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Contents

Statistics in this issue

Europe's hardwood trade

This issue contains the first part of our annual EU-wide review of the hardwood trade. Full year 2000 import data together with a briefing on market conditions is presented for eight countries: Germany, Austria, Netherlands, Belgium-Luxembourg, France, Italy, Spain and Portugal. Next month we will cover the UK and Ireland, the Scandinavian countries, Greece, and imports into the EU as a whole. For most EU countries, the year 2000 was a bouyant year. But there are signs of market weakness during 2001.

Germany

Rising hardwood log imports

The value of Germany's imports of hardwood logs were significantly higher during 2000 than the previous year, while imports of sawn lumber were more stable. In part this was due to the storm damage in late December 1999, which boosted Germany's imports of beech logs from France. The trend also reflects the weakness of the euro which meant it was more cost effective to import logs for processing in Germany than to import semi-processed products. This factor explains the strength of Germany's log imports from the USA and Canada during 2000. Germany's imports of tropical logs were also well up on the previous year, despite tightening controls on log exports from many of the major African supplier countries. Congo (Brazzaville) is emerging as an important log supplier to Germany.

After promising signs of economic recovery in Germany during 2000, conditions now seem less favourable. Year-on-year GDP growth plunged from 1.9% in the fourth quarter of 2000 to 1.6% in the first quarter of 2001, the lowest since the third quarter of 1999. Germany's furniture sector succeeded in raising export levels to other EU countries during 2000, but domestic markets are coming under severe pressure from imports. German imports of wood furniture by value increased by 8% during 2000 compared to the previous year, with particularly strong growth in imports from Poland. Imports of profiled hardwood from Poland also grew strongly during 2000.

The German hardwood market during 2000 and throughout this year has been characterised by highly competitive conditions. The weak euro has encouraged importers of hardwoods denominated in dollars to maintain only low stock levels, and a partial switch to alternative European and African hardwoods. The temperate hardwood market has also been affected by high stocks of beech logs and sawn lumber since the December 1999 storms, and weakening export demand in China.

Austria

Temperate trader

Austria is a significant player in the the temperate hardwood trade, but less significant in the tropical trade. Austria's imports of most primary hardwood products rose during 2000 compared with the previous year, reflecting reasonably bouyant economic growth (+2.6% for the year). The *Economist's Poll of Forecasters* suggests GDP growth of 2.2% during 2001. Austrian construction activity grew by 2% in 2000, compared to 1% in 1999, but the rate of growth may slow again this year.

Trade reports indicate that Austria's domestic market for hardwood logs is fairly lively at present, with lighter colours and good quality maple and beech being in particular demand. Demand has been boosted with the establishment by Theurl and Tinzl of a new hardwood sawmill in Austria.

During 2000, the value of Austrian imports of hardwood logs was up on the previous

Continued page 11

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Editorial

Europe's statistical garbage bin

Until now, obtaining accurate and consistent EU-wide statistics on the trade in wood products, particularly hardwoods, has been very difficult. A large part of the problem lies in the practices of Europe's national statistical agencies. Obtaining the raw data from these agencies generally requires the payment of a hefty fee, in return for which you receive a fairly shabby set of statistics. Decimal points are inserted in the wrong place, so that 10 m3 magically expands to 10,000 m3; tropical hardwood logs are mysteriously arriving from Antartica; or officials are having difficulty telling the difference between a log and a plank. And it may take the statistical agencies months to compile these wonders. At time of writing, five months on from the end of the year, Ireland's statistical agency still hasn't published a dataset for the year 2000.

The national timber trade associations perform an important role wading through the Eurostat garbage bin to provide national-level trade statistics for their members. In doing so, they are able to draw on their own extensive contacts amd knowledge of the trade to paint a fairly accurate picture of what is going on within their national boundaries. But here there is a problem of fragmentation. As trade flows globalise, the value of national data may be limited, particularly for countries trans-shipping large volumes of forest products, such as in central Europe. Each national association will also tend to use their own procedures to classify product groups and rectify problems in the data, creating inconsistencies. And there is a limit to the number of national associations a company trading internationally may be able to join to gain access to statistics.

Compare this situation with the United States where consistent nation-wide import and export data is made available for free on the internet (just take a look at www.fas.usda.gov/ffpd/fpd.html). Apart from being a hugely useful service for the US trade and industry, making this information freely available has another advantage. The accuracy of the raw data is under constant scrutiny by companies and individuals actively involved in the industry. Wayward statistics are soon identified and better data-gathering is encouraged.

Timely and accurate statistics within the EU would go a long way towards improving the efficiency of the hardwood trade, which for want of better information, tends to rely too heavily on hear-say and rumour. Good trade statistics would help to avoid recurring problems of over-stocking and price volatility., and would allow companies to identify much more quickly new sources of supply and demand.

This is why hardwoodmarkets.com is investing so heavily in the acquisition of EU-wide trade statistics; why we are seeking to subject this data to thorough and consistent analysis, and to make it available as promptly as possible. This month and next, we present the first consistent EU-wide comparison of annual import data for all the major hardwood products, from logs through to wood furniture You will not find this information anywhere else.

And we still have much work to do. Due to the many inconsistencies in Eurostat volume and weight data, we are only providing euro value data at this stage. Over the next 12 months we intend to go further, and to develop ways of providing more accurate volume and weight data. Limits are placed on the amount of data that we can display in a monthly print publication, so we are also working on making a much more extensive dataset - covering imports and exports, hardwoods and softwoods - available to our subscribers on the web.

So watch this space.

Rupert Oliver
Editor

Sawn lumber market

Slowing forward demand

■**Sapele** - forward demand for sapele has eased off in a number of European markets, including Spain and the UK. Slowing forward demand reflects reasonably high stocks in Europe and uncertainty over underlying economic conditions. Importers are also preparing for the anticipated slowdown in end-user demand over the summer months. For the time being, end-user demand remains steady throughout much of Europe. However buyers seeking to replace inventory are generally turning to existing stocks on the ground in Europe rather than making forward commitments. FOB prices have therefore weakened slightly. More significant price declines have been prevented by limited availability in the major African supply regions for the time of year. As production of sapele sawn lumber has fallen in Ivory Coast and Ghana, there has been greater reliance on Cameroon as a source of supply, and even here harvesting has been restricted this year.

