

PRESS RELEASE

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German forming technology manufacturers maintaining record order levels

Frankfurt am Main, 15 November 2018. – Orders received by German forming technology manufacturers were 14 per cent up in the third quarter of 2018. Orders from Germany rose by 12 per cent whereas those from abroad were up by 16 per cent. Orders increased by 12 per cent in the first nine months of the year. Domestic orders grew by 20 per cent, while foreign orders rose by 8 per cent.

"Forming technology has once again proven to be the main driving force," said Dr. Wilfried Schäfer, Executive Director of the VDW (German Machine Tool Builders' Association) in Frankfurt am Main, commenting on the result. "The demand for metal cutting machinery, which increased sharply last year due to the Chinese boom, is now declining, while forming is catching up due to large orders for press machinery," Schäfer continued. Especially in Germany, the pent-up demand for forming technology has not yet been satisfied. Foreign orders from within the euro zone are now at similar levels to those from non-euro countries.

In October of this year, forming technology manufacturers were operating at 93.1 per cent capacity utilisation. This represents an increase of roughly 5 per cent in comparison to July. The last time such high capacity utilisation levels were posted was in July 2012. "The challenges most frequently mentioned by

companies are capacity bottlenecks and difficulties in finding suitable personnel," said Schäfer.

Forming technology traditionally accounts for around 30 per cent of total production by the German machine tool industry. Last year this represented around EUR 3 billion. At present, sales in the metal forming segment are growing at a rate of 14 per cent, similar to that of metal cutting. "It will not be possible to sustain this double-digit growth over the year because production skyrocketed at the end of 2017," said Schäfer. However, the strong growth has prompted the association to raise its production forecast by a further percentage point. The VDW now expects production to grow by 8 per cent to over EUR 17 billion in 2018. However, Schäfer specifically drew attention to the renewed divergence in the performance of the different sectors and of individual companies.

Background

The German machine tool industry ranks among the five largest specialist groupings in the mechanical engineering sector. It provides production technology for metalworking applications in all branches of industry, and makes a crucial contribution towards innovation and enhanced productivity in the industrial sector as a whole. Due to its absolutely key role for industrial production, its development is an important indicator for the economic dynamism of the industrial sector as such. In 2017, with most recently over 72,000 employees (status at the end of 2017, firms with more than 50 staff), the sector produced machines and services worth around 16.1 billion euros.

Picture:

Dr. Wilfried Schäfer, Executive Director of the VDW (German Machine Tool Builders' Association), Frankfurt am Main

Graphics: Order bookings for German forming technology

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