Press Release for immediate release

**Antwerp H1: Rough Market Thrives with Double Digit Growth, Outperforms 2019**

Antwerp, July 16, 2021. [Figures on the trade in Antwerp](https://www.awdc.be/en/2021-1) in the first six months of the year demonstrate the city is back on track of the pre-pandemic upturn seen in the first few months of 2020, outperforming 2019 figures on rough trade with double digit growth. Polished trade, still suffering from the lack of trade shows and the effects of the pandemic in India, shows encouraging signs of recovering to normal levels.

Compared to the same period in 2019, in terms of total value of traded rough diamonds, Antwerp records a +11% increase to US$10,4bn and a 7% jump in terms of volume to 99m ct. Demonstrating a strong rough market, apart from the regular influx of rough diamonds via contract sales from major miners, Antwerp hosted more than 75 diamond tenders in the first six months of the year, boosted by strong rough prices and the city’s unrivalled critical mass of buyers and sellers. Karen Rentmeesters, Senior Manager Industry Relations; “Despite the lingering constraints of the pandemic, with second and third waves in many places around the world, Antwerp has proven to be a safe haven for producers to sell their rough, where they can achieve consistent, high value for their goods. It is no surprise that, while competing hubs were forced to cancel tenders, new supply of rough found its way to Antwerp, and continues to be sold here, demonstrated by very strong rough import figures and a busy market.”

In H1, Antwerp imported US$5bn worth of rough diamonds, compared to US$2.7bn in H1 of the pandemic year 2020 and US$4.3bn in 2019, up nearly 15% y-o-y comparing 2021 with the last “normal” year 2019.  In terms of volume, imports jumped from 32m ct in the same period in 2020 and 40m ct in 2019 to 47m ct in the past six months, or a +17% increase comparing 2021 with 2019.

While the rough business is booming, polished trade is lagging behind somewhat, with a total volume of 4,3m ct, total value of US$7,4bn in traded polished goods in H1 2021. Karen Rentmeesters; “Since the outbreak of the pandemic, there have been no trade shows whatsoever, which traditionally create a lot of movement of polished goods in the industry. In addition, the devastating third wave in India in the first half of this year had a major impact on the somewhat slower trend of polished business picking up throughout the global industry, but the last three months show positive signs.” In April, polished imports in volume in Antwerp equaled 2019 levels, jumping over the June 2019 figures and a similar trend is noticeable for polished exports.”

The **Antwerp World Diamond Centre** (AWDC), coordinates and officially represents the Antwerp diamond industry, the global leader in the diamond trade. In this role, AWDC promotes the entire diamond industry at home and abroad. AWDC is also recognized internationally as the point of contact, spokesperson and intermediary for the entire Belgian diamond community.

86% of all rough diamonds and 50% of all polished diamonds pass through Antwerp. Diamonds represent 5% of the total Belgian exports and 15% of all Belgian exports outside the EU, making diamonds the most important export product outside the EU.

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