

Press Release:

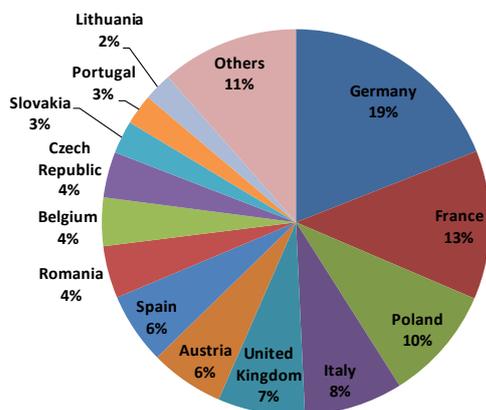
Economic Review of the Wood-Based Panels Industry in 2015 & New Managing Board

On the occasion of EPF's Annual General Meeting in Venice on 7th & 8th July, and in the presence of MEP Simona Bonafè, MEP David Borrelli, Mr Carlo Mari Medaglia of the Italian Ministry of the Environment, captains of the European panel industry and their suppliers, the Chairman and President of the Composite Panel Association of North America and members of the trade press, Mr Clive Pinnington, EPF Managing Director presented an economic review of the wood-based panels industry in 2015. Figures were drawn from the recently published EPF Annual Report, an extensive compilation of industry statistics collected by the federation.

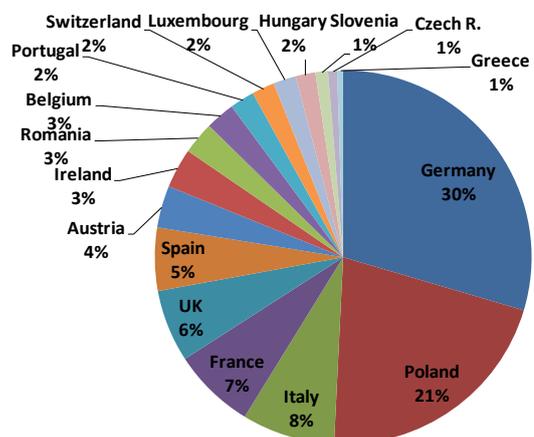
In 2015 particleboard production went up by 1.5% to 29.1 million m³ and is expected to continue this positive trend in 2016 with a further 1.1% growth. Medium Density Fibreboard (MDF) production showed an even greater increase of 2.7% in 2015 rising to 11.8 million m³. Oriented Strand Board (OSB) production improved by 3.9% in 2015 and amounted to 5 million m³. Hardboard production went up by 9% and amounted to 616,000 m³ whereas softboard production showed an increase of 10%, reaching 4.4 million m³ in 2015. All production figures for particleboard, MDF, OSB, hard and softboard relate to the EU28 and EFTA. Plywood production increased by 1% in 2015 to 2.8 million m³ and is expected to rise by an additional 3.5% in 2016. Together these figures represent a growth of 3% in 2015 for the wood-based panels industry in terms of production volume:

Production (million m3)	Countries	2015	2014	2015 v 2014
Particleboard	EU28 + EFTA	29.1	28.7	1.5%
MDF	EU28 + EFTA	11.8	11.5	2.7%
OSB	EU28 + EFTA	5.0	4.8	3.9%
Hardboard	EU28 + EFTA	0.6	0.6	9.0%
Softboard	EU28 + EFTA	4.4	4.0	10.0%
Plywood	EU28 + CH	2.8	2.8	1.0%
TOTAL		53.8	52.4	3%

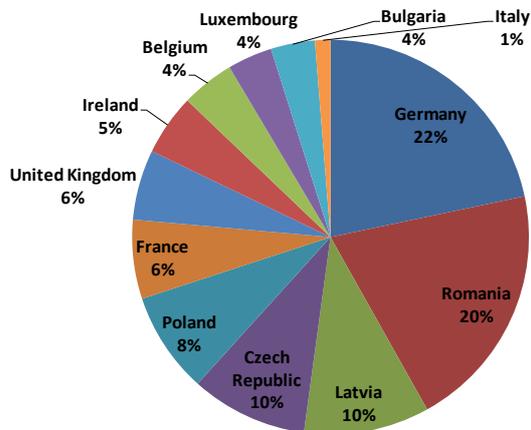
A geographical analysis of the annual figures was shared, showing the relative size of each country in the production of particleboard, MDF, OSB and plywood.



