

## PRESS RELEASE FEP

The Board of Directors of the European Federation of the Parquet Industry met on 18 September 2013 and discussed amongst others both the parquet situation and recent economic indicators on the European market.

There was some positive news: the latest Economic Sentiment Indicator of the EC continued its upward trend, increasing sharply both in the euro area and in the EU. The indicator rose for the fourth successive month in both regions, marking a two-year high in the EU.

Despite some of these more optimistic messages, demand expectations further deteriorated. The information provided by the individual country representatives confirms the past observations, namely that the European parquet producers continue to face important variations at country level.

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

### Market overview

<b>Austria</b> 	The harsh weather conditions in Austria which already impacted the parquet consumption in the first quarter continue to weight on the market and were even reinforced by an evenly difficult spring. In this context, parquet sales went slightly down by about 2% in the first semester of 2013.
<b>Belgium</b> 	In a not entirely unfavorable economic climate in Belgium, various FEP sources indicated that the parquet market was experiencing a contraction in excess of 5% on a year to year basis for the first six months of 2013.
<b>Denmark</b> 	After a stable first quarter, parquet sales declined and now show a negative trend. Compared to S1/2012, the first six months of 2013 are lagging 4% behind.
<b>Finland</b> 	In the first semester of 2013, the consumption of parquet decreased by 3% compared to the same period in 2012.
<b>France</b> 	The first semester of 2013 showed a decrease of 10% in parquet sales y/on/y. This means that the tendency already reported for the first quarter of the year is continuing, as a result of a weak consumers' confidence and a lack of political action to solve the real issues.
<b>Germany</b> 	Parquet sales in S1/2013 remained flat in general. The construction sector performs well with an increase in building permits.
<b>Italy</b> 	The high taxes have a negative impact on the consumers and on the market, which is estimated to have lost 11% in the first semester of 2013 compared to the same period of last year. The woodworking industries as a whole go through difficult times, with a loss of 25% in sales. Imported products benefit from the favorable EUR/USD exchange rate.

<b>Netherlands</b> 	<p>The negative trend was put to an end. The situation on the parquet market in the first semester is comparable to the situation of last year.</p> <p>The renovation market is performing well, but the bigger part of it does not involve the replacement of old parquet floors, but rather their refurbishment.</p>
<b>Norway</b> 	<p>Despite the downward adjustment of the number of finished dwellings, a slight improvement can be seen on the Norwegian parquet market, which is improving by 2% compared to the same period last year.</p>
<b>Spain</b> 	<p>Sales went further down in the first semester of 2013, by 10% compared to last year.</p>
<b>Sweden</b> 	<p>Parquet consumption is continuing its downward tendency, already witnessed in Q1/2013: the first six months saw a contraction of the market by approximately 3%.</p>
<b>Switzerland</b> 	<p>After a more or less stable start in Q1/2013, parquet sales increased in S1/2013 compared to S1/2012. This positive evolution is estimated to be between 2 and 3%.</p> <p>The market is however more and more flooded with products of dubious quality, hampering the image of real wood parquet.</p>

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