

NEWSLETTER





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ABOUT

ITALIAN TECHNOLOGY CENTER (ITC) is a network of a group of Italian capital goods manufacturing companies. This innovative project is promoted by UCIMU-SISTEMI PER PRODURRE (the Italian machine tools, robots and automation manufacturers' Association), AMAPLAST (the Italian plastics and rubber machinery and moulds manufacturers' Association) and ACIMGA (the Italian manufacturers' association of machinery for the graphic, converting and paper industry). The ITC network facilitates a flexible collaboration among leading Italian machinery manufacturers in order to share resources and knowledge with the common aim of strengthening their presence in the Indian market.

Indian companies consider ITC as their first point of reference in India and get immediate answer/feedback to their queries from the respective Italian companies. Fresh enquiries and technical solutions are also discussed and properly followed-up with the member companies.

The enquiries for other machines/technologies will also be entertained.

Office Address: Italian Technology Center – ITC India
Office No. 003, Lunkad Sky Station,
Near HDFC Bank, Datta Mandir Chowk,
Viman Nagar, Pune - 411 014 (INDIA)
Tel.: +91-20-41226111
E-mail: marketing@itc-india.in
Website: www.itc-india.in / www.itc-india.it

The above office is presided by Mrs Barbara Colombo (Managing Director - FICEP) through its India SPV (Rare Tech LLP) - Mr. Sandeep Chadha (Director); www.raretech.org.



Bejot: A technological leap forward in office furniture manufacturing

Small batches, productivity and automation, the three characteristics considered to be important by Bejot a Polish family business specialized in the manufacture of office chairs.

In this interview Marcin Durzyński, Production & Logistics Director, tells us about the development of his company from the beginning and about the technological solutions implemented to the market demands.

In order to further develop and meet the growing expectations of his customers in terms of design, quality and ergonomics, he decided to acquire state-of-the-art machines from BLM GROUP, one for laser tube cutting, one for tube bending and the other for wire bending.

1. Investment in tube laser cutting

In this rapid business development phase, what were the investments in new machinery you decided to undertake?

We took into consideration a wide range of machines, from the modern cutters to the laser cutting systems. After the first performance analysis, it became clear that laser cutting was the solution we were looking for. We started benchmarking the machines available on market, speaking mainly to our partners and to companies with which we are collaborating or that have products complementary to ours.

Two suppliers remained in the game very quickly, BLM GROUP and another world leader among the manufacturers of laser cutting systems for industrial processing. The final decision was taken after consulting our partners who had the opportunity to work with machines from both manufacturers.

As we are not experts in this technology, we could only compare the performance on paper and listen to the opinions of the professionals using the programming software for lasertube systems: ArTube by BLM GROUP turned out to be far better for the user.

After acquiring the LT-FIBER tube laser cutting system, we implemented and modernized most of our product portfolio in 2 years.

2. Investment in tube bending technology

Therefore, we can say that it was a period of investments for your company?

Yes, there were many investment needs on the horizon. We made an investment in tube bending technology, with the aim of acquiring a machine capable to bending practically any shape and that offered completely new possibilities to our designers and to our research and development team. From here also came the need to bend tubes that are previously laser cut; end-cuts like cope cut or miter cut or even holes or slots on the tube.

Initially, we tried to carry out this process on the hydraulic tube bending machines we already had. These are reliable machines to manufacture conference chairs, but unfortunately, we soon found out the limitations on the feasibility of the parts that could be bend (older machines could bend in one direction only). On the other hand, the repeatability of bending was insufficient and could not match with the quality standards introduced by LT-FIBER.

Once again, we started searching and analyzing the machines available on the market, we visited various companies and tested bending on several machines.

From the analysis the E-TURN40 proved to be the most efficient, but that does not mean that it is the most economical at the time of purchase.



In the end, what made you buy this machine?

Three things:

First is the setup time and the post-setup calibration: the block tool system is virtually calibrated only once after purchase. With our wide range of products it is also very important to reduce the time necessary to change production i.e. the bending tools: we produce about 500 different structures consisting of different parts with small production volumes.

The second point in favor of the E-TURN was the capability to bend the tube in both the directions; to the right and to the left in the same cycle: thanks to this, we have reduced the average number of child parts that make up the product by bending longer tubes with more complex shapes rather than welding multiple parts to get the same final shape. This has allowed us to reduce the number of subsequent operations such as welding and grinding.

