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Industrial robot sales increase worldwide by 29 percent

Munich, June 20th, 2018 – **Global sales of industrial robots reached the new record of 380,550 units in 2017. That is an increase of 29 percent compared to the previous year (2016: 294,300 units). China saw the largest growth in demand for industrial robots, up 58 percent. Sales in the USA increased by 6 percent - in Germany by 8 percent compared to the previous year. These are the initial findings of the World Robotics Report 2018, published by the International Federation of Robotics (IFR).**

Broken down by industry, the automotive industry continues to lead global demand for industrial robots: In 2017, around 125,200 units were sold in this segment - equivalent to growth of 21 percent. The strongest growth sectors in 2017 were the metal industry (+54 percent), the electrical/electronics industry (+27 percent) and the food industry (+19 percent).

In terms of sales volume, Asia has the strongest individual markets: China installed around 138,000 industrial robots in 2017, followed by South Korea with around 40,000 units and Japan with around 38,000 units. In the Americas, the USA is the largest single market with around 33,000 industrial robots sold, and in Europe it is Germany with around 22,000 units sold.

"The growth of industrial robots continues at an impressive pace worldwide," says Junji Tsuda, President of the International Federation of Robotics. "Key trends such as digitalisation, simplification and human-robot collaboration will certainly shape the future and drive forward rapid development."

In the course of digitalisation, real production is becoming increasingly connected with the virtual data world, opening up completely new possibilities for analysis - right through to machine learning. Robots will acquire new skills through learning processes. At the same time, the industry is working to simplify the handling of robots. In the future industrial robots should be easier and faster to program using intuitive procedures. Such a technology is not only attractive to established users, but also to small and medium-sized companies, for example, companies who can use it to introduce automation without the need for highly experienced or expert personnel. This development also paves the way for the third major robotics trend: collaboration between humans and robots without protective barriers offers new approaches to new flexible production processes. In the future human-robot collaboration will support the flexible production of small quantities with high complexity.

Photos + Graphics

Please find photos and graphics for download at: <https://ifr.org/ifr-press-releases/news/industrial-robot-sales-increase-worldwide-by-29-percent>

About IFR

The International Federation of Robotics: www.ifr.org

The IFR Statistical Department publishes two robotics studies each year:

World Robotics - Industrial Robots: This unique report provides global statistics on industrial robots in standardised tables and enables national comparisons to be made. It contains statistical data from around 40 countries broken down into areas of application, industrial sectors, types of robots and other technical and economic aspects. Production, export and import data is listed for selected countries. It also describes the trends in relation to robotic density, e.g. the number of robots per 10,000 employees in relevant sectors.

World Robotics - Service Robots: This unique report provides global statistics on service robots, market analyses, case studies and international research strategies on service robots. The study is jointly prepared with our partner Fraunhofer IPA, Stuttgart.

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