■**Iroko** – few buyers in the key Irish market are looking for forward orders. Stocks in Ireland remain high following excess imports earlier this year. Economic growth in Ireland, although still bouyant, has fallen away from the heights of last year. This is partly a response to falling inward investment by U.S. firms. The UK market for iroko is also slow. Prices have shown some weakness. Ghanaian shippers, who nowadays rarely have much iroko on offer, are currently looking for buyers for kiln dried stock. Spanish buyers of iroko sawing logs are transferring to dabema as a cheaper alternative.

■**Sipo/utile** – prices remain firm reflecting limited availability. Demand in Europe, notably Germany and the UK, is in excess of supply and has been boosted by limited availability of alternative quality redwoods.

■**Wawa/ayous** –reports continue to emerge of good European demand for wawa and ayous, although there has been some easing of demand in the Far East. Various problems on the supply side have meant that contracts for wawa from Ghana are running 2 to 3 months late and some mills are reporting they are already out of logs, unusual so soon after the start of the rainy season. Prices for wawa to the yard in the UK, including agents commission, now stand at around £225-235/m3, £5 up on levels quoted in April. Ayous, the same species as wawa but sourced from Cameroon and generally of higher quality, is meeting with good demand in Italy. Demand may receive a further boost if Indonesia proceeds with an export ban on ramin - ayous is one possible alternative.

■ **Koto** – as supply pressure on other Ghanaian woods has mounted, koto is emerging as a more important export species. Koto is similar to wawa, but denser and harder and suitable for better quality mouldings and dowells. It's use in the past has been limited due to its propensity to blue stain following harvest – however these problems are being overcome with improved milling and drying techniques. It is another possible ramin substitute.

African Sawn Indicative Prices

	Mar	Apr	May
Exchange rates			
Fr.F/£	10.55	10.56	10.88
Cameroon, CAR, Congo (Braz.)			
Fr. Francs/m3, FOB			
Grade and size: FAS, air dried, width6"+, length 6'+			
Sapele	3500	3450	3400
Sipo	4400	4400	4400
Bibolo	2600	2600	2600
N'Gollon	3500	3500	3500
Afrormosia	5600	5600	5600
Iroko	3650	3650	3600
Cote d'Ivoire			
Fr. Francs/m3; FOB Abidjan			
Grade: FAS, air dried			
Size: width 6"+ avg 9"-10"; length 6'+ avg 10'-11', thickness 1"-2"			
Iroko	3450	3450	3450
Mahogany	2750	2750	2750
Framire	2150	2150	2150
Samba No.1 C&S	1540	1540	1540
Dimension stock			
Azobe	2600/ 3000	2600/ 3000	2600/ 3000
Dabema	1950/ 2550	1950/ 2550	1950/ 2550
Gabon			
Fr. Francs/m3, FOB			
Grade and size: FAS, width 6"+, length 6'+			
Okoume AD	2250	2250	2250
Okoume KD	2500	2500	2500

Country notes

Tightening supply in Cameroon

■**Cameroon** – overall levels of harvesting during the last logging season were significantly lower than in previous years due to tightening controls over concessions. These controls may tighten further next season with the imminent appointment by the Cameroon authorities of Global Witness, the UK based environmental organisation, as an independent monitor of forestry operations in Cameroon. Global Witness have been given an initial contract for six months which, subject to satisfactory completion, may be extended for three years. Global Witness will themselves have no powers of sanction in Cameroon, but will be involved in monitoring the effectiveness of regulatory procedures. They will work closely with the Cameroon forest authorities. Funding for the project is derived from the EU, World Bank, the World Conservation Union (IUCN) and UK's Department for International Development (DFID).

■**Ghana** – no final decisions have been reached in the dispute between the industry and government over the imposition of an additional 10% tax on exports of wood products. There is talk of replacing the 10% blanket tax with a 5% tax on rough sawn lumber, both air and kiln dried, a 3% tax on veneers, and a 1% tax on plywood. Exports have been resumed since the start of May, following agreement by exporters to pay the 10% export duty into a temporary fund, on the understanding that part of this will be reimbursed when negotiations over the actual rates are finalised. Meanwhile Ghana's new Minister of Forestry, Dr. Kwaku Afriyie, has begun his term in office with remarks critical of the Ghanaian forestry profession. He noted that 10 years ago, the forest administration undertook a full forest inventory which determined a mandatory annual allowable cut of one million m3. However, according to the Minister, in the years 1999 and 2000 respectively, 3.7 million m3 and 4.7 million m3 of timber were felled. For this he blamed "*indiscipline, illegalities and collusion between government officials and timber companies*".

Continued page 4

African logs indicative prices

	Mar	Apr	May
Exchange rates			
Fr.F/£	10.55	10.56	10.88
CAR & Congo (Brazzaville)			
Fr. Francs/m3; FOB Douala			
Grade: B+ & better (good UK sawing quality)			
All diameters in cm			
N'gollon			
70+ (20% 60-69)	1500	1500	1500
Bosse 60+	1650	1650	1650
Ayous 70+	1200	1200	1200
Sapele			
80+ (20% 70-79)	1950	1950	1950
Sipo			
80+ (20% 70-79)	2500	2500	2500
Gabon			
Fr. Francs/m3; FOB Douala			
Grade: B+ & better (good UK sawing quality)			
All diameters in cm			
Acajou			
70+ (20% 60-69)	1200	1200	1200
Sipo			
70-79 (10% 60-69)	2100	2100	2100
80-99cm	2450	2450	2450
Liberia			
US$/m3, FOB Liberia			
Grade: B+ & better (good UK sawing quality)			
All diameters 60 cm+			
A. mahogany	200	200	200
Walnut	200	200	200
Iroko	280	280	280
Kusia (Opepe)	130	130	130

Africa

■**Congo (Brazzaville)** - according to local press reports, overall production of unbarked logs in Congo (Brazzaville) may reach 850,000 tonnes during 2001. Production will be boosted by the resumption of operations in southwestern Congo after a long stoppage during the 1998-1999 civil war. Production in this region may reach 400,000 tonnes, double that of a few years ago. The northern regions of Sangha and Likouala will produce the remaining 450,000 tonnes. Much production derives from the Congolese Timber Company (CIB), the nation's largest private forest sector company. CIB has made significant investments in the Pokola industrial area, downstream of Ouesso, where it is based. Due to continuing difficulties in rail transport between Brazzaville and Pointe-Noire, the major port in Congo, all logs from north Congo transit through Douala in the Cameroon.