The third one was the VGP3D programming software: it is easy to understand, use and configure, integrated in a single environment with ArTube combined in the so-called All-In-One system, that allows us to automatically correct the position of the cutting geometries along the tube taking into account the springback and elongation caused during subsequent bending operation.

3. Investment in wire bending technology

We found out that you didn't stop with a tube bending machine, did you?

True, during one of the industry events, our attention was drawn by a double-head wire bending machine able to bend the wire taken from a coil.

After an initial analysis, we came to the conclusion that by purchasing this type of wire bending machine we would have obtained a fourfold reduction in our manufacturing time.

Until then, wire production was based on buying the material already straightened, about 6 m long, but the wire itself is very flexible and difficult to unload and reload. Furthermore, in many cases, we were forced to cut the wire to a given length and later bend it on our tube bending machines equipped with special fixtures and tooling, wasting time and also a lot of material.

By purchasing a DH4012, an automatic wire bending machine with a double bending head able to bend both from pre-cut pieces of wire and from coil all the production steps have been eliminated and we only have to buy a wire coil and load it on the machine.

With DH4012 we carry out cutting, straightening and bending of the wire in a single cycle. Furthermore, we also requested to equip the machine with the wire tip chamfering unit to get a better quality weld seam. Moreover, bending the wire on a wire bending machine is faster than on a traditional tube bending machine.

Why a double-head wire bending machine was necessary?

For parts with long development length, the long overhang wire generates vibrations during the bending cycle at high speed of the single head machine, so the last bends are less accurate. Such parts are more suitable for a double head bending machine.

In the double head wire bending machine, wire vibrations for the same length of wire are much lower, because the wire held in the middle and is bent on both sides, and hence parts are more accurate.

As we had already decided to buy a tube bending machine E-TURN40 and as we desired to have a single supplier, service and design environment we asked BLM GROUP.

About 9 months after installation, we are producing all our wire products on this wire bending machine.

Now we have one employee only to carry out a job instead of four. It is the same operator working on the E-TURN40 tube bending machine.



BLM GROUP

Thanks to the DH4012 we have shortened the production time, reduced the warehouse dimensions to store the wire and we are also saving money because we buy the wire directly in coil form.

We have also improved the production accuracy because like the E-TURN40 tube bending machine, the DH4012 is also electric and very accurate, for which the BLM GROUP is well-known.

Today we are nearly 230 people and on one side we are trying to get the most from the potential and knowledge of our manpower and, on the other side, to make their potential grow. This allows us to progress in product development, in sales and also in serving our Customers.



Reference

<https://blog.blmgroupp.com/bejot-a-technological-leap-forward-in-office-furniture-manufacturing>

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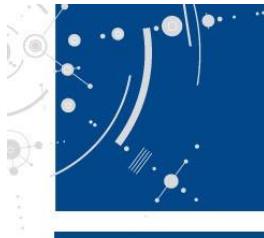
BUFFOLI TRANSFER S.P.A

Via Stretta 40
25128 Brescia (Italy)
Tel.: +39 030 201550
Fax: +39 030 201555

sales@buffoli.com
www.buffoli.com
www.buffoli.asia

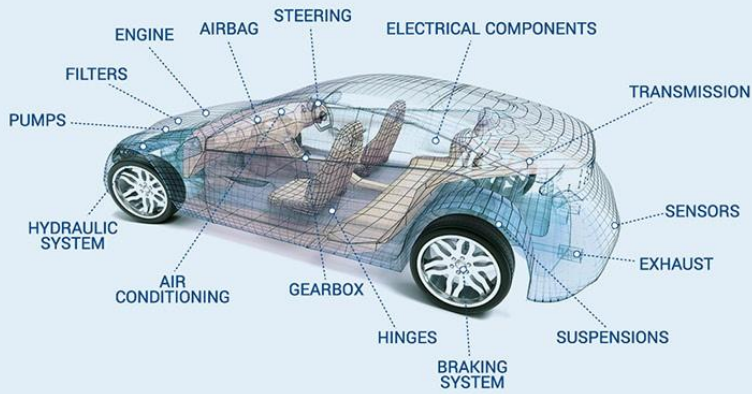


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Via Stretta 40
 25128 Brescia (Italy)
 Tel.: +39 030 201550
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sales@buffoli.com
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Website: www.pradmanservices.com

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Indian official representative:

KALYAN CONSULTANTS (MADRAS) PVT. LTD.
3/76 Fourth Street - Abhiramapuram
600018 Chennai - INDIA
Ph. +91 4424991228
Email: info@kalyanindia.com
Website: www.kalyanindia.com

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Problems concerning mists with high quantity of smokes? Icarus is your solution

Having a safe and healthy workplace environment influences employees' productivity, performance and well-being, as well as it reduces cleaning and maintenance costs. No matter the industry, maintaining a clean workplace increases healthy, safety and efficiency. Air and coolant filtration systems are a necessary solution since they eliminate pollutant mixes and ensure people "working clean and breathing healthy". In the air filtration field, Losma designs and creates static, electrostatic and centrifugal filtration systems able to capture particles of micro-mists and smokes with a filtration efficiency up to 99,97% thanks to products such as Icarus, Losma's mist collector.



