



News  
Trends  
Analysis

# Plastics Information Europe

## PRICES TECHNICAL THERMOPLASTICS

**February / March: The market is everything but dynamic / Abundant supplies lead to price weakness / Higher numbers only for PP compounds / Trends likely to continue in Q2**

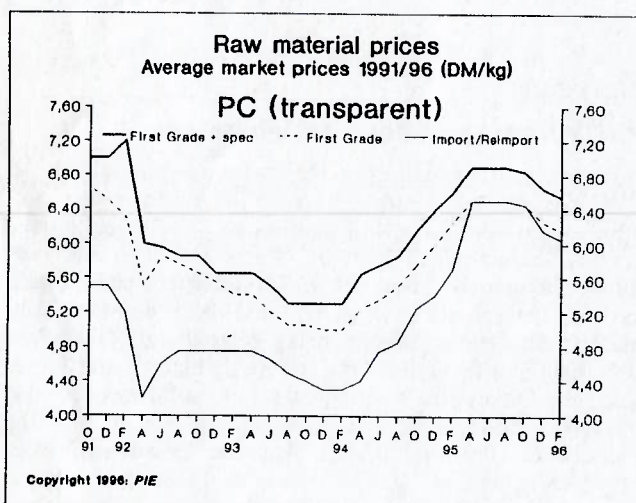
Since the beginning of 1996, volume sales of technical thermoplastics have held steady, with little dynamic movement in either direction. For the present, no one expects this pattern to change. "Business picks up for a while, then falls back again," as one observer remarked. Prices have more or less followed the volume trend, moving up slightly, only to ease off once more. Imports have shown the most volatility, not least because of the growing amount of material finding its way westward from sources in eastern Europe.

In general, it appears that buyers of small quantities are getting better price deals. This is because producers in western Europe are interested in their remaining competitive and don't want to leave this business entirely to importers or compounders.

In Q2 1996, the trends seen in the first three months of the year can be expected to continue; no major movements are anticipated. The markets for individual polymers in February / March looked as follows (for December / January, see PIE No 2, 1996):

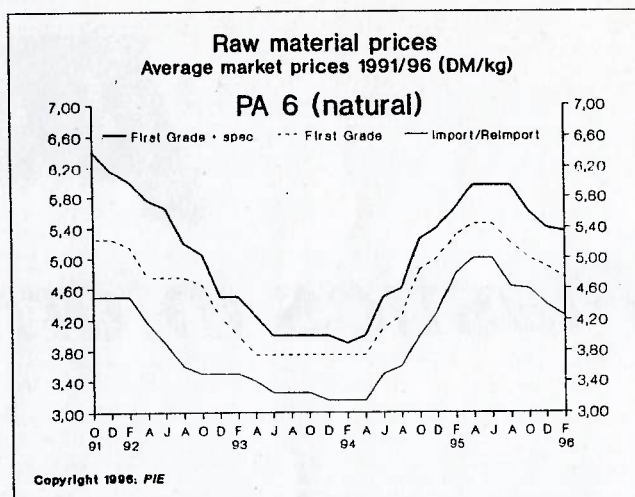
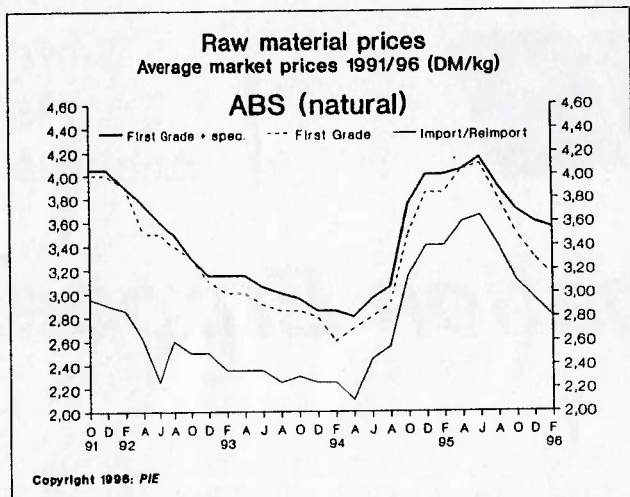
**ABS:** For specified types, the numbers have remained basically unchanged over December/January. Small quantities apparently are being offered at discounts, to ensure that this category of buyers remains in the game with larger market players. Some of the surcharges on heat resistant material are beginning to crumble. The fierce competition among importers of overseas material has brought prices down somewhat. At present, there are no reliable signs that notations are on the way up. However, as China appears to have opened its doors to material from Taiwan, and demand in Europe is believed to be pointing slightly upward, increases are beginning to be talked.

