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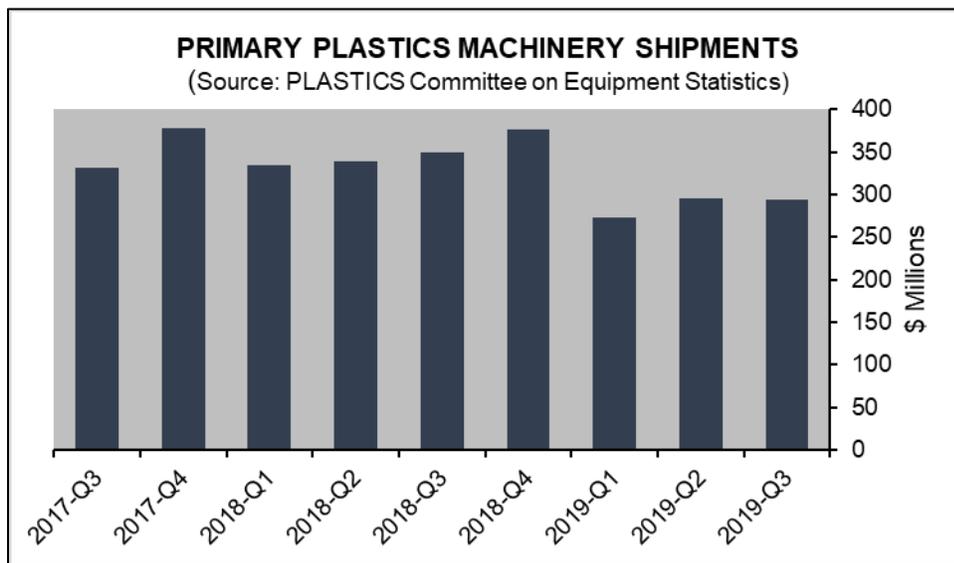
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Plastics Machinery Shipments Stayed Low in 2019 Despite Fourth Quarter Uptick

WASHINGTON, D.C., February 20, 2020—The value of primary plastics machinery (injection molding and extrusion) shipments in North America increased in the fourth quarter according to the statistics compiled and [reported](#) by the [Plastics Industry Association's \(PLASTICS\) Committee on Equipment Statistics \(CES\)](#).

The preliminary estimate of shipments value from reporting companies in the fourth quarter totaled \$316 million—a 7.7% increase from the previous quarter. While the shipments of injection molding rose 9.6% in the fourth quarter, single- and twin-screw extruders shipments decreased 0.9% and 7.7%, respectively.

Although fourth quarter value of primary plastics machinery shipments improved, from a year ago shipments were 16.2% lower. The shipments value of twin-screw extruders fell significantly by 35.2% and 12.3% for single-screw extruders. Injection molding machinery shipments value was down 14.9% from the fourth quarter of 2018.



“The fourth quarter numbers confirm weaker 2019 plastics machinery shipments compared to 2018. Weaker business investment spending in 2019 due to uncertainties from trade and tariffs and overall weaker manufacturing activity explains the low numbers of plastics machinery shipments,” according to

Perc Pineda, PhD, chief economist of PLASTICS. “Our projection of a 2.3% GDP growth in 2019 was on point based on the advanced estimates of the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis. We expect another year of moderate U.S. economic growth. However, if business confidence turns optimistic this year now that there have been positive developments on trade and tariffs, and interest rates are expected to stay low, we could see better numbers for plastics machinery shipments,” Pineda added.

The CES also conducts a quarterly survey of plastics machinery suppliers that asks about present market conditions and expectations for the future. In the coming quarter, 69.4% of respondents expect conditions to either improve or hold steady—a reversal of the 39% that felt similarly in the previous quarter. As for the next 12 months, 73.5% expect market conditions to be steady-to-better, which is up from 63% in the previous quarter’s survey.

Trade and tariffs issues in 2019 negatively affected the plastics machinery trade. Exports of plastics machinery totaled \$352.8 million in the final quarter of 2019—a 6.8% decrease from the third quarter. Mexico, Canada, and Germany remained the largest U.S. export markets. The combined exports to these countries in the fourth quarter totaled \$157.0 million. China was the fourth-largest market in the fourth quarter with plastics machinery exports totaling \$22.7 million. Imports of plastics machinery fell 5.4%. Lower exports and imports have caused the plastics machinery trade deficit to decrease by 4.2% from the third quarter.

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About PLASTICS Committee on Equipment Statistics (CES)

The PLASTICS Committee on Equipment Statistics (CES) collects monthly data from manufacturers of plastic injection molding, extrusion, blow molding, hot runners and auxiliary equipment. A confidential, third-party fiduciary, Vault Consulting, LLC, compiles the monthly data and analyzes individual company data for consistency and accuracy. Once this crucial process is completed, Vault aggregates and disseminates reports to participating companies. If this is something you and your company are interested in please contact Katie Hanczaryk at khanczaryk@plasticsindustry.org or 202-974-5296.

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About Plastics Industry Association

The Plastics Industry Association (PLASTICS), formerly SPI, is the only organization that supports the entire plastics supply chain, representing nearly one million workers in the \$451 billion U.S. industry. Since 1937, PLASTICS has been working to make its members and the industry more globally competitive while advancing recycling and sustainability. To learn more about PLASTICS’ education initiatives, industry-leading insights and events, networking opportunities and policy advocacy, and North America’s largest plastics trade show, [NPE: The Plastics Show](#), visit plasticsindustry.org. Connect with PLASTICS on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Instagram](#).