■**Liberia** - according to the French journal *Le Commerce International du Bois*, log production in Liberia was disrupted prior to the onset of the rains by the presence of huge numbers of refugees in forested areas fleeing from military operations. Therefore log shipments have been much less than the same period last year. This has raised concerns that the French market may suffer supply shortfalls in important Liberian species, notably niangon, if current levels of demand are maintained.

FAO have signed a US $263,000 agreement to improve Liberia's Forestry Development Authority and national forestry programme. Under the programme, FAO will provide institutional support for the authority's offices in the towns of Sanniquellie, Zwedru, Tubmanburg and Greenville.

■**Congo (Zaire)** – progress seems to have been made to end the conflict that has removed Congo as a player in the international hardwood trade. The rebel Movement for the Liberation of Congo (MLC) has agreed to pull back troops from frontline positions by 1 June. This marked a turnaround in MLC's position who had previously refused to join a general disengagement of armed forces. The UN now plans to deploy 3,500 observers and peacekeepers in the region to monitor the disengagement of forces. While a major step forward, many challenges remain, notably how to engage in the peace process the various ethnic militias still fighting in the Congo. And even if peace returns to the region, it will take time to rebuild industrial capacity in the country.

Liberia

Allegations of timber industry involvement in arms trade

Global Witness, the UK based environmental monitoring group, have issued a report on the Liberian timber industry, which includes allegations that sections of the industry are supporting the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels in Sierra Leone through active involvement in the illicit trade in diamonds and arms with the rebels. Global Witness suggest that Liberia's forestry industry is contributing to "regional insecurity", and call for the UN embargo on Liberia's trade in diamonds to be extended to timber.

The report is also heavily critical of President Taylor's far-reaching control of the forest sector since passage of the Strategic Commodities Act in mid 2000. The law states that the President has "*sole power to execute, negotiate and conclude all commercial contracts or agreements with any foreign or domestic investor for the exploitation of the strategic commodities of the Republic of Liberia*". Global Witness also note that the President's brother, D. Robert Taylor, is Director of the Liberian Forestry Development Authority (FDA), the government body assigned to monitor and document forest practices and exports.

Limited industry data

The report provides data on the Liberian timber industry, suggesting that such information is limited because of the industry's financial importance to President Taylor. The only comprehensive data available is contained in the FDA reports. However this data is suspect since the FDA does not have access to all areas and receives little government funding. FDA figures indicate that China and France are the main importers of Liberian timber. The FDA semi-annual report covering the period from January to June 2000, indicated that in those six months, log production was estimated at 679,352.76 m^3, more than that of the previous four years put together. The report states that 342,523 m3 of this was exported primarily in log form and mainly to five principle destinations China (46.4% of total export); France (17.9%); Italy (9.3%); Korea (3.8%) and Turkey (3.7%) of total export. The Oriental Timber Company (OTC) produced 57% of round logs and were responsible for 54% of total exports.

A copy of the complete Global Witness report is available at www.oneworld.org/globalwitness

South America

The rains in northern Brazil are now over and logging operations have recommenced. New season mahogany lumber should start to become available from Belem by end June. At present there are no firm indications of likely available volumes or price levels. However, news of tightening environmental controls suggest harvest levels will be at least as restricted as last year, and shippers are already signalling their intention to push for higher prices. It remains to be seen whether these can be made to stick as the economy has cooled in the U.S., the dominant market for American mahogany.

There are rumours that a major review of forestry policy and regulation in the Brazilian Amazon will be undertaken prior to the next logging season with potentially far-reaching implications for log supply from the region.

Shipments of mahogany sawn lumber are now proceeding from Peru, the majority destined for the U.S., with occasional small volumes sold into the UK.

Steady but restricted volumes of Brazilian cedar and virola continue to be shipped to the UK at stable prices.

Brazil's large domestic market for tropical hardwood is stable, although an expected increase in demand, normal at this time of year, failed to materialise. Domestic hardwood prices in *reals* are static, but have fallen in US$ terms due to the recent devaluation of the *real*.

Satellite data has shown that 19,836 square km of Amazon rainforest were cleared in the 12 months between September 1999 and August 2000, a 15% increase on the previous 12 month period. Brazil's authorities suggest the increase is due to economic growth following the recession of early 1999 which boosted demand for timber, settlement, agricultural products and infra-structure.

Brazilian sawn lumber Indicative prices

	Mar	Apr	May
Exchange rates			
$/£	1.42	1.44	1.42
US$/m3 C&F UK Port Grade & size: FAS, width 6"+ avg 9-10", length 6'+ avg 10-11', air dried (AD) or kiln dried (KD)			
Mahogany (Swietenia)			
1"-2" AD	1400	1400	1450
2.5"-3" AD	1420	1420	1470
1"-2" KD	1470	1470	1520
2.5"-3" KD	1500	1500	1550
Virola			
1" KD No.1 C&B			
boards	380	380	380
strips	380	380	380
Cedro			
1"-1.5" KD	725	725	725
2" KD	750	750	750
2.5"-3" KD	775	775	775

Sawn lumber

The European forward market for dark red meranti and seraya remains very subdued. After a few months of stability at low levels, there are reports of even cheaper offers for meranti during May as mills are seeking cash to cover costs.