Icarus is a static exhaust fan for filtration of air containing oil mists, micro-mists and smokes generated from coolants (both emulsion or neat oil), which can be used on every kind of machine tool and for every removal machinery.

Icarus is available in **three sizes** with flowrate from 600 to 2.000 m³/h with different filtration efficiency combination. Polluted air is drawn in by a high efficiency centrifugal fan, mounted behind the filters. In this way the fan cannot be damaged, since it works with clean air without any pollutant residual. Air passes initially through a special deflector, whose function is to distribute uniformly the air onto filter's surface, assuring a proper use of the whole useful contact area of the filter. Then the air crosses a series of filters with increasing efficiency up to more than 95% with polluted particles measuring less than a micron. Efficiency can reach 99,97% with the use of a HEPA post-filter following EN 1822 regulation.

On request Icarus can be equipped with various accessories, such as the absolute **HEPA H13 filter** which allows to obtain a very high filtration level (99.97% according to EN 1822); **X-Guard** pre filtration system for chips and powders that maximize suction efficiency in presence of high production of oil mists mixed with powders; and C.A. (activated carbon) post filtration system, which is able to remove fumes, gaseous particles, as well as unpleasant and / or harmful odours produced by some specific mechanical processes.

The use of filters with increasing efficiency and the possibility of implementing pre and post filtration systems make Icarus the ideal filter for all modern mechanical machining, from the simplest to the most demanding ones. Moreover, access to filtering section is very easy and quick, since you don't need to unscrew or dismantle any part. Just open the two locks on the door and access to the filters, which can be extracted easily and changed in a few minutes.

For further information:
Losma India Pvt. Ltd.
Tel. +91-9226107775
E-mail: info@losma.in
Website: www.losma.in



**MOLD MAINTENANCE
THE HIDDEN VALUE OF A SPOTTING PRESS**

As mold complexity increases, so too does the complexity of maintenance, which advances the role of spotting in mold validation.



In the highly competitive plastics industry great emphasis is placed on precision, efficiency and productivity, but people often forget about the importance of completing the mold process. If a mold builder invests resources into high-precision machining, yet tests its molds using an overhead crane, how can he assure his customers that the molds are properly validated? With a high-precision spotting press, a mold builder can say, "This is how we know the mold is accurate." This validation not only completes the mold process, it also provides the quality assurance of a premiere mold manufacturer.

As molds become more and more complicated, so does the checking and maintenance process. In turn, technology advances and so does the role of a spotting press to validate a mold. Having a high-precision spotting press provides a shop owner several advantages.



Safety. The first criteria in the design and manufacture of a spotting press should be safety. A high-precision spotting press minimizes dangerous mold handling associated with cranes, forklift trucks and other lifting equipment. Different from the mechanical multi-hole or toothed bar system, a high-precision spotting press has a safety device that prevents the press ram from falling, in case the hydraulic system fails. Safety devices are externally connected and always locked, which adds an extra safety measure.

Ergonomics. A high-precision spotting press is designed intrinsically with the maintenance crew in mind. Both platens should have the ability to tilt at varying angles, which helps avoid stressful maneuvers when performing mold maintenance, by making the molds easily accessible. Some presses have a compact design that allows the mold maintenance technician to approach the mold from a variety of angles with a simple tap of a control touch panel. For example, a press with the upper platen rotating 360 degrees and the lower platen rolling out and then tilting 75 degrees. This same approach can be applied to medium and large molds where the upper platen withholds the capability of flipping 180 degrees and the lower platen rolls out, then tilts 70 degrees to either the left or right. This allows workers to ergonomically adjust both platens with the benefit of working on the same side.

Productivity. Some shops use production molding presses to adjust a mold. This method is dangerous.

It is difficult for technician to work on it.

Molding machines need to be in production continuously utilizing molding machine for spotting or maintenance of Mold is net loss of Production Time.

