors, out of a total of 71 different countries, are – in this order – Germany, Great Britain, Austria, Netherlands, Poland, France, Switzerland, Czech Republic, Russian Federation and the US.

The next EXPO REAL takes place from October 7 to 9, 2013 in Munich.

Further information at www.exporeal.net

Ms Katrin Polenz

Trade Fair PR Manager

EXPO REAL

Tel: **+49 89 949-21483**

Fax: **+49 89 949-9721483**

katrin.polenz@messe-muenchen.de

Source: Messe München; IFAT