

**PRESS RELEASE****Trends 2017: Study reveals speed and risk minimization to dominate international supply chain agendas**

- Survey respondents cite shorter lead times, time to delivery, and risk minimization as top issues for global supply chains next year
- Over 50% of respondents report major shortcomings in talent management but the overall importance for 2017 varies by company size



**November 28, 2016 – Speed remains the top issue in logistics, global trade, and supply chain management: Three out of four industry experts consider shorter lead times and time to delivery their top priorities for 2017. That is one of the findings of a study conducted by software company AEB and the University DHBW in Stuttgart (Germany) which surveyed 330 logistics and global trade experts. Titled “Global Trade Management Agenda 2017”,**

**the study can be downloaded free of charge at [www.aeb.com/gtm-study](http://www.aeb.com/gtm-study).**

The Global Trade Management Agenda is carried out annually by software company AEB and the Baden-Württemberg Cooperative State University (DHBW) Stuttgart. Shorter lead times and time to delivery were already ranked as the most important issues in last year’s survey. “Customer demands for fast shipping continue to increase and place high pressures on companies in the industrial and commercial sectors as well as on transport and logistics businesses,” said Prof. Dr. Dirk Hartel, Head of the Department of Business Administration Service / Logistics Management at DHBW Stuttgart and co-author of the study.

“Companies ask for innovative ideas and new technologies, such as package delivery by drone, but also for optimized and smooth processes.” Most respondents consider their companies to be already well positioned in this area: Only 41.2% felt there was room for improvement when it comes to reducing lead times and time to delivery.

**Top issue number two: Minimizing supply chain risks**

As in the past year, minimizing supply chain risks is another top issue. Some two-thirds of those surveyed (65%) consider the topic to be very important. The majority of logistics and global trade experts feel that their companies are well equipped in this area as well – only 42% see a need for improvement or major shortcomings.

Implementing changes to customs laws remains an important or very important challenge in 2017 for 61.6% of respondents. What’s most interesting here is that the Brexit vote did not produce any change

regarding the assessment, nor did it heighten the perceived importance of this issue compared with the previous year's study. The British referendum took place during the survey period, and most respondents completed the questionnaire after the results of the vote were known. "It was not yet clear at the time, however, how foreign trade relations between the EU and UK would be managed and what impact the Brexit vote would have," explains Dr. Ulrich Lison, Portfolio Manager and Member of the Executive Board at AEB who conducted the study jointly with Prof. Dr. Hartel.

### **Importance of recruitment in global trade falls**

The greatest need for improvement in global trade management is seen in talent management – the recruitment, training, and development of employees. The self-diagnosis here is quite critical, with half of respondents reporting that their own companies come up short in this area. But while this topic ranked fourth in importance in last year's survey, it fell to eighth place this year. Only some 47% of participants consider talent management to be an important or very important topic in 2017. "The problem of shortage of skilled labor is much less pressing for smaller companies and for very large enterprises, according to our study," says Dr. Lison. "The former frequently only need very few new employees, the latter typically have an image advantage as attractive employers, possibly leaving them less affected by the shortage of skilled labor."

### **About the study**

The study "Global Trade Management Agenda 2017 – Apps in global trade and logistics, and the top priorities in global supply chain management" is based on a cross-industry survey of 330 experts from the fields of logistics, global trade, and supply chain management. The participants work in companies of various sizes in different countries. Some 67% of respondents hold leadership positions as the head of a company, department, team, or project. The survey has been carried out annually by AEB and DHBW Stuttgart since 2013. All previous studies are available for download at <https://www.aeb.com/uk/media/global-trade-management-study.php>.

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### **About AEB ([www.aeb.com/uk](http://www.aeb.com/uk))**

AEB is one of Europe's leading providers of supply chain logistics software, consultancy, and services and has been delivering solutions to customers for over thirty-five years. The company has over 5,000 customers worldwide, supported by offices in the UK, Germany, Singapore, Switzerland, Sweden, the Netherlands, Czech Republic, France, and the US. AEB's core product - ASSIST4 - is the comprehensive solution suite for all logistics processes in global business. ASSIST4 offers a complete set of business services for end-to-end logistics, including international goods movements, making it possible to

standardize and automate business processes in supply chain execution. ASSIST4 also creates transparency and provides a reliable basis for making the right decisions about the planning, monitoring, control, and continual optimization of supply networks - even beyond the boundaries of the business. The ASSIST4 suite offers full functionality via a wide range of modules including Visibility & Collaboration Platform, Order Management, Warehouse Management, Transport & Freight Management, Customs Management, and Compliance & Risk Management.

**About DHBW Stuttgart ([www.dhbw-stuttgart.de](http://www.dhbw-stuttgart.de))**

Baden-Württemberg Cooperative State University, with some 8,400 Bachelor students, is among the largest higher education institutions in the Stuttgart and Upper Neckar regions of Germany: The Schools of Business, Engineering, and Social Work collaborate with about 2,500 carefully selected companies and social institutions to offer more than 40 nationally and internationally approved Bachelor courses. According to the cooperative concept of the university, research at DHBW Stuttgart is application-oriented. The three departments therefore have their own training and research centers and focus on various research topics.