

## PANELS

### 2014 started well for wood based panels, but...

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From June 18 to 21 took place in Bruges (Belgium), the annual meeting of the **European Panel Federation (EpF)**, the most important time of year to take stock of the state of an industry that each year in the European produces a turnover of € 22 billion with over 5,000 companies employing more than 100 thousand people.

The meeting highlighted the **good performance** in the first quarter of 2014 with the growth of the main types of wood-based panel: chipboard +3 percent, Mdf +3 percent, Osb +6 percent. Positive results which give hope of an imminent recovery in the sector even if the persistence of some structural problems continue to penalize it. Among these, the most worrying is definitely the increasing difficulty in obtaining raw material for the production of the panels due to the still strong competition from biomass power plants. On this point has been great concern expressed by industry people, as each year the European industry of wood-working uses 38.8 million cubic meters

of industrial waste wood and recycled wood 15.5 million.

*"The strong pressure of biomass power plants, which continue to enjoy government incentives, has led to a dramatic shortage of raw material at a European level that impacts the entire wood industry, furniture included, and its competitiveness", says **Paolo Fantoni**, president of Assopannelli and the Epf Economic working group coordinator. "At this point, in order to solve a problem that is becoming every year more and more serious, I feel the urgent implementation of the Resolution of Dresden in June 2010 with the Epf members who have asked the European authorities to promote the use "in cascade" of wood that would give priority to the reuse and recycling compared to combustion. Pending successful interventions in this direction – continued Fantoni – I hope that Europe should follow the example of some countries that have opted for enabling new power plants to operate without government subsidies". ■*