Far Eastern sawn lumber production is much reduced for the time of year, with some mills having shut-down since Chinese New Year. Shippers suggest any significant return by European buyers to the forward market may soon run-up against supply problems.

However for the time-being importers throughout the main markets of North Western Europe are not buying. Large stocks were built up in the course of last year which have not been absorbed as quickly as importers hoped. Much meranti sold into the EU last year was destined for concentration yards in the Netherlands and Belgium. These countries registered 45% and 60% rises in the value of Malaysian sawn lumber imports last year. A large part of the excess stocking problem last year arose from high availability of cut-price meranti from the Indonesian island of Sumatra trans-shipped via Peninsular Malaysia.

Margins in meranti trading in Europe are very tight at present, and many importers are currently focusing on other species. European importers tend also to avoid buying on a falling market, and may be concerned about possible exchange rate volatility and signs of economic weakness, notably in Germany.

The Japanese market for seraya lumber remains weak, although prices are holding steady at low levels for the time being.

In other species, high stocks of balau decking in Europe have meant only weak demand on the forward market. The UK is buying only limited volumes of keruing at relatively weak but stable prices.

Ramin ban

Moves by the Indonesian authorities to ban the trade in ramin are progressing. Indonesian Minister Marzuki Usmann has now written to the Secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) requesting that Indonesian ramin be placed on CITES Appendix 111 with zero quota. This would enable importing countries to use their domestic CITES legislation to seize Indonesian ramin, thereby greatly improving enforcement of the ban. Since a large proportion of the ramin exported from Malaysia derives ultimately from Indonesia, the ban would effectively remove ramin as a significant commercially traded timber. The impact would be greatest in Italy, which has been the major European importer of ramin for fine furniture and mouldings.

Southsea logs

Although this is usually the major production season throughout the Far East, there are reports that some of the big producers in Sarawak have reduced harvesting as a response to weak export demand. Demand for southsea logs in both Japan and China is very subdued. Despite relatively limited availability on the forward market and rising costs of production, FOB log prices have been sliding.

Tropical plywood

Indonesian plywood mills are reported to have reasonable stocks of logs at present, but export demand is currently subdued with weak buying in Japan and the U.S. Japanese importers continue to push for lower prices due to the weakness of the yen. Since Indonesian plywood producers are struggling to find orders, some are responding by dropping prices even lower. Low prices for Indonesian plywood also reflect the extreme weakness of the Indonesian rupiah, which stood at 11,421 to the US$ at the end of May. One year ago the exchange rate was 8,510 to the dollar.

Prices for hardwood plywood are such that mills throughout the Far East have been working on extremely thin margins, and many have lost considerable amounts of money over the past year.

Japanese manufacturers of hardwood plywood are progressively reducing their production, but inventories are still high and prices in Japan are depressed. Malaysian producers have succeeded in boosting orders in Japan by quoting in yen rather than dollars, thereby protecting Japanese buyers from exchange rate risks.

UK demand for Far Eastern hardwood plywood remains steady at relatively low levels. UK buyers are buying Far Eastern plywood principally from Indonesia, since Malaysian mills find prices prevailing in the UK unattractive.

Japan

Log imports down...

Japan's southsea log market has been depressed since the beginning of 2001. Arrivals of logs were 270,000 cubic meters in January, 107,000 cubic meters in February and 201,000 cubic meters (estimated) in March, very low by historical standards. The February figure is the lowest monthly import for 30 years. Slow purchases are due to weak growth in end-user demand. Construction activity in Japan remains depressed. The Land, Infrastructure and Transport Ministry announced housing registered 94,829 units in March, a decrease of 1.4% from the same month of the previous year. Weakness of the yen has meant that Japanese importers are pushing for lower log prices.

Furniture imports up

As in other developed countries, Japan's furniture imports were on the rise last year. According to a report in the Japan Lumber Journal based on data from Japan's International Furniture Industry Development Association, Japan imported furniture to the value of 329.1 billion yen in 2000, 17.2% more than the previous year. Wood furniture imports increased 19.8% over the previous year to 164.7 billion yen and represented 50% of the total. Taiwan, the leading supplier for the last 8 years, was overtaken by China during 2000. Imports from China reached 63,897 million yen, a 48.4% increase on the previous year, of which wooden furniture comprised 34,662 million yen, an increase of 55.2%. Imports from Taiwan also increased by 11.3% to 55,096 million yen, with wood furniture rising 26.9% to 14,873 million yen.

Asian Sawn Lumber Indicative Prices

	Mar	Apr	May
Exchange rates:			
M$/£	5.40	5.46	5.40
U$/£	1.42	1.44	1.42
M$/US$	3.80	3.80	3.80
Malaysia			
All prices US$/ton, C&F UK port			
West Malaysian Dark Red Meranti			
Grade: Select & better GMS; Kiln dried			
Size: Width 6"+ avg 7"/8"; Length: 8'+ avg 12'/14'			
1"	715	715	690
2"	735	735	700
2.5"	750	750	720
3"	770	770	740
Keruing			
Grade: Standard & Better GMS			
Size: Random or fixed 16'+			
1"-3"	520	520	520
Kapur			
Grade: Standard & Better GMS			
Size: Width 6"+, avg 7"-8"; Length 16'+			
1"-3" plnd	535	535	535
Myanmar Teak			
US$/50 cu ft, FOB Rangoon/Bangkok/Singapore			
Grade: Air dried boards			
Size: Width 6"+ avg 8", Length 6'+ avg 8'			
1"	2650/ 3500	2750/ 3500	2750 3500

Note private-sector prices for Myanmar teak boards vary considerably from one mill to the next. Prices from the cheapest private mills in Myanmar currently start at the lower end of the range. The most expensive mills, many based in Singapore and Bangkok, are selling boards from best quality teak logs at the top end of the range.

