








## PRESS RELEASE FEP






The Board of Directors of the European Federation of the Parquet Industry met on 28 April 2014 and discussed amongst others both the parquet situation and recent economic 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 the European parquet producers continue to face important challenges. However, the lights are (slightly) back on green in some countries, whereas the situation is back to a level of stabilisation in some others. In the south, the markets remain difficult. The lack of consumer confidence, a weak European construction sector as well as an ever increasing competition are the daily challenges of our industry.

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

### Market overview

<b>Austria</b> 	The harsh winter conditions of last year are now behind in Austria and a small increase of around 1% is foreseen in consumption in the first quarter of 2014 compared to Q1/2013. The market is moreover evolving towards more competition from LVT.
<b>Belgium</b> 	After a stabilisation in the past few months, the first quarter of 2014 seems to be following the same path. The total construction output fell by 1.3% in 2013, with non-residential construction being the only segment to improve both in the new (+2.2%) and the renovation subsectors (+1%).
<b>Denmark</b> 	Parquet sales remain flat in the first three months of 2014 when compared to the same period in 2013. When it comes to the annual evolution, a positive tendency of a few percent is forecast.
<b>Finland</b> 	The consumption of parquet remains stable in Q1/2014. The market is relatively small at the moment, with an estimated 1.000.000 square meters being sold a year.
<b>France</b> 	The first quarter of 2014 showed a decrease of an estimated 8 to 10% in parquet sales. Consumer confidence is still lacking. Traditional dealers do not necessarily see parquet as a priority. Competition is getting fiercer.
<b>Germany</b> 	The volume of consumption remains virtually unchanged. As in the past, the planks tend to become increasingly popular. The DIY stores are moving towards new products, e.g. LVT. Despite the good economic situation in Germany, the parquet market remains stable at around 0% with more competition from other products.
<b>Italy</b> 	The parquet market did not start too badly this year, but soon lost some ground. The consumption is estimated to have decreased by 10% in Q1/2014 compared to the same quarter in 2013. Moreover, the yearly consumption for 2013 is expected to follow the same development compared to 2012. There are a lot of new competitors on the market and some confusion at the moment.

<b>Netherlands</b> 	<p>The negative trend witnessed at the end of 2012 was put to an end in 2013. The market remains now stable in terms of consumption. The results of Q1/2014 are in line with those of Q1/2013. It is also forecast the 2013 will be very comparable to 2014.</p>
<b>Norway</b> 	<p>Just like its Swedish neighbour, the Norwegian parquet market is estimated to have gained a couple percent in Q1/2014 compared to Q1/2013. Also worth mentioning is that the imports of building materials have increased by 18% in the first 3 months of 2014, which shows that there is an active market.</p>
<b>Spain</b> 	<p>Parquet sales in the first quarter of 2014 went down by approximately 5% compared to the same period of last year. However, optimism seems to come back slowly. Some macroeconomic indicators are recovering but do not translate into reality at the microeconomic level.</p>
<b>Sweden</b> 	<p>Parquet consumption is slightly better in Q1/2014 compared to Q1/2013, with a small rebound of +/- 2%. The housing sector is also starting to recover, which makes the market a little more active than in the previous months.</p>
<b>Switzerland</b> 	<p>The mood in Switzerland remains sound. The non-existing winter enabled to record positive parquet sales in the order of +5%.</p>

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