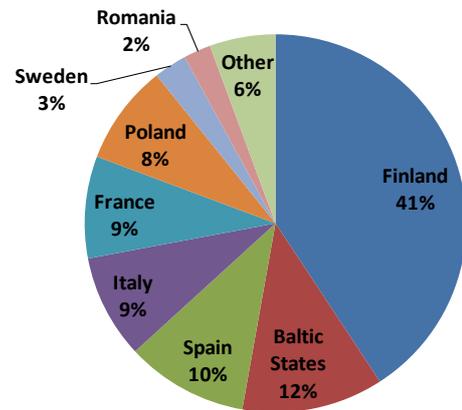
Breakdown of particle board production by country in 2015



Breakdown of MDF production by country in 2015

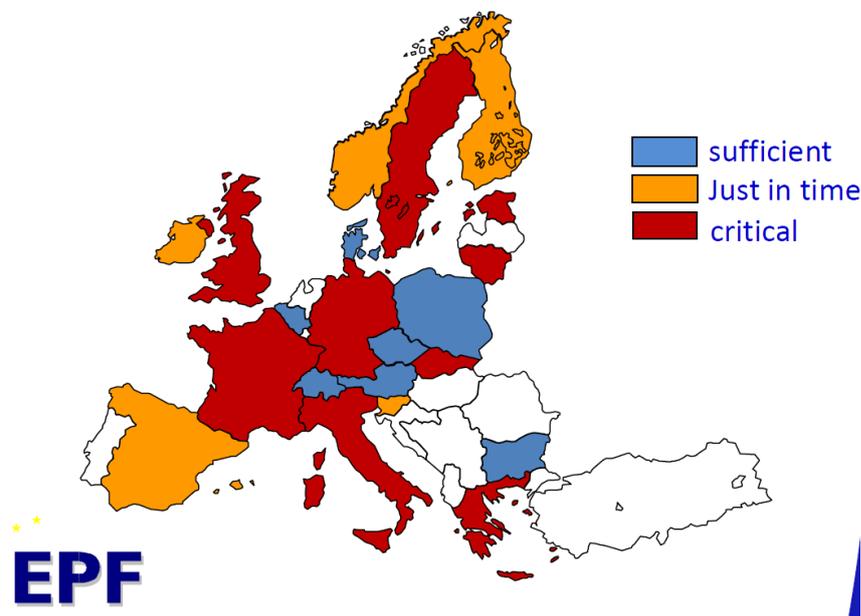


Breakdown of OSB production by country in 2015



Breakdown of plywood production by country in 2015

EPF reported that the industry is guardedly optimistic about the future, predicting stable to good outlooks in all markets. However the industry is greatly troubled by the increasingly critical status of wood availability, as measured by its own research. This is presented below in graphical format.



After the presentation of the 2015 results the topic of the circular economy, and especially how the cascade use of wood can help to optimise our approach to this valuable resource for Europe became the focal point of the discussions. For more information about these results, and to order a copy of EPF's Annual Report, please contact the EPF Secretariat in Brussels.

5 new Cornerstone Strategies

In a closed session of its Annual General Meeting, the General Assembly of the European Panel Federation, reapproved its commitment to EPF's 5 new cornerstone strategies. These were developed in addition to the core activities of the federation which retain their existing importance. The 5 new cornerstones remain:

1. EI Compulsory – A desire to seek legislation in the EU-28 that endorses EI as the minimum acceptable standard for panels and panel based products made, traded and imported into Europe.
2. New Standard – An internal project to define a single low emission standard to arrest the proliferation of different limit levels around the World.
3. Image – To profile the wood-based panels industry in the eyes of the general public as a leader in Europe's drive towards a circular economy and resource efficiency.
4. Construction – To increase the use of wood-based panels in the construction industry, thereby growing the market whilst helping to mitigate climate change thanks to wood's carbon sink qualities.
5. Africa – To share European experience of the production, certification and marketing of wood-based panels with the leaders of this growing market of Africa, thereby becoming a future reference point.

New Managing Board

The resignations of Mr Martin Brettenthaler and Mr Jean Charles Thebault were accepted with thanks for their dedicated service, and in their place unanimous approval was given for the nominations of Mr Bernard Thiers (as new Vice Chairman), Mr Heiko Seibert and Mr Guillermo Hernanz. The composition of the new Managing Board is thus as below:

Managing Board	Company
Dr Paolo Fantoni (Chairman)	Fantoni SPA
Mr Bernard Thiers (Vice Chairman)	Unilin Group
Mr Rui Correia	Sonae Indústria
Mr Guillermo Hernanz	Garnica Plywood
Mr Andrew Macdonald	Coillte Panel Products
Mr Bernard Retureau	Egger Group
Mr Stefano Saviola	Gruppo Mauro Saviola
Mr Heiko Seibert	Steico SE
Dr Erlfried Taurer	Constantia Industries - FunderMax
Mr Max von Tippelskirch	Swiss Krono Group
Mr Michael Wolff	Pfleiderer Holzwerkstoffe GmbH
Mr Clive Pinnington	EPF
Mr Kris Wijnendaele	EPF

About EPF

EPF, the European Panel Federation, has members in 25 countries and represents the manufacturers of particleboard, MDF, OSB, hardboard, softboard and plywood. The European wood-based panel industry has an annual turnover of about 22 billion Euros, creates over 100,000 jobs directly and counts more than 5,000 enterprises in Europe.

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