**PC:** Delivery times are still fairly long for some special types. Imported material is showing more price flexibility, even for smaller quantities. As a reaction to this, large European producers are giving their trading partners more freedom to make price concessions. Due to the ease in supply bottlenecks for GF types, numbers are coming down here, too. Although rumours of price increases are still being heard, no obvious thrust in this direction has been noted.



## This Week's Topics

*M.A. Hanna: Acquisition of Victor International*  
*Hoechst: 1995 earnings on plastics rebound*  
*Bayer: 1996 outlook good for PC and ABS*  
*Battenfeld: JV for extrusion lines in China*  
*BASF: Major investment for styrene copolymers*  
*Wavin: New plastics pipe company in Romania*  
*Italy: 1995 plastics consumption up 2.4 percent*  
*USA: Plastics resin sales hold steady*  
*Building economy: Record growth in Europe*



**PA:** Compounders and importers continue to fight each other for market shares. The growing amount of Eastern European material in the market is resulting in increased pressure on prices. Surcharges for GF types continue to melt away. Delivery problems have become a thing of the past. Specified types are tending firmer, a trend that seems likely to hold. Converters anticipate no let-up in price pressure.

**PBT:** Here, too, GF types seem to be pointing downward. In general, however, numbers appear to be more stable than for other technical polymers. Large consumers have negotiated their own special conditions.

**POM:** For this polymer, prices for specified brands also appear to have eased off. Traders are defending the DM 5.00 barrier tooth and claw, but with supplies abundant, despite good volume sales, converters believe there is still more room on the downward scale.

**PMMA:** In the last price round, not all targets were achieved. For major automotive applications, prices are still below DM 4.00. But as sellers continue to complain of insufficient margins, they will undoubtedly try to turn the situation around.

**PP/TF:** Currently, there is no clear picture of the market situation. Higher prices – in the 10-15 pfennig range have been seen in some sectors; others (quarterly prices, for example) are still at the old level. (Capacities are obviously not completely utilised, and stocks are still ample. But as PP is still going up, talc-filled numbers also are certain to rise.

## Raw material price graphs

Every two months the current raw material prices of technical thermoplastics are published in PIE. In addition PIE offers the following service: starting October 1991 nine technical thermoplastics are documented in graphs and brought up to date every two months. Selected graphs are shown on this page as an example.

**READER SERVICE:** The graphs in A4 format can be purchased at the price of DM 12.00 each (please give the appropriate KI-No as reference):

ABS (natural/black)	KI-No 4511
PC (transparent)	KI-No 4512
PA 6 (natural)	KI-No 4513
PA 66 (natural)	KI-No 4514
PBT (natural)	KI-No 4515
POM (natural)	KI-No 4516
PMMA (transparent)	KI-No 4517
PP (20% talc-filled, nat., light colours)	KI-No 4518
PP (30% glass-reinf.)	KI-No 4519

### PLASTICS INFORMATION EUROPE

"Plastics Information Europe" (PIE) is published twice a month by Kunststoff Information Verlagsgesellschaft mbH, Bad Homburg, Germany. Editor: Helmut Hertsch. Managing Editor: Ulrike Hertsch. Regional Editors: Germany: Dede Williams (Frankfurt), Phone 49-69-522061, Fax 49-69-528842. Great Britain: Carole Kluth (Bristol), Phone/Fax 44-117-9420064. – Subscription rate: DM 360.- + postage per year. All rights reserved. Copyright 1996: Plastics Information Europe Ltd., Tonbridge, Great Britain / Kunststoff Information Verlagsgesellschaft mbH, Bad Homburg, Germany. Kunststoff Information Verlagsgesellschaft mbH Saalburgstraße 157, D-61350 Bad Homburg / Germany, Phone 49-6172-32007, Fax 49-6172-304178.

### DENMARK

#### PVC report questions stabiliser use

A report in Denmark into the environmental effects of PVC has caused controversy over its findings on commonly used stabilisers and plasticisers. The report by the Danish Technological Institute claims that lead and cadmium compounds used as PVC stabilisers are acutely toxic in the aquatic environment and the general environment. Cadmium is already being phased out. The report lists health effects that include reproductive and nerve damage. Dibutyltin, a component of stabilisers, is also alleged to be toxic to aquatic organisms as well as being teratogenic. It also alleges that the plasticiser, di(2-ethylhexyl)phthalate (DEHP) may be harmful to aquatic life and exhibits xenoestrogenic effects. Diisodecylphthalate (DIDP) is claimed to be bio-accumulative and toxic in the aquatic environment. The report also claims that 67% of chlorine in Danish incinerators comes from PVC waste.