

Press Release: EPF launches the project “Compulsory E1”

EPF, the European Wood-Based Panel Federation has the pleasure to announce a new pan-European project “Compulsory E1”. This seeks to ensure common legislation throughout Europe for the production, import and marketing of wood-based panels, and of products made from them at E1 level (or below). The objective is to establish a fair and common market, i.e. a “level playing field”.

Since 2007, all EPF members have agreed to produce particleboard, MDF and OSB of at least E1 quality. This commitment is now shared by hardboard, softboard and plywood manufacturers. Yet only 8 of 28 EU Member States currently require E1 by legislation (Austria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Italy, The Netherlands and Sweden).

This is why EPF and its members have initiated steps to call upon all remaining national Ministries to draft and enact a decree that requires:

- 1. The entry of wood-based panels on the national market *only* if they meet the requirements of European Standard EN 13986 for E1 classification (to be supported by a statement or certification).**
- 2. The manufacture, promotion and sale of products that contain wood-based panels (furniture, products for the construction sector, etc), *only* if they are classed at least E1.**

Without such legislation the furniture, construction and distribution sectors will become more and more vulnerable to imports of products that do not comply with restrictions of any kind in terms of emission standards. The adoption of a compulsory system in all EU Member States will further improve the well-being of consumers and the environment. In addition it is in line with a European desire for harmonisation and above all it prevents unfair competition.

EPF has members in 25 countries and represents the manufacturers of particleboard, MDF, OSB, hardboard, softboard and plywood. The EU wood 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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