

EUROMAP Press Release

European plastics and rubber machinery industry well positioned despite crisis and highly motivated for K 2022

Frankfurt, 5 October 2022 – The expected production value for plastics and rubber machinery in Europe in 2022 will be – as in 2021 – around 15 billion euros. Looking at the trend of the last twelve years, however, a steady growth in production can be observed. This is also reflected in the development of the global demand for plastics. For the period 2021 to 2026, the forecasts report an increase of 21 percent. The demand for processing machinery and equipment is evident in all major sales markets and will continue to grow. World exports of plastics and rubber machinery doubled from 12 billion euros in 2001 to 24 billion euros in 2021. It is noteworthy here that the share of Chinese exports grew over-proportionately from less than ten to 24 percent. Europe continues to lead the way with a 47 per cent share of deliveries.

Although the order situation is currently restrained, the European plastics and rubber machinery industry does not have a structural problem. However, like the plastics industry as a whole, it is currently facing a variety of challenges. The supply chain problem has still not been eased, the prices for gas and steel are exploding. To put this into perspective, gas only covers a quarter of Europe's energy needs; before the shortage, 40 per cent of this came from Russia. Currently, it is only 8 per cent, and the gas storage facilities are well filled. However, it is important to develop or expand alternative, regenerative energy sources now.

The approaching leading trade fair for the plastics industry, K 2022 in Düsseldorf, comes at the right time. After three years now, this is the first international industry gathering with exhibitors from 60 countries and full occupancy of the entire exhibition centre as already in 2019. The industry is in the midst of the transformation process towards a circular economy. The current situation with rising energy and raw material prices is seen as a confirmation, rather than an obstacle, to consistently continue along this path. The European plastics and rubber machinery manufacturers stand behind the key themes of K 2022 – circular economy, digitalisation, climate protection. With their technologies, they make a decisive contribution to realising the circular economy of plastics. In the Circular Economy Forum at the K trade fair, they will be demonstrating important stages of the cycle on running machines, from preparation of plastic waste and re-granulation to the processing of recycled materials.

The machinery manufacturers will also be involved in the current discussions at the “Sonderschau” at K. One focus here will also be digitalisation. The networking of machines is the key to more efficiency, traceability, condition monitoring or machine learning.

At K 2022, machinery manufacturers from Europe, China, Japan and Canada will show how their machines send live data to the central umati demonstrator using the world language of production, OPC UA. Visitors can access these data via smartphone and also in the VDMA Dome in the Circular Economy Forum.

By agreeing on OPC UA as the technology in combination with the information models standardised by EUROMAP, the integration of machines from different manufacturers into a common system has been considerably simplified. A total of around 40 machine manufacturers are taking part in the showcase at K, making the great potential of platform-independent and cross-manufacturer machine-to-machine communication visible and experienceable.

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