The features available on Spotting press helps operator to finish the work faster with better quality which is impossible when you use Molding Machine for spotting.

Considering increased complexity of molds (for example, multi-shot molds), a built-in rotational table on a high-precision spotting press allows shops to simulate mold production instead of taking up precious molding machine time. All in one setup, two-shot molds can be tested, adjusted and checked in a safe and simple manner, saving time and money.

Accuracy. High-precision spotting presses have high repeatability and accuracy. Trials can be further improved by testing hydraulic slides, auxiliary cylinders and ejectors. Thanks to a parallelism control system which can gauge the upper plate's position to ensure an even stroke. Today there is a lot of focus on mold accuracy, as many companies cut to net shape and negative stock on their cores and cavities. This parallelism control unit accurately brings the two halves together with precision. This technology features four electronic measurement devices, which continuously check the press' upper plate position and parallelism while comparing it with the lower plate. Encoders are located diagonally in the four external corners of the upper plate with the columns. The measurements are displayed on a touch panel for the entire stroke. If the preset limit parameters are exceeded, the stroke's movement is immediately disabled and the error is displayed. Parameters can be exceeded when hydraulic cylinders not being retracted or tools are being left in the mold (for example, scrapers, grinders, slip gauges and hammers). Some presses use optic scales to ensure the upper plate's movement is even, while the lower platen is locked into position.

User friendly Control - Spotting operations of a high-precision press are intuitively controlled through a control touch panel that makes press functions clear, straightforward and simple. Additionally, the diagnostic program immediately reports on the display any anomalies that occur during operation. Each movement of the press is represented by a specific pictogram. In case of a malfunction, the relevant point is shown on the specific page for a quick solution. This helps minimize downtime, quickens troubleshooting and reduces service costs, especially after the warranty period.

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Italian Technology Center

MILLUTENSIL- Marketing Office
Office No. 003, Lunkad Sky Station,
Near HDFC Bank,
Datta Mandir Chowk, Viman Nagar,
Pune - 411 014

Telephone: +91-20-41226111

Skype: itc.pune

e-mail: marketing@itc-india.in

website: www.itc-india.in



Cod.Fisc e PIVA
08060920157
REA Milano n° 1200630
Reg. Imp. Milano
n° 08060920157
Capitale Sociale:
Euro 554.000,00 i.v.

Plant
Via delle Industrie,10
26010 Izano (CR) ITALY

Warehouse
Via delle Industrie,13
26010 Izano (CR) ITALY

Millutensil S.r.l.
Corso Buenos Aires, 92
20124 Milano (MI) ITALY
Tel. +39 02 29404390
Fax +39 02 2046677
info@millutensil.com
millutensil.com



**POSITIVE 2021 BALANCE SHEET AND ENCOURAGING OUTLOOK FOR 2022,
ALTHOUGH NOT WITHOUT SOME UNCERTAINTY**

With outcomes in some cases exceeding the forecast year-end results, the Italian industry of plastics and rubber processing machinery, equipment, and moulds closed the year 2021 with double-digit growth in production (+14%, with value exceeding pre-pandemic level) and equally encouraging results in foreign trade.

According to data from the MECS-AMAPLAST Statistical Studies Centre combined with ISTAT data, the strongly positive final balance was driven in particular by excellent performance in the domestic market, close to +30% over 2020.

The share of exports is in line with previous years and close to 70% of production. Foreign sales also recorded a significant rebound (+9%) while not making it past the peak of 3 billion euros, which was abundantly exceeded in the three years preceding the crisis.

Italian market of machinery, equipment and moulds for plastics and rubber (million euros)	2020	2021	Δ% 2021/2020
production	3,900	4,450	14.1
export	2,730	2,980	9.2
import	770	1,050	36.4
domestic market	1,940	2,520	29.9
trade balance	+1,960	+1,930	-1.5

The main destination region is Europe, albeit with a slight decrease with respect to 2020. On the other hand, Italian companies in the sector benefited from transatlantic sales, a significant portion in North America, where the strongly growing U.S. economy expressed healthy demand, albeit with some contradictions. In parallel, strong increases in supply to priority markets such as China and India have strengthened the importance of the Asian continent.

Compared to 2020, in 2021 sales towards India posted a considerable +33% and the country jumped tenth among the destination markets, with a 2,9% share out of the total and a total value exceeding 86 million euros.

