

## EPF revises production statistics upwards a little

European wood-based panel production increased 1.8% to a total of 55.6m (2015: 54.6m) m<sup>3</sup> last year. OSB and wood-fibre insulating panel output showed a disproportionately strong growth. According to final figures presented in Porto, Portugal at the annual general meeting of the European Panel Federation (EPF), based European OSB production climbed 6.9% to 5.4m (5.0m) m<sup>3</sup>. Insulating panel production rose 4.0% to 4.6m (4.4m) m<sup>3</sup>. MDF/HDF manufacturing was 2.0% higher than in 2015 at 12.0m (11.8m) m<sup>3</sup>. Particleboard production was up 0.8% at 30.2m (30.0m) m<sup>3</sup>. Rigid fibreboard production was down 5.6% at about 500,000 (600,000) m<sup>3</sup>. The EPF statistics for particleboard, MDF/HDF, OSB and fibreboard cover the EU-28 and EFTA region. By contrast, the plywood data pertains to the EU-28 and Switzerland, but does not include the three other EFTA countries of Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein. The EPF reported a 2.5%

improvement in plywood production to 2.9m (2.8m) m<sup>3</sup>.

The production statistics contained in the EPF annual report are slightly higher than preliminary figures unveiled during the Interzum trade fair. However, some of these deviations are also connected to rounding-up effects. In May, the association had anticipated a 1.7% growth in production to 54.7m (53.8m) m<sup>3</sup>. This recent correction is mainly connected to particleboard production, which the preliminary figures had put at 29.4m m<sup>3</sup>, below the 30m m<sup>3</sup> mark. Since the 2015 figures had been corrected again with the publication of the final figures, the rates of change compared with the previous year had not altered on the whole and in terms of the different product groups. When the preliminary figures were announced, the production figures from last year's EPF report had been used as comparison statistics. □

## Paolo Fantoni re-elected as EPF chairman in Porto

Dr Paolo Fantoni (Fantoni S.p.A., Ossopo, Italy), who has served as chairman of the Brussels-based European Panel Federation (EPF) since June 2015, was re-elected for another two-year term at the organisation's annual general meeting. This event was held in Porto, Portugal from 28 to 30 June 2017. The other 10 members of the EPF Managing Board were all re-elected, too. Just one change has occurred since last year's annual general meeting in Venice: Michael Wolff, then CEO of Pfeiderer Group S.A., based in Wrocław, Poland, handed over his position to Stefan Zinn last autumn. Mr Zinn has been director of industrial sales at Pfeiderer Deutschland GmbH, headquartered in Neumarkt, Germany, since May 2013; he was also appointed to the management team of Pfeiderer's German entity in March 2017. The EPF general meeting, which is held at regular intervals, approved Mr Zinn's appointment in November 2016. The present EPF Managing Board is hence made up of chairman Dr Fantoni, deputy chairman Bernard Thiers (Unilin bvba, Wielsbeke, Belgium), Rui Correia (Sonae Arauco S.A., Madrid), Guillermo Hernanz (Garnica Plywood S.A., Logroño, Spain), Andrew Macdonald (Medite Smartply), Bernard Retureau (Egger Panneaux & Decors, Rambervillers, France), Stefano Saviola (Gruppo Mauro Saviola s.r.l., Viadana, Italy), Heiko Seibert (Steico SE, Felkdkirchen, Germany), Erfried Taurer (Constantia Industries - FunderMax

GmbH, St. Veit, Austria), Max von Tippelskirch (Swiss Krono Group) and Mr Zinn.

Mr von Tippelskirch, Mr Retureau, Mr Seibert and Mr Hernanz had joined the EPF Managing Board during the first half of 2016. Mr von Tippelskirch and Mr Retureau had replaced Maciej Karnicki and Ulrich Bühler after internal changes. Mr Seibert had been chosen to replace hardboard and softboard producers belonging to the EPF after the resignation of then EPF deputy chairman Martin Bretenthaler in May 2016. At virtually the same time, Mr Hernanz took over from Jean-Charles Thebault as the representative of plywood manufacturers.

Held in Porto at the invitation of Sonae Arauco this year, the EPF annual general meeting welcomed fewer attendees than last year's event in Venice with a total of about 130 participants. A good 60 delegates came from the wood-based panel industry, comprising almost 40 from the particleboard, MDF/HDF and OSB industry, six from hardboard and softboard producers and about 15 from the plywood sector. The chemicals industry sent 16 people, machinery and plant builders 11 people and the surfaces industry 6 people. Some 20 people were at the event representing associations and institutes. The other 16 participants came from a variety of different areas. The North American Composite Panel Federation (CPA), based in Leesburg, Virginia, was represented by this year's chairman Emilio Ayub (Duraplay de Parral S.A. de C.V., Hidalgo del Parral, Mexico) and president Jackson Morrill. □