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**SUMMARY OF THE FURNITURE FAIR 2023**

**An edition marked by optimism and satisfaction**

The Brussels Furniture Fair is over. Alongside you, we are reflecting on a future-orientated edition. Because you can only build the future together by taking the best of the past and constructing on solid foundations. The Furniture Fair has made a number of firm promises in recent years: certainty, efficiency, good business and experience. Despite a challenging economic context, it was precisely delivering on those promises that made the 2023 edition such a success. Needless to say, the organisers, exhibitors and retailers will not remain blind to the challenges that face us all. But the combination of optimism and realism that shone through in Brussels promises a bright and hopeful future for our sector.

A hopeful future that was also reflected in the collections themselves. The trend corridors, where the latest ideas from the interior design sector are linked to the finest products on display at the furniture fair, were also a real source of inspiration for numerous people this year. We noticed that many of the so-called ‘traditional furniture’ manufacturers were putting even greater energy and resources into refining their ranges. Be it with sleek in-house designs, as with Theuns, the winner of the Brussels Balthazar Award for ‘Best Innovation’, or through collaborations with design studios, such as Saunaco and Studio Segers, the winners of the Balthazar Award for ‘Best of Belgium’. The increasingly beautiful offerings, together with the successful nature-themed decoration of the halls, ensured that the Furniture Fair 2023 was full of exquisite things. The focus on made-to-measure and modular furniture had become increasingly evident in previous editions. Now, in addition to this, it was the ever-growing concern for aesthetics that stood out. We saw an array of streamlined designs and discovered just how far the limits of woodworking techniques were being pushed. All this without losing the warmth that is intrinsic to a piece of furniture. The difference between ‘disposable furniture’ and that born of craftsmanship has thus become increasingly noticeable.

Our belief in a hopeful future was also bolstered by the genuine satisfaction expressed by the majority of exhibitors. Satisfied with the turnout, satisfied with the business results, satisfied with the efforts made in terms of experience, with the resilience our sector is showing, and the capacity to adapt... That we have the determination and ability to improve became all the more apparent in the Square (Hall 3), where various practical ECO-stories were shared with manufacturers and retailers. But the new dynamism truly came to the fore in the Design Academy and the vigorous energy of Trendwolves, where young people, arguments at hand, engaged in dialogue and shared their vision and solutions for a hopeful future with everyone. A vision of the future that is full of discoveries, and founded on optimism, design and realism. One that the entire sector rallied behind in Brussels!

The Furniture Fair 2023 will not be forgotten in a hurry, that much is certain. The ‘after movie’ is another testimonial. But equally, this remains an edition on which to build. By augmenting the hotel and project market, for example, because with 65 exhibitors indicating their readiness for this field, contract labels are becoming increasingly prominent on the hall plan. An evolution that continued in hall 6, the sleep segment, where both retailers and visitors from the hotel industry were presented with a high-quality and market-oriented offering. Because ‘Brussels by Night’ is enjoying a revival and once again becoming ‘the place to be’ for the sleep sector in the Benelux. The aim is to connect even more European bed and linen manufacturers with our visiting professional specialists in the near future.

To convince sleep specialists and other furniture makers, the Furniture Fair relies on the fact that you will definitely do good business in Brussels. As a visitor, in turn, you can be sure that there is always something to see and experience. ‘A visit to Brussels is always worthwhile’ is a refrain we often hear. This year, upon entry, you could stop to marvel at the impressive nature-themed entrance area. Not to mention all the beauty yet to come! The Brussels Furniture Fair has once again lived up to its reputation as the ‘heyday of Furniture’.

**BRUSSELS BALTHAZAR AWARDS 2023 - RESULTS**

* Best of Belgium: Nominees: Robu (model TAKU), Passe Partout (model Bahia) and Saunaco (model Ron)
	+ Winner: Saunaco
* Best Innovation: Nominees: Herleven (model Wave), Ecolife (model Eco Agave) and Theuns (model Sento)
	+ Winner: Theuns
* Coup de Coeur: Nominees: Dienne (model Petra), De Toekomst (model Kelp) and Max Divani (model Abbracci)
	+ Winner : Max Divani
* Best International: Nominees: Himolla (model Modell 1462), Poldem (model Dixon) and Innovation Living (model Nolis)
	+ Winner: Innovation Living
* Young Designer: Winner: Caroline Van Hoeck (model Vlak)

**EXHIBITORS 2023**

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| Exhibitors 2023 - Nationality |
|  |
| **Country of origin** | **Quantity** |  |  | **Country of origin** | **Quantity** |  |
| Belgium | 79 |  |  | Belgium | 79 |  |
| China | 2 |  |  | Netherlands | 75 |  |
| Croatia | 1 |  |  | Germany | 17 |  |
| Denmark | 5 |  |  | Italy | 12 |  |
| France | 6 |  |  | Poland | 8 |  |
| Germany | 17 |  |  | France | 6 |  |
| Italy | 12 |  |  | Lithuania | 6 |  |
| Latvia | 1 |  |  | Denmark | 5 |  |
| Lithuania | 6 |  |  | Turkey | 5 |  |
| Mauritius | 1 |  |  | Sweden | 4 |  |
| Netherlands | 75 |  |  | China | 2 |  |
| Norway | 1 |  |  | Singapore | 2 |  |
| Poland | 8 |  |  | Croatia | 1 |  |
| Portugal | 1 |  |  | Latvia | 1 |  |
| Singapore | 2 |  |  | Mauritius | 1 |  |
| Spain | 1 |  |  | Norway | 1 |  |
| Sweden | 4 |  |  | Portugal | 1 |  |
| Switzerland  | 1 |  |  | Spain | 1 |  |
| Turkey | 5 |  |  | Switzerland | 1 |  |
| United Kingdom | 1 |  |  | United Kingdom | 1 |  |
|  | 229 |  |  |  | 229 |  |

**VISITORS**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2022** | **2023** | **+/-** | **+/- in %** | **% of total** |
| **BE/LUX** | 6474 | 6723 | 249 | 3.85% | 41.57% |
| **EN** | 4063 | 4379 | 316 | 7.78% | 27.08% |
| **FR** | 1863 | 1876 | 13 | 0.70% | 11.60% |
| **DE/AT/CH** | 884 | 906 | 22 | 2.49% | 5.60% |
| **UK/IE** | 503 | 443 | -60 | -11.93% | 2.74% |
| **OTHER**  | 3674 | 3316 | -358 | -9.74% | 20.51% |
|  | **17461** | **17643** | **182** | **1,04%** | **100** |