Once again, such sales included considerable quotas for extruders, injection moulding machines, equipment for reactive resins, flexographic machines, plants for mono-multifilaments, thus high added-value and hi-tech equipment.

Back to the general performance of the Italian plastics and rubber machinery industry, in terms of product categories, after losses registered for various types of machinery in 2020, recovery was recorded in 2021 across most categories, from core machinery to auxiliaries and moulds. For example, foreign sales grew by 29% for injection and blow-moulding machines, by 18% for plants for mono- and multifilament, and by 6% for moulds (representing nearly a fourth of the total).



It is quite difficult to venture forecasts for the coming months: there are many factors that may influence the global economic context that are difficult to quantify and may accumulate or overlap over time. Shortages in raw materials and components and the resulting increase in prices that companies have been lamenting for over a year could get even worse due to the recent closure of the port of Shanghai as part of China's drastic measures to combat Covid. This will probably affect logistics and distribution chains. Essential materials for various manufacturing processes are produced in areas affected by the Russian-Ukraine conflict, which has also caused energy prices to skyrocket to levels that are unsustainable for many production chains.

Companies thus find themselves operating in an exceedingly complicated and also paradoxical situation: in spite of the above issues, orders continue to accumulate and it may become complicated for many companies to fulfil them.

Indeed, the latest survey by AMAPLAST among its members regarding the first quarter of 2022 shows that demand for plastics and rubber processing machinery, equipment, and moulds continues to grow, particularly in foreign markets (+28% with respect to January-March 2021). Outlooks for the second quarter are also characterized by optimism, at least as strictly regards incoming orders, expected to grow by another 6-7%.

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AMAPLAST - Centro Direzionale Milanofiori
Palazzo F/3 - 20057 Assago MI (Italy)
tel. +39 02 8228371 - fax +39 02 57512490
info@amaplast.org - www.amaplast.org
codice fiscale/fiscal code 80134430158

UCIMU-SISTEMI PER PRODURRE

Associazione Costruttori Italiani Macchine Utensili,
Robot e Automazione
Italian Machine Tools, Robots and Automation
Manufacturers' Association



viale Fulvio Testi 128, 20092 Cinisello Balsamo MI (Milan, Italy)
tel. +39 02 262 551, telefax +39 0226 255 214/349
<http://www.ucimu.it>, e-mail: ucimu@ucimu.it

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THE UCIMU INDEX IN THE FIRST QUARTER: A SLIGHT DECREASE IN MACHINE TOOL ORDERS (-3%) DOMESTIC ORDERS -15.9%; FOREIGN ORDERS +5.3%

In the first quarter 2022, the index of machine tool orders processed by the Economic Studies Department & Business Culture of UCIMU-SISTEMI PER PRODURRE marked a slight decrease (-3%) compared with the period January-March 2021. The absolute value of the index stood at 164 (base year 100 in 2015). The outcome was due to the reduction in the collection of orders in the domestic market, which was partially counterbalanced by an increase in overseas orders.

In particular, on the foreign front, the collected orders grew by 5.3% compared with the same period of the previous year. The absolute value of the index was 163.2.

On the contrary, the index of the orders collected in the domestic market registered a 15.9% fall compared with the same period of the previous year. The absolute value of the index was 164.4.

Barbara Colombo, president of UCIMU-SISTEMI PER PRODURRE, pointed out: "Business in foreign markets is essential for Italian manufacturers. Therefore, despite the difficulties caused first by the pandemic and then by the war, it is necessary to develop our business overseas, not only to recover the ground lost over the last two years. The current situation should lead the Italian machine tool manufacturing enterprises to reconsider the order of priority of markets. Even if it is important to keep on exploring new areas of destination for the "Made in Italy" of the sector, today it is fundamental to be present and develop business in traditional markets, in particular in Europe and in the United States. This should occur with a view to gaining market shares in the areas, whose economies will be more easily concerned with commercial relations in the near future".



UCIMU President, Barbara Colombo

"On the domestic front, the slowdown recorded by Italian manufacturers in their national market was due to two reasons. On one hand, the data are compared with the results of the first quarter 2021, which was extremely positive. On the other hand, it could reasonably have been generated by the users' decision to anticipate their purchases in the last quarter to enjoy the incentives 4.0, whose rates established in the last Budget Law (2021) were higher than those of the current one (2022)".

"After all, - continued the president of UCIMU-SISTEMI PER PRODURRE – even if the fall is rather small and the order collection is presently showing very high performances, as proven by the absolute value of the index, manufacturers are starting to worry about a possible cooling down of the propensity to invest due to the uncertainty caused by the war between Russia and Ukraine".

