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## PRESS RELEASE

### **SUSTAINED GROWTH IN FOREIGN TRADE**

**for Italian manufacturers of plastics and rubber processing machinery, equipment and moulds.**

**Imports up by 9.1%, exports by 14.6%:** these are the results of the first half of 2017 with respect to the same period in 2016 based on the analysis of ISTAT foreign trade data by the Amaplast Statistical Studies Center.

The two trends point to **further improvement in the positive balance of trade** for the sector (by more than 1.1 billion euros), with an increase of seventeen percentage points compared to January-June 2016.

While imports have slightly slowed down with respect to year-end 2016 and the first months of 2017, sales abroad confirm the **robust double-digit growth** that has characterized the entire first half of 2017.

As regards exports – the main outlet for national production in the sector – Italian manufacturers may consider themselves satisfied both as regards the range of products and in terms of the geography of sales.

#### Performance by machine type

With the exception of negative performance in plants for mono- and multi-filament, blow moulding machines, and machines for foamed materials, all machine types have recorded **marked improvement in foreign demand**, and particularly extrusion lines (+17% over the previous year), flexographic printers (+23%), thermoforming machines (+37%), and moulds (+18%), just to mention some of the principal customs codes.

#### Performance by geography – Europe

As for outlets, Europe remains the principal destination market. Sales within the EU have increased by over twenty percentage points with respect to the first six months of 2016, and a similar upsurge is recorded across the rest of Europe generally. It is worth underscoring the positive performance in Russia, where the value of sales more than doubled from approximately 21 to nearly 50 million euros.

#### Performance by geography – the Americas

The Americas absorbed a fifth of Italian exports in the sector, with an increase on the order of ten percentage points, imputable mainly to growth in Latin American markets, with Brazil in the lead



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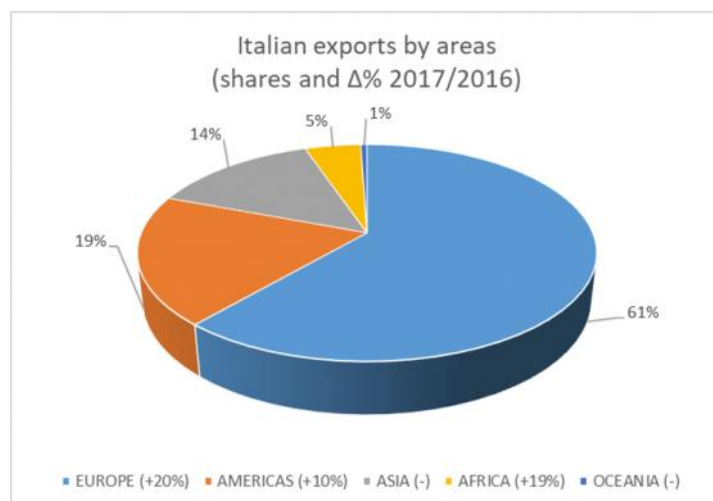
(+73%). The NAFTA countries, on the other hand, recorded more modest growth, due to a slowdown in sales to Mexico.

#### Performance by geography – Asia

Sales to Asian countries remained rather stagnant, conditioned by a drop in exports to the Middle East in general, and specifically to Saudi Arabia and Iran. Sales to the Far East did not fare much better, dragged down by the -12% recorded for China, which was certainly not offset by the +1% to India (just looking at the two principal markets in the area).

#### Performance by geography – Africa

While the aggregate sales to Africa are modest in value, Mediterranean countries and Sub-Saharan countries both recorded an increase approaching twenty percentage points.



“It should be noted,” points out the satisfied president of Amaplast Alessandro Grassi, “that the **recovery in supplies to important historical markets such as Russian and Brazil**, which were sputtering in the recent past due to their respective, well publicized economic and political problems, gives a quite significant boost in confidence for companies in our sector.”

“The end-of-June statistics highlighting continuing growth in exports for the sector,” continues Grassi, “are an important signal for Italian manufacturers of plastics and rubber processing machinery, equipment, and moulds, who thus have a more tangible perception of recovery in their market and can look forward to a **new record in production and exports** at year end. Companies also note a parallel recovery in the domestic market, sustained in part by the stimulus measures implemented by the Italian government to support investment by manufacturers within an “Industry 4.0” approach. Italian manufacturers of plastics and rubber processing machinery are ready to contribute to the process by providing **cutting-edge, competitive systems**.”



3.

Confirming the above foreign trade statistics, the mid-year survey conducted at the end of July among Amaplast member companies, comparing the first half of 2017 with the same period in 2016, revealed a **positive trend** both in turnover (rising for 45% of the interviewees and stable for 51%) and current orders (improving for 51% of those surveyed and stable for 35%).

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#### Events in the sector

The upcoming months bring an intense calendar of major specialized trade fairs around the world, where Amaplast will play an active role in promoting the Made-in-Italy:

- ) Iranplast (Tehran, 24-27 September), where the association, together with ICE-Agenzia, will coordinate the national collective of some thirty companies
- ) Equiplast (Barcelona, 2-6 October)
- ) Plastimagen (Mexico City, 7-10 November), with some 40 exhibitors in the Italian pavilion
- ) Plastics & Rubber Indonesia (Jakarta, 15-18 November)
- ) Plast Eurasia (Istanbul, 6-9 December).

Naturally, the Italian presence at these fairs will also offer the opportunity to intensify promotion of **PLAST 2018 (Milan, 29 May–1 June 2018)** among potential visitors. In the meantime, the organizational office of the fair has completed the stand assignment procedure, which is being reviewed by the more than one thousand currently registered exhibitors, who have reserved close to 90% of the available space.

**PLAST 2018 is a member of “The Innovation Alliance”**, which unites five international fairs (IPACK-IMA, MEAT-TECH, PLAST, PRINT4ALL and INTRALOGISTICA ITALIA), all accessible with a single admission ticket. The fairs will feature the technological excellence of various complementary industries in a logic of integrated supply chain: from plastics and rubber processing to industrial moulding, from manufacturing to packaging, from custom graphics for packaging and labels to goods handling and storage.

PLAST 2018 will also include **three satellite fairs**: RUBBER 2018 (for the rubber segment), 3D PLAST (3D printing and associated technologies), and PLAST-MAT (innovative plastics).

Based on numbers from the last edition (1,584 exhibitors from 57 countries and 50,087 visitors from 115 countries), **PLAST will be the industry’s most important event in Europe for 2018. Together with the other events making up “The Innovation Alliance”, it will occupy the entire Rho-Pero fairgrounds.**

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#### The new name

Amaplast is the national trade association, a member of CONFINDUSTRIA, that represents more than 160 manufacturers of plastics and rubber processing machinery, equipment, and moulds. On 7 June 2017, Assocomaplast was renamed Amaplast. The association office has created a [brief animated presentation](#) to underscore the importance of the new name.

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