

Figures analysed by the Marmomacc Observatory-Confindustria Marmomacchine based on Istat data

**FIRST HALF 2015 - BOOM FOR ITALIAN STONE INDUSTRY EXPORTS:
JUST UNDER 1.6 BILLION EUROS COMBINED FOR NATURAL STONE (+5.2%) AND PROCESSING
TECHNOLOGIES (+28.8%)**

The 50th edition of Marmomacc, the landmark international show for the natural stone industry, opens at Veronafiere on Wednesday 30 September. 1,524 companies are taking part - 588 Italian and 936 international from 55 countries.

Verona, 28 September 2015 – The Made in Italy natural stone sector posted growth again in the first half of 2015. Between January and June, Italian **exports** of marble, granite and natural stone posted an **increase of 5.2%** compared to the same period in 2014, thanks to turnover of **978.1 million euros** from international orders. More specifically, finished and semi-finished products were the driving force, with sales totalling 777 million euros (+7.3%), while raw materials (201.1 million euros) posted a slight downturn (-2.3%). Two-figure growth for exports of Italian quarrying and processing machinery and technologies, posting turnover of **616.1 million euros (+28.8%)**.

These are the facts and figures - as analysed by the **Marmomacc-Confindustria Marmomacchine Observatory** - for Italian sector just before the opening of the **50th edition of Marmomacc**, the most important international event for business and culture in the natural stone field scheduled held at the Verona Exhibition Centre from Wednesday 30 September to Saturday 3 October 2015 (www.marmomacc.com).

«For 50 editions, Marmomacc has been the first platform for global promotion and development of the natural stone industry, - explained **Ettore Riello, President of Veronafiere**. - This year there are 1,524 exhibitors, comprising 588 from Italy and 936 from 55 international countries, with more than 60,000 professional visitors expected from 140 countries. The event plays a strategic role in this sector and has even earned official recognition by the Ministry for Economic Development in being included in the Special Made in Italy Promotion Plan»

According to **Flavio Marabilli, Honorary President of Confindustria Marmomacchine**, «The positive results in the first half year for sector exports – for materials and technologies alike – are the best response to the Ministry's decision to include our sector in the Special Made in Italy Promotion Plan, which envisages the allocation of funds to promote the main sectors in national industry through the reference trade fair platforms. Overall, our sector is still one of landmark industrial fields in Italy, with exports in 2014 coming to just under 3 billion euros and a balance of trade in the black by almost 2.5 billion euros».

Focus on unhewn, finished and semi-finished stone products

The main **outlet markets** for processed materials in the first six months of the year once again saw the **United States** in first place with 218.7 million euros (+30.2%), followed by **Germany**, with 71.3 millions. Despite international tensions, **Russia** remained the largest customer for Italian companies in the East, with 23.5 million euros (+6.6%). Exports also grew to **Turkey** (6.6 million euros / +19.6%), **Poland** (9.2 million euros / +10.8%) and **Azerbaijan** (4.5 million euros / +6.6%).

In the **Middle East**, United Arab Emirates (35.2 million euros / +54.3%), Saudi Arabia (36.5 million euros / -1.9%) and Kuwait (16.9 million euros / +8.7%) particularly stood out. With the exception of Morocco (17.9 million euros / +11.8%), the Mediterranean **basin** - including Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt and Libya - saw a generalised setback in imports of -8.4%. Lastly, with 9.3 million euros of orders, Italian companies doubled their turnover in India.

Asia is still the reference area among **buyers** of unhewn stone materials. In the first half of 2015, exports to **India** increased (44.1 million euros / +30.7%), while **China** (-8.5% / 58.9 million euros) saw a downturn despite remaining the main outlet for unprocessed blocks of Italian natural stone.

There were also positive signs for **Italian stone imports**. In six months, imports of raw materials increased (169.8 million euros / +13.1%), especially from Brazil (44.1 million euros / +49.7%), as well as those for finished and semi-finished materials (57.9 million euros / +16.3%).

Focus on machinery and equipment for natural stone quarrying and processing

As regards the natural stone quarrying and processing technology field – which had already closed 2014 with +1.7% – Italian builders in the first six months of 2015 exported machinery and equipment for a total value of 616.1 million euros, with a two-figure increase of +28.8% over the same period in 2014.

Once again, the **United States** leads the ranking of export outlets, with orders worth 65.8 million and an increase of 82% compared to the first half of 2014. **Brazil** also put in a good performance as second importer with 50.6 million euros (+78.6%), while **Turkey** dropped back to third place (33.5 million euros / -16.2%). **Germany**, as the leading European market, confirmed fourth place overall with imports worth 31 million euros (+12.6%), while **ALGERIA** climbed to fifth place (26 million euros / +67.7%), followed by **Saudi Arabia** (22.5 million euros / -1.5%), **the United Kingdom** (20.9 million euros / +69.6%) and India (20.8 million euros / -46%). The top ten list of importing countries closes with **Spain** (19 million euros / +158%) and **China** (14.4 million euros / -30.7%).

The Italian natural stone sector in brief: final figures 2014

In 2014, the Italian natural stone and related technology sector posted turnover of more than 3.9 **billion euros**. Exports came to 2.9 billion euros (almost 75% of total value) with a balance of trade surplus of 2.48 billion euros. In terms of marble, granite and natural stone product (unhewn and processed), Italy ranks in second place by turnover among exporting countries. On the other hand, Italy enjoys undisputed leadership in the machinery and equipment sector, with a share of stone processing technology exports close to 60% of the world-wide total. The Italian stone industry boats 3,339 companies with 33,680 **workers**.

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