

PRESS RELEASE FEP

The Board of Directors of the European Federation of the Parquet Industry met in Brussels on 13 April 2012 and discussed both the parquet situation and recent indicators on the European market.

Though it is yet too early to give a reliable forecast for the current year, the information provided by the individual country representatives indicates that 2012 will be a challenging year for the European parquet producers with important variations at country level – a situation already visible in recent years and which seems to be further amplified by the persisting economic downturn in certain regions. It is hence generally an increasingly polarized picture that emerges, with some Central European and Nordic countries performing predominantly well versus a more disquieting current that has seemingly settled under Southern skies.

A brief per country recap is provided in the table below.

Market overview

Austria 	2011 was a good year and 2012 started in a stable way The country remains with a very low unemployment rate and the private sector performs well Government debt is problematic, with little money for investments
Belgium 	No spectacular changes on the parquet market at start 2012 General economic picture improving on account of growing GDP, slightly decreasing unemployment rate and declining budget deficit
Denmark 	The market remained flat to slightly down
Finland 	Slightly positive market
France 	The first quarter of 2012 showed a flat picture Many companies face uncertainties New buildings are decreasing, 80% of the market is in renovation People are predominantly uncertain and show a lack of confidence
Germany 	Parquet sales in Q1 2012 rose slightly, especially wide planks The economy in the first quarter of 2012 was positive The construction sector performs well with an increase in building and flat permits of 20% in 2011 Overall, customers and wholesalers show some confidence
Italy 	The parquet market was more or less stable in 2011, however the tendency in Q4 2011 and Q1 2012 is clearly negative The economic situation is pretty difficult, probably the worst period since the beginning of the crisis Many companies face or envisage permanent closures and/or stiff cuts in their working force The financial situation does not improve, difficulties to lend money Psychological problems and lack of confidence impede economic activity
Netherlands 	The market is going down and remains uncertain Activities and exports are following the same negative trend Overall, the economy is not in a good shape

Norway 	The parquet market growing in excess of 10% Building market going up by 19% in January and February New houses: 28,000 in 2011, 31,000 expected in 2012
Spain 	The situation in Spain is really difficult The parquet market went down in the first quarter of 2012 Parquet consumption remains uncertain but is in any case lower than last year
Sweden 	The market remained fairly flat in the first quarter after a sound progress last year Competition is picking up, especially in retail as a result of a well functioning market The Swedish Crown remains strong

Membership

FEP is pleased to welcome in its ranks Spačva d.d., parquet producer from Croatia.



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