

## **Antwerp's December imports and exports indicate lower per-carat prices**

After the November figures showed a strong rise in demand for rough and polished diamonds with a higher per-carat price as a logical consequence, the prices per-carat declined again this month. This is no unusual trend because the end of the year is typically a calm period for the sector.

The U.S. dollar value of exports of polished diamonds in December soared 18.76 percent to \$ 1.21 billion compared to December 2010. In volume terms, there was a 10.22 percent decline to 659.388 carats.

The average price per carat for polished exports was therefore \$ 1,837 in December compared to an average price of \$ 1,964 in November. Exactly one year ago, in December 2010, this was \$ 1,389.

During January-December, exports of polished goods rose by 31.9 percent to \$ 14.64 billion, while in volume terms they rose by a much more moderate 8.82 percent to 8.48 million carats.

As for exports of rough diamonds, they soared a little by 4.91 percent to \$ 1.19 billion in December, but recorded a 23.9 percent fall on the year in volume terms to 8.72 million carats.

During this year, Belgium exported 107.1 million carats of rough goods, 15.6 percent lower but a 31.2 percent rise on a year earlier in financial terms to \$ 14.4 billion.

In polished diamond imports, Belgium brought in 644,399 carats in December, a decline of only 2.3 percent from December 2010 but a 37.2 percent rise to \$ 1.10 billion. In 2011, Belgium imported 8.99 million carats of polished diamonds, a rise of 11 percent on 2010 and 36 percent higher in financial terms to \$ 14.03 billion.

In rough diamonds, Belgium imported 5.26 million carats worth \$ 825 million in December, a drop of 43.2 percent in volume terms, but 16.8 percent up in financial terms on a year earlier. During 2011, Belgium imported 98.9 million carats of rough diamonds, a decline of 9.9 percent on last year, but in financial terms there was a jump of 41.9 percent to \$13.4 billion.

Antwerp ended 2011 on a high note with a total diamond turnover of \$56.5 billion, compared to \$38.2 billion in 2010 and \$30.3 billion in 2009. The annual turnover for 2011 in carats decreased slightly from 230 million carats in 2010 to 223 million carats in 2011.