Domestic demand

Fed's assertive response

On 15 May the U.S. Federal Reserve cut interest rates by another half percent to 4%, the lowest rate in seven years. There have now been five interest rate cuts in as many months, an assertive response to mounting evidence of economic slide in the United States. U.S. industrial production was down 0.3% in April compared to March, capital spending has continued to fall, while April's unemployment figures were very weak, the jobless rate rising to 4.5%. However cuts in interest rates, linked to the prospect of tax cuts under the Bush administration, seem to have had some positive impact on consumer spending in the States. Retail sales rose by 0.8% in April, while consumer confidence, as measured by the University of Michigan's index, rebounded in May.

At time of going to press, the Bush administration has succeeded in getting a proposal for major tax cuts passed by the Senate. The tax package is currently "in conference", a period of political negotiation prior to passage into law. It looks as though U.S. citizens will receive a tax cut of US$1.35 trillion over 11 years. Most importantly for consumer spending, the measure includes an immediate tax cut of US$100 billion designed to provide a short-term boost to the economy.

Reasonable prospects

These various measures hold out reasonable prospects for better domestic demand later in the year. But, for the time-being, overall demand levels are subdued and the market is highly competitive. Competition to sell green lumber is particularly intense as supply now outpaces demand. Competition is marginally less intense in the kiln dried sector due to bottlenecks during drying. Buyers throughout the trading chain are tending only to replace rather than build inventories. Demand from the U.S. furniture sector is still confined. This reflects both current economic conditions and a longer term trend towards increased market penetration by overseas furniture manufacturers. In terms of dollar value, over 50% of all the furniture sold in the U.S. during 2000 was either imported, or made with imported parts.China alone accounted for 30% of all furniture imported into the U.S. last year. While this trend may lead to an increase in export sales for U.S. hardwoods, the loss of a domestic manufacturing base may well lead a net loss of markets for American hardwoods, since not all species and grades used for secondary manufacturing will be exportable at reasonable cost.

An occasional sliver of light penetrates the gloom. Construction activity has increased in some parts of the U.S. with the onset of Spring and this seems to have boosted demand for hardwood strip flooring. The cabinet industry also reported gains in monthly sales during February and March.

Mexico

The Mexican market is still highly competitive, although buying is reasonably steady. Some exporters suggest the volume of lumber moving into Mexico's Maquiladora Zone is favorable, although a lot of suppliers are looking for orders and importers are looking for lower prices. Sales to Mexico typically slow during the summer months, but expectations are that underlying demand will remain reasonably solid.

Canada

In Canada, there is great concern over falling in demand for hard maple, a major component of sales and now in over-supply as the main production season has just come to a close. Canadian exporters face similar challenges to US exporters in developing markets overseas, so are also focusing on tighter inventory control. Canadian GDP is not expected to grow this year as rapidly as last, but forecasts suggest the Canadian economy will fare better than the U.S. during 2001. The Economists Poll of Forecasters indicates 2.1% growth in Canada this year compared to 1.5% in the U.S.

Production

Matching supply to demand

Production of hardwood sawn lumber in the United States has responded relatively quickly to the downturn in demand. The US milling sector is reducing production to counter-act problems of over-supply and weakening prices. As margins have been squeezed, mills have been refusing to buy logs at elevated prices even at the risk of running out of stock. In fact, some mills have shut down recently and others have reduced operating hours or the number of shifts. Declining lumber production is mainly on account of reduced activity by smaller sawmills, some which have been forced out of business, while others have closed temporarily. Cash flow problems have become an increasing problem in the milling sector. Customers are cutting back their inventories and slowing payments to the point where many sawmills lack the capital to buy replacement logs. These problems are being compounded by rising energy prices which have lifted transportation and operating costs. With kiln-dried lumber prices down, many kiln operators are no longer profitable. Banks are increasingly cautious in approving loans to hardwood operators.

According to ITTO's *Market News Service*, another long term factor has become more prominent since the onset of the economic slowdown. Family businesses are finding that the younger generation often see little attraction in a career in the hardwood milling sector, now viewed as a low margin and limited profit business. Numerous smaller mills are being offered for sale by owners ready for retirement – a significant proportion of which will be shut down. ITTO suggest that output of hardwood lumber in the U.S. has fallen about 2-4% in the last two months, or 300-500 million board feet on an annualized basis, and that production will continue to decline. The traditional summer shutdown period of sawmills will probably be longer than normal this year.

Exports

Highly competitive

Export markets for US hardwood are highly competitive. Buyers everywhere continue to adopt a wait-and-see approach to purchasing, an attitude encouraged by widespread perceptions of ready availability. As the domestic market has slowed in the U.S., many producers are seeking to keep as much volume moving on the international market as possible. However declining production levels for most species appear now to be having an affect and many exporters are beginning to resist importers demands for lower prices. Possible exceptions are tulipwood and ash, supplies of which are currently in excess of demand.

Meanwhile importers are being deterred from building stocks by wide-spread expectations of weakening in the US dollar later in the year – a trend which may follow from the slowing economy and lowering of interest rates in the U.S. Nevertheless many US exporters remain reasonably upbeat, suggesting that stocks are shifting, although usually at short notice.

First quarter export data

The most recent data issued by the U.S. Bureau of Census paints a mixed picture of the US hardwood export trade during 2001. The data indicates that between January and March 2001, world exports of U.S. hardwood lumber were down 9.7% by volume on the same period the previous year, while hardwood moulding exports were down 26%.

However US hardwood log exports to all destinations were up 31% by volume, and veneer exports were up 4.8%. The fall in lumber and moulding exports is entirely attributable to the European Union, where they are respectively 18% and 10% lower than the same period in 2000. Exports of these products to Greater China have grown marginally, and have remained flat to South East Asia. Exports of hardwood logs have increased to both Europe and Greater China. This last trend may reflect several factors including the strength of the dollar, which implies relatively high costs of processing in the U.S., the development of new sawing facilities in China, and increased interest in custom cutting for manufacturers.

European demand

Markets for American hardwoods in Europe are highly competitive, demand having been hit by the continuing strength of the dollar-euro exchange rate, and by uncertainty over prospects for the European economy this year, particularly in Germany. In May the euro fell to a new six month low against the dollar.

