**Presse**

**230,000 investment-oriented visitors from all over the world make for excellent mood at K 2016**

**Exhibitors report concluding numerous deals**

**Noticeably more guests from overseas – with particularly high numbers from Asia**

The international plastics and rubber industry presents itself in top shape. It benefits from a globally growing end-user market with high quality demands and stands for impressive innovative power across the entire value chain. The extraordinarily good economic state of this sector and the positive outlook for the future characterised the world’s biggest trade fair for the industry and made for an excellent mood amongst the 3,285 exhibitors of K 2016 in Düsseldorf. Companies reported a host of new leads, many of which already led to closed deals over the eight days of the trade fair. Ulrich Reifenhäuser, Chairman of the K 2016 Advisory Board, put it in a nutshell: "I have never seen such a vast number of decisive customers willing to buy at a trade fair before! The number and magnitude of deals, some of which were concluded here spontaneously, as well as the many concrete enquiries about new projects by far exceed our expectations! It was clear from day one that customers wanted to not only find out about new technologies but also purchase them. There is strong investment in all our customer industries and in all regions of the world.”

This assessment held true for all ranges on offer at the trade fair. Exhibitors unanimously confirmed that trade visitors were extremely serious about their business negotiations and showed a pronounced willingness to invest. Furthermore, they emphasised the again higher percentage of international visitors and their very high degree of professional expertise as well as the fact that a disproportionately high number of top managers and company owners had come to Düsseldorf.

230,000 trade visitors from over 160 countries were welcomed to the exhibition halls over the eight days of K 2016. Delighting at the results Werner Matthias Dornscheidt, President & CEO of Messe Düsseldorf, says: “Just the sheer number of experts visiting K 2016 impressively confirm the appeal and importance of the trade fair – since this number is once again clearly higher than at the previous event in 2013. However, what is more important: the breakdown of trade visitors was of an exceedingly high standard. We can register a constantly good level of demand from Germany and a disproportionately high level of interest from abroad, especially from overseas. It is known the world over that K in Düsseldorf is THE innovation platform for the entire sector. A visit here is simply indispensable for everyone wanting to stay ahead of the competition.”

The previous event in 2013 was attended by 218,000 visitors and 3,220 exhibitors.

The results from the visitor survey underpin the exhibitors’ view that the proportion of international guests has risen once again: some 70% came from abroad. More than 40% of all foreign visitors hailed from overseas – even from as far-away places as Bangladesh, Costa Rica, Ethiopia, the Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Oman, Madagascar, Mauritius, Surinam and Togo they travelled to the Rhine. As expected, the experts from Asia accounted for the largest group among foreign guests, which grew yet again: nearly 30,000 experts came from South, East and Central Asia. Guests from India again constituted the biggest group here but the number of visitors from China, South Korea and Iran also rose significantly.

Almost on a par remained the proportion of visitors from the USA and Canada with some 6% of all foreign visitors.

Regarding guests from the neighbouring European countries Italy dominated with over 10,000 visitors followed by the Netherlands (some 9,500), France (some 6,700), Belgium (some 6,300), Spain and Poland (some 5,000 each). There was perceptibly stronger interest taken by Turkey, Hungary and Greece.

Across all country borders the percentage of executives among trade visitors is extraordinarily high. Some two thirds are top managers or are in middle management. Almost 60% have the final word on, or are decisively involved in, their companies’ investment decisions. K plays an outstanding role in deciding which investment will be made: almost half the visitors stated that they waited for the trade fair before realising any purchasing projects.

Exhibitors in all exhibition segments had prepared for K 2016 for months in order to face international competition with convincing innovations. And they met with enormous approval: trade visitors were thrilled with the wealth of new technical developments presented to them by raw materials producers, machine manufacturers and producers of semi-finished and technical parts. Over 70% of visitors confirmed having received information on news and trends. By their own accounts, numerous visitors wish to immediately convert these new insights in investment: 60% of industry decision-makers said they had visited the trade fair with concrete intentions to buy while 58% had already found new suppliers. With these new purchases visitors first and foremost pursued three objectives for their enterprises: expand their product portfolio, extend production capacity and increase efficiency. The results of the visitor survey also confirm the positive business situation in the downstream sectors of the plastics and rubber industries: 60% of the visitors polled rate the current situation as “very good” and “good” while the same percentage even expect the situation to improve over the next twelve months.

Energy, material and resource efficiency were the dominating themes at K 2016. Also meeting with avid interest were new materials, innovative recycling concepts, new application areas for organic plastics and additive manufacturing. Smart, quick and flexible lines and services were in high demand among customers; Industry 4.0 dominated not only lectures and discussions but was also demonstrated hands-on at many stands. Commenting on this Ulrich Reifenhäuser said: “The possibilities the Internet of Things brings stimulates strong, serious interest – especially among younger, IT-savvy customers from throughout the world. Industry 4.0 is a theme of the future that will keep us busy for years to come.” Machine and plant manufacturing, which occupies the biggest exhibition area at K 2016 with over 1,900 exhibitors, was also the centre of attraction for visitors; a good two thirds of all experts polled ranked this segment first. 46% said they were predominantly interested in raw and auxiliary materials, while for 25% semi-finished products and technical parts made of plastic and rubber were the main reason for coming (multiple choice possible). Albeit the smaller sector of the two, the rubber industry made a highly visible appearance at K 2016 and underscored its importance in the areas of mobility, leisure, household and energy.

Visitors came from all important user industries – from the construction sector and automotive to packaging and electrical as well as medical device technology not forgetting agriculture. They all again gave top scores to the ranges on display in the 19 exhibition halls: 97% ensured that they had reached their goals 100% while 96% said they were impressed with the line-up at K 2016.

Also going down well with the experts from throughout the world was the line-up of accompanying events at K 2016, especially the Special Show “Plastics shape the future” and the Science Campus. The Special Show, a central forum for swapping information, thoughts and opinions in Hall 6, complemented the exhibits at K for the ninth time now. This year saw individual themed days illustrate the impact plastics have on shaping modern living environments. The agenda featured both expert discussions and entertaining presentations and sports activities as well as exciting experiments. At the Science Campus exhibitors and visitors to K 2016 obtained a focused overview of scientific activities and results in the plastics and rubber sectors and were given the opportunity to make contact with numerous universities, institutes and sponsoring organisations.

The next K in Düsseldorf will take place from 16 to 23 October 2019.

**26 October 2016**

**Information on K 2016 at** [www.k-online.com](http://www.k-online.com)

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Contact:

Press department K 2016

Eva Rugenstein/Desislava Angelova/Sabrina Giewald

Tel.: +49-211-4560 240 / Fax.: +49-211-4560 8548

E-mail: AngelovaD@messe-duesseldorf.de/ GiewaldS@messe-duesseldorf.de