

**IN THE FOURTH QUARTER, MACHINE TOOL ORDERS GROW AGAIN (+49.4%)
IT IS A RECORD EVEN ON A YEARLY BASIS (+70.1%)**

Barbara Colombo, president of UCIMU: *“The collection of machine tool orders is satisfactory, but affected by the delays in the supplies of raw materials and components and by the exorbitant increase of costs”.*
“We ask the Government to move, from April to June 2022, the delivery terms of machines ordered by the end of 2021, to ensure our customers the benefits established in the incentive measures regarding Industry 4.0”

In the fourth quarter 2021, the index of machine tool orders processed by the Economic Studies Department & Business Culture of UCIMU-SISTEMI PER PRODURRE showed a **49.4% upturn versus the period October-December 2020**. The absolute value of the index was 129.1 (base 100 in 2015). It is a record-breaking value that has never been registered in history before.

The outcome was due to the positive trend of the orders collected in the foreign markets, as well as to the excellent performances in the domestic market.

In particular, the orders collected abroad increased by 29% compared with the same period of the previous year. The absolute value of the index stood at 101.5.

On the domestic front, collected orders recorded a 96.9% growth, whereas **the absolute value of the index was 243.9**.

On a yearly basis, the orders index marked a 70.1% rise, for an absolute value of 130.4. While there was a remarkable recovery in foreign sales, which materialised into a **43.6% increase in orders**, for an absolute value of 112.7, the **collection of orders in the domestic market** grew more than exponentially, accounting for **166.6% more** than the 2020 figure, for an absolute value of 182.7.

It was not only the fourth quarter that highlighted an outstanding performance, but also the whole year and all the four quarters of 2021, compared with the corresponding reference periods.

Barbara Colombo, president of UCIMU-SISTEMI PER PRODURRE, pointed out: *“The year 2021 was extremely satisfactory for Italian machine tool manufacturers, as proven by the trend of the orders index over the 12 months. Its upturn was due, on one hand, to the partial recovery of sales abroad and, on the other hand, to the dynamism of Italian demand, also supported by the Government incentives of Transition 4.0”.*

“This unexpected growth of orders, all of them concentrated in a reduced time – stressed the president of UCIMU-SISTEMI PER PRODURRE – combined with the scarce availability of raw materials and electrical and electronic components due to the interruption of supply chains, especially those linked to the Far East - is currently putting our enterprises to a hard test. Our companies are compelled to postpone the deliveries of machines ordered by the customers, waiting to receive materials”.

“If conditions do not substantially change, machine tool manufacturers may have difficulties in ensuring that the machines ordered in 2021 are delivered by 30 June 2022, a deadline by which customers can take advantage of tax benefits according to the Government measure 2021.”

*“For this reason – stated **Barbara Colombo** – we ask the Government authorities to act immediately to extend, by six months, the delivery time of machinery ordered by the end of the year 2021, postponing the deadline from 30 June 2022 to 31 December 2022”.*

“The amendment of the measure would not burden the state treasury, but, on the contrary, it would be a great advantage for the whole manufacturing system of the country, which is involved in the gradual process of digital transformation and can certainly not halt the ongoing development, essential for maintaining the competitiveness of the industry”.

*“Moreover, – continued **Barbara Colombo** – there are two big problems that Italian manufacturers have to face and for which they require particular attention from the Government authorities. The first one concerns the production*

costs that the industry has to pay. We are experiencing enormous rises in the prices of raw materials, components and energy. Of course, we cannot recharge these increases to our customers. As for materials, the impact on our enterprises is direct and thus devastating. With regard to energy, the direct effect is less problematic, as our sector is surely not among the big energy-consumers, but it is however very heavy, because it affects our production upstream and downstream”.

“The second problem regards the necessity of being present in the foreign markets, where more than 50% of our sector production is exported. With specific reference to machine tools, beside the sales activity that cannot certainly be carried out remotely, except in exceptional cases, there are activities of installation and final testing, for which employees have to be sent overseas. Yet, unfortunately, quarantines and vaccines not recognised by the European Medicines Agency, Covid-tests and unstable rules that are not shared by all countries make all these activities very difficult. Therefore, we hope that the Government authorities in charge will act accordingly, in order to facilitate the bureaucracy related to travelling and business trips”.

Cinisello Balsamo, 27 January 2022

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