Meanwhile, European hardwood importers are already talking about the summer vacations and establishing deadlines for lumber arrivals. Sales into the EU are likely to slow considerably with the onset of summer.

However, it would be wrong to overplay the problems of the European market. In May, the *Economist's Poll of Forecasters* were still confident of 2.3% GDP growth throughout the euro-zone and in the UK this year. Growth in the Netherlands and Spain may be closer to 3%. Both the European Central Bank and the Bank of England responded to signs of slowing economic activity with quarter point cuts in interest rates during May, to 4.5% and 5.25% respectively.

US exporters also note that the apparent slowdown in lumber export sales to the EU this year is slightly misleading. Shipments to Europe were strong in the opening months of 2000, only slowing towards the end of the year. U.S. exporters suggest the pace of sales and shipments during the first few months of 2001, while subdued, represented an improvement over activity during the second half of 2000.

US sawn lumber indicative prices

North Appalachian US$ MBF* CIF- W. Europe
Grade: KD square edged
Net measure after kilning
NOTE US prices are highly variable depending on quality and point of orgin. These prices are shown only to highlight trends over time.
*One cubic meter is equivalent to 423.8 BF or 0.4238 MBF

	Mar	Apr	May
$/£	1.42	1.44	1.42
$/Euro	**0.88**	**0.89**	**0.86**
Red oak			
1"	1850	1825	1750
1.25"	1950	1925	1850
1.5"	2000	1975	1900
2"	2350	2325	2250
White oak			
1"	1475	1450	1550
1.25"	1625	1600	1650
1.5"	2100	2075	2200
2"	2700	2650	2650
Ash			
1"	1250	1225	1200
2"	1650	1625	1450
Tulipwood			
1"	1000	975	950
1.25"	1050	1025	1000
1.5"	1150	1125	1100
2"	1175	1150	1125
Cherry			
1"	3600	3600	3600
1.25"	3700	3700	3700
1.5"	3800	3800	3800
2"	4000	4000	4000
Hard Maple			
1"	2600	2575	2400
1.25"	2750	2725	2550
1.5"	3000	2975	2750
2"	3050	3025	2800

Loss of share to Eastern Europe

U.S. shippers concerns that they may be losing market share to Central and Eastern European hardwoods have been mounting this year. Certainly new investment in milling capacity and infra-structure has increased availability of square edged and kiln dried oak and beech lumber from these nations, while the weak euro has tended to encourage importers to look to European sources. *Hardwoodmarkets.com* analysis of EU imports last year indicates that there are signs of increased market penetration by Eastern European hardwood lumber. This trend is strongest in Italy and Germany, and less important in Spain and the UK. Also, with the notable exception of Italy, the volumes involved are still relatively small compared to the US trade. This reflects the wider diversity of hardwood species available from the US, and their reliability of supply and service.

Far Eastern demand

Although there has been some increase in enquiries and orders from the Far East during the second quarter of 2001, markets are extremely competitive. There are reports of orders being lost or gained on the basis of relatively minor price differences. There are some optimistic American exporters who suggest demand in East Asia may increase during the second half of the year. These predictions seem premature given uncertainty over the impact of the global economic slowdown on the region, political uncertainty, and Japan's recent history of unfulfilled promises. Many economists also suggest that many East Asian countries have failed to push through sufficiently far-reaching reforms to restructure indebted companies and strengthen the banking system. At this stage economic prospects for the region do not look promising.

The Chinese market is, of course, the principal "land of opportunity" in East Asia. The country is developing into a major player in the import and export of hardwood products, a trend that is set to intensify with the China's anticipated entry into the World Trade Organisation later this year. Last year, US hardwood lumber imports into China were over 70% up on the previous year. This trend has continued into 2001; between January and March, U.S. hardwood logs, lumber, and veneer exports to Greater China (including China, Hong Kong and Taiwan) were up 80%, 8%, and 4% on the same period in 2000. The potential for growth in China seems enormous, but the market is also becoming more challenging. The emergent private importing sector is acquiring experience of inventory control and increasingly aware of the quality demands of manufacturing industry. Weakening demand elsewhere has meant that exporters in all areas of the world are seeking to expand market share in China. The marketplace is increasingly competitive and price sensitive.

Species notes

■**Ash**: US buyer interest has waned considerably and inventories are in excess of demand. Much buying is to cover short term needs only. Prices for both green lumber and kiln dried have been falling. Most mills have responded by reducing production. Overseas shipments are relatively subdued, and opportunities to increase sales are limited.

■**Cherry**: a split has developed between markets for common grades and for FAS/IF material. Despite efforts to cut production, supplies of common grades of cherry are in excess of demand, competition is intense and prices have been weakening. However more limited availability of FAS/IF has meant that supply and demand are more in balance and prices have been more stable. More limited production has also meant there has been less price pressure on thicker sizes. Overseas demand from traditional markets for FAS/IF lumber in Germany, France, Italy, and Belgium are still relatively subdued.. China has been showing more interest however. US demand for cherry has been undermined by the slowdown in the furniture sector.

■**Hard maple**: As the spring season arrives, which brings with it greater risk of staining, hard maple logs and green lumber are being processed as quickly as possible. This has

Continued page 8

North America

Species notes - cont.

added to growing supply pressure and falling prices, particularly for the upper grades of "white" hard maple. Buyers in the U.S. and Canada have also reduced purchasing in response to lower domestic end-user demand. Export demand for dimension and flooring material has been better than for lumber. The strongest overseas markets have been China, Mexico, the UK and Germany, but price competition is intense.

■**Soft maple**: the U.S. market is very competitive, particularly as substitute usage for cherry in the furniture sector has been falling. Supply is in excess of demand. Exports remain relatively restricted.

■**White oak**: there are some reports of improved export demand, but these are offset by evidence of declining domestic demand. Domestic buying of white oak has become very demanding in terms of size and grade. However, by end May, efforts to limit production were beginning to off-set price declines on export markets. There are reports of relatively low stocks in many shippers yards, and exporters have been resisting further price reductions. Exporting companies are tending to buy lumber only as needed, and even then for prompt shipment. Exports of FAS/IF material are at best described as "fair", with demand in the EU undermined by the weak euro, economic uncertainty and expectations of a slowdown over the holiday season. Markets for dimension material have been stronger than for rough sawn lumber.