"The ongoing conflict is already bringing about great harm to the production activities of our enterprises, which must dramatically extend their delivery times of machinery, as they in turn, have to wait for supplies of electronic components and materials, such as nickel, steel and cast iron".

UCIMU-SISTEMI PER PRODURRE

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viale Fulvio Testi 128, 20092 Cinisello Balsamo MI (Milan, Italy)
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<http://www.ucimu.it>, e-mail: ucimu@ucimu.it

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“All this – stressed Barbara Colombo – risks causing problems to our customers who have to wait for the delivery of machines beyond the fixed term. Moreover, the lead time between the placements of an order, the delivery of a machine and the issuing of its invoice are 9-12 months today versus the usual 6-8 months. In such a long time lapse and in such an uncertain context, the price changes of raw materials may heavily affect the production cost of a machine, thus reducing the margins for machine tool manufacturing enterprises. In addition, the phenomenon of inflation is more and more evident and may act as a multiplier of prices, to the further detriment of profits deriving from production activity”.

“In order to avoid that, at a certain point, we the manufacturers may decide not to accept any more orders or that our customers may decide to wait until the situation is clearer before sending their orders – continued Barbara Colombo – immediate Government intervention is required. For this reason, UCIMU-SISTEMI PER PRODURRE, together with other associations, ASSOFERMET, ANIMA and ANFIA, representing the most affected sectors, asked the Government authorities for a meeting to consider possible actions to mitigate the effects derived from the ongoing war”.

“In particular, we ask for immediate intervention to arrange a working table with the Ministry of Economic Development, of Foreign Affairs and of International Cooperation, for the definition of new supply channels for raw materials as an alternative to the usual ones, which are now interrupted owing to the current situation. Moreover, in order to ensure a correct operation in the production chains that use metals – representing a very important share of the European industry – we think that a temporary suspension of the EU measures should be taken into account. Established in 2018 in response to the US customs duties on the imports of steel from Europe, these measures set fixed quotas with regard to imports of iron and steel materials from third countries, imposing duties on the excess parts, thus highly penalizing the players of the European manufacturing industry”.

“In addition, although for several weeks the Government authorities have already been working on the definition of measures that may mitigate energy costs for private citizens and enterprises; we ask them to apply a maximum limit to energy costs not only in relation to renewable energy, but to all energy sources used by companies in their production activity”.

“Even if we are aware that it is necessary to support the “green” transition, we are compelled to stress how, in such an emergency situation as the present one, it is essential first of all, to ensure that the manufacturing industry - the first pillar of the economic system in our country and all over Europe - can continue its activity under the best possible conditions”.

“We mustn't let our companies exit from the market owing to unbearable costs or stop because they are not able to carry on their production. It would be an irreparable social harm. Therefore, we believe that the “green” measures established by the European Union should be modified. First of all, in relation to the transition to electric motor. It should be clear that we do not require any disruption, but a re-scheduling of the transition from endothermic engine to electric motor, taking into account that the current situation is already very complicated”.

Cinisello Balsamo, 21 April 2022





Contact:

Claudia Mastrogiuseppe, External Relations and Press Office Manager, +39 0226255.299, +39 3482618701 press@ucimu.it

Massimo Civello, External Relations and Press Office +39 0226255.266, +39 3487812176 press2@ucimu.it

Filippo Laonigro, Technical Press Office, +39 0226255.225, technical.press@ucimu.it



Company Names	Details of Machineries	Companies logo
BLM S.p.A	Tube processing machines (Laser Tubecutting, CNC Tube bending, end- forming, automatic sawing, tube/bar cutting and end-machining), Wire bending machines, Five Axis Laser cutting machines, Laser sheet cuttingmachines.	 BLM GROUP
BUFFOLI TRANSFERS.p.A	CNC Rotary Transfer Machines (Bar orBlanks), complete with automation, robotic and gaging systems. IoT (I4.0) technology and software.	 BUFFOLI INDUSTRIES
FICEP S.p.A.	CNC lines for the processing of profilesand plates for the steel construction industry (drilling, milling, marking, scribing, sawing, plasma and oxy cutting, punching, shearing). Hydraulic,mechanical and screw presses, shears, saws and automation for the forgingindustry	
LOSMA S.p.A	Air filtration systems and coolant filtration systems for machine tools	 LOSMA [®] WORKING CLEAN, BREATHING HEALTHY
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