

PRESS RELEASE

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Unspectacular end to the year in the German machine tool industry

Frankfurt am Main, 6 February 2014. – In the fourth quarter of 2013, order bookings in the German machine tool industry fell by 6 per cent compared to the final quarter of 2012. Domestic orders were up by 3 per cent, while export orders were 11 per cent below the previous year's figure. For the year 2013 as a whole, there is a minus of 6 per cent, with domestic orders down by 7 per cent, and export bookings by 6 per cent.

“So this was a rather unspectacular end to the year for the German machine tool industry”, comments Dr. Wilfried Schäfer, Executive Director of the sectoral organisation VDW (German Machine Tool Builders' Association) in Frankfurt. The year's final quarter saw a minor setback in regard to a stable uptrend in order bookings. Nonetheless, orders in the second half of 2013 showed a definite plus. Forming technology, the guarantor of success for the development of production output last year, lost 25 per cent of its order bookings in the year's fourth quarter. “This category is taking a short breather, and the big projects of the automotive industry, which is the main customer grouping, have been completed for the time being”, says Schäfer. In 2013 as a whole, order bookings for forming technology were down by 2 per cent. Order bookings for metal-cutting technology fell by 8 per cent.

In 2014, the sector is expecting order bookings to rise again, by around 10 per cent, set to come in equal proportions from Germany and abroad.

Background

The German machine tool industry ranks among the five largest sectors in the country's mechanical engineering segment. It supplies production technologies for metalworking applications to all categories of manufacturer, and makes a crucial contribution towards progressing innovation and productivity in the industrial sector overall. Due to its absolutely key position for industrial production output, its development is also an important indicator for the economic vigour of the country's industrial sector as a whole. In 2013, the German machine tool industry produced machines and services worth around 14.5 billion euros, and was employing about 71,400 people (annual average for 2013, firms with more than 20 staff). This corresponded to growth of 2 per cent.

Picture:

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

Graphics: Order bookings and turnover in the German machine tool industry