■**Red oak**: domestic demand has weakened, while export sales of FAS/IF are slow with limited orders from the Middle East and Europe. Supplies are in excess of demand, particularly as more green and KD production is being diverted to red oak from other species. Weakening demand for cherry, maple, tulipwood and ash encouraged some mills to switch to red oak. Kiln dried cycles, which were putting a brake on supplies, have shortened in the warmer weather pushing more dried material onto the market. These factors have led to a more competitive atmosphere and are putting pressure on prices.

■**Tulipwood**: supplies are in excess of demand, which remains limited. Producers are seeking to generate sales by making additional sorts for colour and size, although there appears to be little willingness to pay a premium for the effort. Demand from Italian buyers is fair, but there is intense pressure to reduce prices even to below domestic levels. Chinese orders for lower grades have been relatively slow. Efforts are being made to reduce production to match demand, but in areas where tulipwood predominates in forest stands, this is proving difficult.

■**Walnut**: demand for steamed walnut remains good, both domestically and overseas. Production and demand are well balanced and prices remain firm. Shipments to China have been particularly good.

Europe

Beech sawn lumber

Different market conditions prevail for unsteamed and steamed sawn beech. Availability of unsteamed and lighter sawn beech from new season logs - qualities preferred by many buyers - is relatively limited in Western Europe and prices have remained reasonably stable. By contrast, stocks of steamed beech in darker colours produced from storm felled logs remain very high, particularly in France. Demand for the latter product, which is of less interest to major buyers in China and Spain, has also been relatively weak. Spanish demand has been subdued due to heavy stocking. Spanish importers have shifted much of their purchasing of beech sawn from France to Germany. Shipments to Spain are likely to be seasonally slow over the summer. Demand in China has been down on previous years due to heavy stocking, and the market is highly competitive. The German market is also subdued, reflecting weakness in the construction sector - which has meant reduced demand from the joinery, stair and elements of the furniture manufacturing sectors. With weak demand elsewhere, German exporters have been offering more sawn beech to the UK market. UK buyers have been hesitant and demanding on specification as they are aware that availability is good and that prices have generally been weakening.

Supplies of sawn beech from Eastern Europe have been increasing over recent months, and there is intense competition for market share between Romanian, Croatian, Yugoslavian, Bulgarian and Ukrainian suppliers. Following a period when exports were disrupted by war and UN trade sanctions, Yugoslavia is again expanding exports of beech sawn lumber. Between 1999 and 2000, Yugoslavian exports of beech sawn lumber increased from 147,000 m3 to 182,000 m3, with most of the volume destined for Italy, Greece and Egypt.

European sawnwood indicative prices

	Mar	Apr	May
Exchange rates			
DM/£	3.15	3.15	3.24
DM/US$	2.21	2.19	2.28
Euro/£	1.61	1.61	1.66
Euro/US$	1.13	1.12	1.17
German beech			
Northern Germany, DM/m3, C&F, UK Port			
Grade: kiln dried, steamed and square edged.			
1"	1500	1475	1475
2"	1600	1575	1575
German oak			
Northern Germany, DM/m3, C&F, UK Port			
Grade: kiln dried, waney edged prime grade*.			
1"	1505	1505	1505
2"	1945	1945	1945
*waney edged prices provided as there is very little square edged available from Germany or France - French prices are similar to German prices			
Croatian oak			
Northern Italy, Euro/m3, C&F, UK Port			
Grade: kiln dried and square edged.			
1"	920	920	920
2"	1400	1400	1400

Beech logs

Availability of green beech logs in Western Europe was relatively low during the last winter logging season due to an early close to harvesting in Germany, and major restrictions on logging by the French forest authorities. After a slow start to the year, enquiries for German beech logs increased during the second quarter of 2001. There was growing interest from Chinese buyers, but only for the best quality sawing and veneer logs. Specifications required by Chinese buyers were difficult for many suppliers to comply with. Buyers were also shopping around for the best prices. Nevertheless, western European green log inventories were much depleted by mid May.

European oak

Due to low availability of green beech logs and subdued demand for beech lumber, many mills in Western Europe have switched to cutting oak. In France, there is high availability of oak logs from storm damaged forests. However it is not easy for specialist beech mills to switch to oak - raising concerns that inexperienced producers may disrupt the market. European oak is a highly specialised business, requiring detailed knowledge of drying cycles, and of a very wide range of grade and size requirements.

Demand for oak remains reasonably good at present, benefitting from the fashion for oak in the flooring and furniture sectors. However availability of European oak lumber is now increasing, and by mid May there were signs of price weakening for the lower joinery grades.

Austria imports

Tropical Logs

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
GERMANY	253	257	1.6
ITALY	228	108	-52.6
LAOS	0	36	0.0
DENMARK	0	4	0.0
...	0	0	0.0
...	0	0	0.0
...	0	0	0.0
OTHER	15	0	-100.0
TOTAL	**496**	**405**	**-18.3**

Beech Logs

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
SLOVAKIA	13751	16252	18.2
CZECH REPUBLIC	6159	5761	-6.5
GERMANY	7922	5384	-32.0
HUNGARY	3974	3978	0.1
ROMANIA	1075	2502	132.7
FRANCE	1467	1363	-7.1
SLOVENIA	885	1339	51.3
OTHER	1548	2450	58.3
TOTAL	**36781**	**39029**	**6.1**

Oak Logs

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
HUNGARY	4152	3390	-18.4
SLOVAKIA	373	937	151.2
ROMANIA	181	829	358.0
CZECH REPUBLIC	506	509	0.6
GERMANY	348	322	-7.5
POLAND	156	171	9.6
UKRAINE	20	92	360.0
OTHER	411	189	-54.0
TOTAL	**6147**	**6439**	**4.8**

