

Italian machine sales solidifying

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Sales of construction machines have been improving in Italy. Data from the Italian equipment manufacturing association, **UNACEA**, shows how the market picked up during the first six months of 2016. The report reveals how sales in the Italian market rose 22% compared to the same period of 2015. The UNACEA quarterly study shows that 4,723 construction machines were sold during the first six months of 2016, including 4,617 earthmoving machines and 106 road machines. Compared with the same period for 2015, this equated to a gain in sales of earthmoving machines of 24% but a drop of 33% for road construction machinery.

"The positive trend of recovery in the Italian market has been consolidated - said Paolo Venturi, president of Unaceca - which has started by now three years ago. However, in absolute value, it is a much more modest recovery. Effectively, comparing this result with the data of the Golden Year 2007, when in the first six months were sold more than 13,000 machines, the loss is more than 63%. Despite the recovery, the market is still lower than the pre-crisis level so prudence and measures of support are mandatory, also considering the deterioration of the international trade and of the growing global tensions."

According to the Samoter Outlook report produced by Prometeia in collaboration with Unaceca on the data of the Italian institute for Statistics, exports of construction equipment between January and March have only increased slightly (+1.2%), reaching just over €810 million. Exports of drilling equipment grew 50%, while exports of tower cranes grew 13%. But demand for other product lines fell, with a 21% drop for crushing and screening equipment, a 10% fall for road machinery, a drop of 8% for concrete equipment and 3% for earth-moving machines.

Imports grew by 13.8%, reaching a value of €210 million. Particularly positive were imports of road equipment which grew 46%, while sales of drilling machines increased 38%, concrete equipment climbed 37% and earth-moving machines rose by 18%. Imports of crushing and screening equipment stayed more or less stable by increasing by 1%, while imports of tower cranes dropped 38%. The trade balance records a surplus of €600 million, although this is 2% drop compared to 2015.