

## WOODWORKING TECHNOLOGY: “BACK TO NORMAL” CONTINUES

The quarterly survey by the Studies office of **Acimall**, the association of Italian woodworking and furniture technology manufacturers, reaffirmed the expected and inevitable return to a normal situation, after of period of exponential growth of orders and turnover.

In the April-June period of this year, **orders** recorded a 17.8 percent reduction versus the same period of 2022, resulting from an 18.7 percent decrease in orders **from abroad** and a 13.8 percent decrease in **domestic orders**. This result replicates the trend of the previous four months, all negative, and brings the **general industry index** back to 2019 levels. So, back to normal after the pandemic-driven downturn and the subsequent recovery that benefited companies with unprecedented growth rates in the recent decades.

The wood and furniture technology industry can rely on an **order backlog** of 5.2 months (unchanged from the previous quarter), while the **price variation** from the beginning of the year – settled at 1.2 percent – is helping cool down the inflation that characterized this industry and the entire economy in the past two years.

According to the **quality survey**, 72 percent of the interviewed companies expect substantial stability in production (versus 71 percent in the previous quarter), while 9 percent predict further shrinkage and 19 percent an increase (the balance is plus 10 points).

**Employment** is increasing according to 14 percent of the sample, stationary for 81 percent, decreasing for 5 percent. **Available stocks** are stable according to 34 percent of the interviewees (versus 62 percent in the January-March period), increasing for 33 percent and decreasing for 33 percent.

Looking at the **forecast survey**, the figures processed by the Acimall Studies office reveal a less positive climate compared to the previous quarter: as to the **foreign markets**, 33 percent of the sample expect a stable trend (versus 38 percent in the previous quarter); it will decrease according to 48 percent (38 in January-March) and increase according to the remaining 19 percent (versus 24). As to the **Italian market**, it will be stable according to 48 percent of the interviewees (57 percent in the first quarter 2023), shrinking for 38 percent (versus 24 percent) and expanding for 14 (19 percent in the previous quarter).

*“This is an expected scenario – commented the Acimall director **Dario Corbetta** – but there might be a change of direction with the new Industry 5.0 Transition Plan, eagerly awaited not only by the wood and furniture technology industry, but by all mechanical engineering segments and beyond. The scope of this plan might drive the recovery of the Italian market in the coming months, or at least from the beginning of 2024”.*

These measures would certainly offer new and bigger opportunities to act in two directions, namely further progress towards digital transformation and an even stronger and tangible “green” revolution of industrial operations.

*For more information:*

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