



## PRESS RELEASE

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### BERNER Group increases sales in the first half-year by approx. 8% to 570 million euros and reaches new record level

- Best September turnover in history
- Chemicals division exceeds pre-Corona level
- eCommerce turnover increases by 13

**COLOGNE/KÜNZELSAU.** The Berner Group sets two new sales records in the first half of the fiscal year 2022/2023 (1.4. to 30.9.). The family-run B2B trading company increased Group sales by 7.7% to 570 million EUR (previous year 530) and thus achieved the highest half-year sales in its history. At EUR 113 million, September was also the strongest sales month since the company was founded in 1957. In the core business B2B Omnichannel Trading, sales increased by around 6%. In the Chemicals Business Area, the Caramba Group was able to exceed pre-Corona sales with double-digit growth.

"We grew in all regions of Europe in the first half of the year. We are satisfied with the course of business because we have prepared ourselves for the challenges in the logistics sector and the shortage of raw materials. In the building trade, however, we are currently seeing the first signs of a slowdown in the pace of sales," says CEO Christian Berner. In the Construction segment, sales grew by more than 5% in the first six months of the financial year, and by 7% in the Mobility segment.

"We see this different development in Germany, Scandinavia, France, BeNeLux and on the Iberian Peninsula, while in Italy and Eastern Europe the construction industry is still going very well," says Arthur Jaunich, who is responsible for marketing and sales in the Executive Board team.

In addition to the core business Omnichannel Trading (approx. 90% share of sales), the chemicals subsidiary Caramba Chemicals Group (CCG) also belongs to the Berner Group. During the Corona period, Caramba had to contend with high fluctuations in demand and a decline in sales. In the middle of last year, there was a trend reversal, which accelerated further in the first half of the 2022/2023 financial year. With an increase of around 47%, Caramba raised its sales mark in this period to more than EUR 35 million (previous year: EUR 24 million), thus surpassing the pre-Corona figures.

#### Share of sales in alternative channels continues to grow

In addition to a strong sales force (around 5,000 men and women), alternative sales channels are becoming increasingly important. In the first half of the year, the Berner Group successfully continued the strategic expansion of these channels. While in the same period last year about 25% of sales were achieved via web shops, eCommerce or telesales, in this first half-year the figure was already 28%. These sales channels are particularly successful in Germany with a share of more than 30%.

eCommerce remains the driver of this development. For four half-years in a row, sales in the eCommerce segment have been increasing (with double-digit growth rates). Between April and September, the Berner Group increased eCommerce sales by 13% to more than 81 million EUR compared to the same period of the previous year.

"eCommerce continues to be the fastest growing sales channel. Growth is driven in particular by the South-East region, where our eCommerce business grew by a strong 33% in the first half of the year. Absolute outperformers



are Hungary with +187% and Portugal with +87%. The share of eCommerce in total turnover is more than 16%. In the South-West region, we are already earning almost every fourth euro through this sales channel," said Arthur Jaunich.

## **Outlook**

"Times remain very difficult. Europe and the EU have been falling massively behind China and especially the USA for years. The recession that is now forecast may exacerbate this development and thus threaten the prosperity of all of us in the long term. I expect politicians to use the time and immediately start to implement far-reaching deregulation and de-bureaucratisation measures. As Berner Group, we want to continue to grow and generate a positive value contribution and secure jobs, but politics must adapt the necessary framework conditions for this, and quickly," says Christian Berner.