EPLF® EUROPEAN LAMINATE MADE WITH WOOD

PRESS RELEASE

The decline in the construction sector affects 2023 laminate sales

Brussels, 13 March 2024 – After a challenging year in 2022, the laminate industry's sales continue to be impacted by the construction sector's downward trend into 2023. Despite facing a general decline due to inflation, rising material costs, and slowing demand, the sector maintains confidence in the market and remains optimistic about future sales.

The EPLF total sales for 2023 amount to 318.049.711 m², marking a decrease of -13,38% compared to 2022. Among the main regions, the smallest decline in 2023 was in Western Europe (-7,65% compared to 2022) and the largest in North America (-42,04% compared to 2022).

In 2023, sales in Western Europe decreased by -7,65% (165.379.999 m² sold). Sales increased in Turkey (+22,46%), Ireland (+16,31%) and Belgium (+2,85%). The majority of countries in the region felt the effects of the international upheaval, with Germany at -11,06% (33.843.105 m² sold) and Austria experiencing a -14,34% (2.971.082 m² sold) decline. However, Switzerland's sales remained relatively stable, with a decline of less than 1% compared to 2022.

In contrast, Eastern Europe faced even harsher conditions, with sales declining by -10,25% (96.705.775 m² sold) compared to 2022. Belarus and Bosnia and Herzegovina recorded a positive sales increase (+8,84% and +3,26% respectively), while Croatia remained stable with 2.550.526 m² sold. However, Poland (-7,30%; 3.521.108 m² sold) and Hungary (-39,20%; 4.626.284 m² sold) suffered the most significant setbacks. On the other hand, Kosovo's sales shifted from a decline of -47,20% in 2022 to an increase of +3,27% in 2023.

North America experienced the most significant impact compared to other regions worldwide, with a decline of -42,04%. Sales in 2023 amounted to 21.609.239 m², a notable decrease from 37.280.606 m² in 2022. Additionally, Latin America saw a decline of -33,76%, achieving 7.402.177 m² in sales for 2023. Notably, Chile, which suffered the most in 2022 (-67%; 4.462.283 m²), experienced a less severe decline of -19,76%, with 3.580.669 m² sold in 2023.

EPLF's sales in Africa declined by -15,66% with 3.244.021 m² sold in 2023, with sales increasing only in Morocco by +3,37% in 2023 to 789.685 m² sold. Oceania experienced a similar situation with a drop of -21,41% (2.361.619 m²). In Asia, there was a -17,25% decrease (17.795.550 m² sold). Notably, Kazakhstan showed signs of recovery with sales increasing by +5,67%, with 4.194.635 m² sold compared to 2022, while China continued to face a decline of -38,21% (2.323.046 m² sold).

The construction market has been under pressure due to high inflation and rising costs. Consumers stopped building and renovating. As laminate is one of the biggest flooring categories, it follows the downward trend of the construction market. Long term projections however show a very big opportunity for laminate flooring as new construction and renovation are expected to boom in the next few years. The construction market will go up again as there is a shortage of housing, new houses will need to be built and the existing housing market will need to be renovated because of the implementation of the European Green Deal.

Laminate is the most sustainable floor on the market today, it is made from recovered wood and it is close to carbon neutral. With the continuous investments in innovation, members of EPLF made the category water-resistant, positioning it as the most sustainable and affordable solutions for customers.

On the short term, the members of EPLF prepare for a difficult market. They are confident on the medium and longer term and are optimistic for future sales.

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About EPLF: Established in 1994 in Germany, the Association of European Producers of Laminate Flooring represents the leading producers of laminate flooring in Europe and their suppliers. The focus of its work revolves around research, development, standardisation and representation at international trade fairs. Its management has moved to Brussels since November 2019.

EPLF® - EUROPEAN PRODUCERS OF LAMINATE FLOORING ASSOCIATION E.V.

BRUSSELS OFFICE
RUE DEFACQZ 52
1050 BRUSSELS
BELGIUM

REGISTERED OFFICE
MITTELSTRASSE 50
33602 BIELEFELD
GERMANY

T +32 (0)2 788 31 68
INFO@EPLF.COM
WWW.EPLF.COM

VAT DE813375934
BANK ACCOUNT DE22 4808 0020 0190 4383 00
REGISTRATION NO. VR 3897, AG BIELEFELD
EU TRANSPARENCY REGISTER 899484345328-53

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