

PRESS RELEASE FEP

The Board of Directors of the European Federation of the Parquet Industry met in Brussels on 17 October 2012 and discussed both the parquet situation and recent indicators on the European market.

The observations and forecasts provided by the individual country representatives confirm the April impressions: 2012 will prove another challenging year for the European parquet producers. As witnessed for months and even years now, important variations remain present at country level. Even the better performing markets seem to lose some of their momentum but should however close the year with a small increase in consumption. Considering the unfavourable picture on the construction market, which weighs heavily upon our sector, this polarized picture is unfortunately still bound to continue.

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

Market overview

Austria 	2012 started with an estimated sales increase of 3%. The second half of the year is expected to show a stable picture. This situation should lead to a small growth in consumption by the end of the year.
Belgium 	The parquet market remains weak and registered a double digit loss in S1-2012. The construction market as well as the consumers' confidence went down.
Denmark 	Parquet consumption registered a decline of 3 to 4% in S1-2012. Project sales remained stable.
Finland 	The Finnish market remains at the same level as in 2011 but the latest developments tend towards a negative evolution during the second quarter of 2012.
France 	The general economic situation is not overly bright in France. As far as the parquet sales are concerned, the first quarter was not bad, the second was already weaker and the third quarter seems to slow down even more. Overall, in S1-2012, parquet sales are estimated between -5 and 0%. The reasons for this negative evolution are mainly political ones, with increasing taxes and the inability to reduce the State's costs. Expectations are not better for 2013.
Germany 	The sales figures of S1-2012 show a positive tendency of 3%, with a better first quarter. September was however more modest, which altogether should lead to a slightly positive balance by the end of the year. The number of building permits for apartments increased on a year to year basis.
Italy 	The parquet market continued its negative trend at an even faster pace. Parquet sales registered a drop of 15%. Although the market for new constructions stopped, the renovation sector still performs. Competition is fierce on the national market.

Netherlands 	<p>The market contracted by around 12% in the first semester and more clouds remain on the horizon. The construction sector remains particularly weak, with a spectacular drop in the number of permits. The VAT was moreover brought from 19 to 21%</p>
Norway 	<p>Parquet sales have slightly decreased in Q2-2012 but remain stable on year to year basis. By the end of the year it is expected that the picture will show a stable or slightly positive tendency. Building permits went up by 5% in S1-2012.</p>
Spain 	<p>The situation in Spain remains really difficult with a further loss of 15% in parquet sales in the first semester. The general economic situation is not favourable: imports decreased by 15-20%, the prices for apartments went down by 30% with huge stocks, etc.</p>
Sweden 	<p>After a sound progress last year and a fairly flat situation in the first quarter, parquet sales showed red figures in Q2-2012.</p>
Switzerland 	<p>The first six month of 2012 ended with an increase of +/- 2% in parquet sales. The Swiss construction sector also remained in the green zone, and is improving. The country also faces a strong pressure on the prices and at the currency level.</p>

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