

Press Release

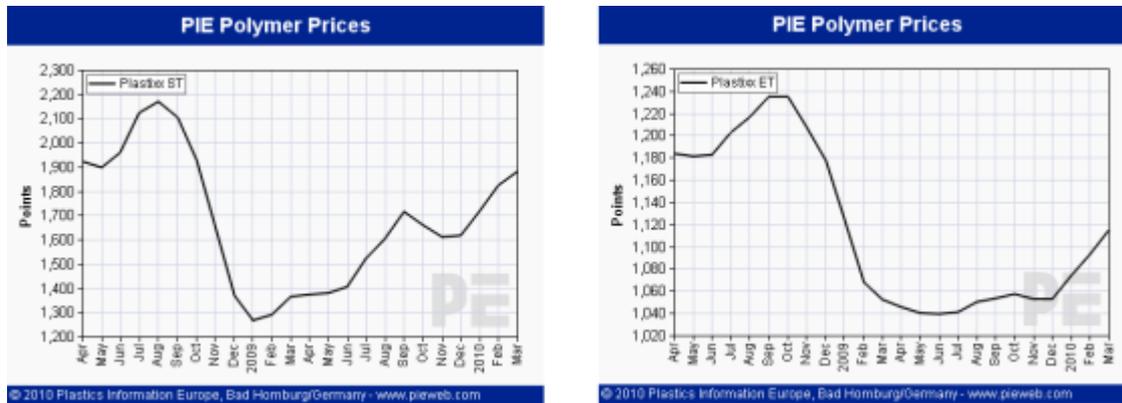
Polymer Prices on an upward curve in Q1: Significant increases for standard thermoplastics / Hikes for engineering thermoplastics less pronounced

Bad Homburg, Germany, 26 April 2010 – An increase in demand and rising feedstock costs led to massive price hikes for standard thermoplastics in the first quarter of 2010, says the plastics news portal and biweekly newsletter “PIE – Plastics Information Europe”. The initially relatively modest rises for engineering thermoplastics also gathered increasing momentum. Both polymer groups are likely to see additional price increases in April and May, says PIE.

The “Plastixx ST“ price index for standard thermoplastics has been heading only in one direction since the beginning of 2010 – and that is up. While the tip of the December curve was at around 1,161 points, the March level was 13.3% higher, at 1,315 points. Most affected were LDPE, LLDPE, PP and PS, all rising 20%. Notations for HDPE, EVA and EPS increased by 12-15% during the same time period. PET prices rose by about 8% and PVC gained 6%. A year-on-year comparison with Q1 2009 shows that, spurred by both an increase in demand – especially in Asia – and rising feedstock costs, prices of all standard thermoplastics together rose by 38% on average. A weak euro has also fuelled the upward spiral. PIE expects the picture to remain largely the same in April and May, although the upward momentum is likely to ease somewhat.

For most higher-quality, lower-quantity engineering thermoplastics, the hikes have been less pronounced. Nevertheless, the “Plastixx TT” price index tracking their movement rose by 6% in the first quarter, from 1,052 points in December to 1,115 points in March. The increase was led by ABS and PP compounds, where prices rose by up to 14% and 10% respectively. The situation was more stable for PBT, POM and PMMA, which saw rises of less than 3%. Polyamides (PA) were positioned somewhere in the middle as the quarter wound down, but on a monthly basis the upswing has been gathering speed, with increases of 2.7-3.7% seen

in March alone. An increase in European – and particularly German – demand, especially from the automotive sector, coupled with international supply shortages and increasingly expensive feedstocks is driving the numbers for engineering thermoplastics forward. With supplies growing ever tighter, engineering thermoplastics likely will see significant hikes in the second quarter.



Plastixx – PIE's Polymer Price Index

"Plastixx" is the name of the PIE polymer price index introduced in June 2005. The index mirrors the price development of plastics in western Europe. The calculations are generated every month on the basis of the market prices for standard and engineering thermoplastics determined and published by PIE. While the Plastixx index represents all important thermoplastics, "Plastixx ST" reflects the price movements among standard thermoplastics while "Plastixx TT" mirrors those of engineering thermoplastics. At 1,000 points, January 2002 constitutes the basis for all three indices.

PIE – Plastics Information Europe

For more than 30 years, "PIE – Plastics Information Europe" has been an invaluable source of business information for decision-makers in Europe's plastics industry. PIE subscribers have access to a biweekly print newsletter as well as comprehensive online news coverage, including polymer price and market reports, daily news, e-mail services, analysis tools and an online archive. For more information, visit www.pieweb.com.

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