Other Hardwood Logs

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
HUNGARY	5564	6337	13.9
ROMANIA	1094	4586	319.2
GERMANY	2673	3161	18.3
SLOVAKIA	1652	1921	16.3
UKRAINE	2085	1863	-10.6
CROATIA	1804	1464	-18.8
CZECH REPUBLIC	2233	1389	-37.8
OTHER	5175	4519	-12.7
TOTAL	**22280**	**25240**	**13.3**

Tropical Sawn Lumber

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
GERMANY	2825	2621	-7.2
ITALY	884	1266	43.2
INDONESIA	114	325	185.1
MALAYSIA	332	230	-30.7
SINGAPORE	150	67	-55.3
NIGERIA	57	54	-5.3
BURKINA	0	32	0.0
DENMARK	5	32	540.0
NETHERLANDS	28	31	10.7
BELGIUM	36	28	-22.2
COSTA RICA	0	22	0.0
CAMEROON	0	16	0.0
OTHER	76	53	-30.3
TOTAL	**4507**	**4777**	**6.0**

Beech Sawn Lumber

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
BOSN & HERZ	11853	12911	8.9
HUNGARY	2951	4195	42.2
GERMANY	4483	4166	-7.1
CROATIA	3621	3479	-3.9
SLOVAKIA	2465	2083	-15.5
SLOVENIA	913	1285	40.7
FRANCE	1138	1209	6.2
POLAND	1053	1079	2.5
CZECH REPUBLIC	1002	975	-2.7
SERB & MONT	1038	920	-11.4
OTHER	1965	1500	-23.7
TOTAL	**32482**	**33802**	**4.1**

Oak Sawn Lumber

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
CROATIA	4104	4291	4.6
HUNGARY	2599	2726	4.9
GERMANY	1741	1361	-21.8
FRANCE	1413	1268	-10.3
SLOVAKIA	658	883	34.2
U.S.A.	1454	866	-40.4
UKRAINE	163	710	335.6
CZECH REPUBLIC	508	596	17.3
BOSN & HERZ	275	575	109.1
SLOVENIA	138	278	101.4
OTHER	839	611	-27.2
TOTAL	**13892**	**14165**	**2.0**

Other hardwood sawn

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
GERMANY	8049	6733	-16.3
CANADA	4192	5288	26.1
CROATIA	2887	4709	63.1
HUNGARY	2929	3781	29.1
SLOVENIA	3119	3715	19.1
POLAND	3045	3102	1.9
U.S.A.	2004	2432	21.4
ITALY	3305	2380	-28.0
LATVIA	954	1406	47.4
FRANCE	404	1298	221.3
OTHER	6525	7539	15.5
TOTAL	**37413**	**42383**	**13.3**

Tropical Veneers

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
GERMANY	757	656	-13.3
BELGIUM	156	435	178.8
ITALY	115	326	183.5
INDONESIA	0	274	0.0
SLOVENIA	0	49	0.0
FRANCE	205	48	-76.6
OTHER	126	76	-39.7
TOTAL	**1359**	**1864**	**37.2**

Other Hardwood Veneers

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
GERMANY	16484	20469	24.2
SLOVENIA	4765	7247	52.1
FRANCE	4602	4027	-12.5
CROATIA	3033	3730	23.0
U.S.A.	2453	2763	12.6
ITALY	1509	1185	-21.5
OTHER	6128	5134	-16.2
TOTAL	**38974**	**44555**	**14.3**

Softwood Veneers

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
GERMANY	1739	1777	2.2
FINLAND	347	600	72.9
U.S.A.	735	567	-22.9
SWEDEN	366	457	24.9
SWITZERLAND	323	310	-4.0
ITALY	199	241	21.1
OTHER	598	520	-13.0
TOTAL	**4307**	**4472**	**3.8**

Tropical Plywood

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
GERMANY	4836	7292	50.8
FINLAND	368	766	108.2
ITALY	432	367	-15.0
INDONESIA	97	136	40.2
BELGIUM	0	78	0.0
GREECE	151	75	-50.3
OTHER	210	193	-8.1
TOTAL	**6094**	**8907**	**46.2**

Other Hardwood Plywood

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
FINLAND	15051	13035	-13.4
GERMANY	8488	10557	24.4
ITALY	4700	4260	-9.4
CZECH REPUBLIC	1880	2046	8.8
SLOVENIA	1862	1956	5.0
LATVIA	2227	1822	-18.2
OTHER	7395	8948	21.0
TOTAL	**41603**	**42624**	**2.5**

Softwood Plywood

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
GERMANY	15535	13467	-13.3
CZECH REPUBLIC	6383	6354	-0.5
ITALY	4025	2871	-28.7
UKRAINE	1066	1787	67.6
FINLAND	1527	1454	-4.8
FRANCE	916	685	-25.2
OTHER	5929	3556	-40.0
TOTAL	**35381**	**30174**	**-14.7**

Sleepers

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
GERMANY	694	534	-23.1
FRANCE	714	253	-64.6
NETHERLANDS	640	166	-74.1
SLOVAKIA	0	129	0.0
OTHER	41	73	78.0
TOTAL	**2089**	**1155**	**-44.7**

Profiled Wood - Softwood

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
GERMANY	7575	9072	19.8
CZECH REPUBLIC	5845	7341	25.6
ITALY	3595	1857	-48.3
FINLAND	803	1616	101.2
OTHER	2111	2009	-4.8
TOTAL	**19929**	**21895**	**9.9**

Profiled Wood - Hardwood

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
GERMANY	6940	8933	28.7
ITALY	6093	5715	-6.2
SLOVENIA	2830	2721	-3.9
POLAND	404	1693	319.1
OTHER	7084	9360	32.1
TOTAL	**23351**	**28422**	**21.7**

Wood Windows and frames

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
SLOVENIA	15427	15102	-2.1
SWITZERLAND	6807	5863	-13.9
DENMARK	5999	5507	-8.2
GERMANY	2717	3332	22.6
OTHER	7812	5509	-29.5
TOTAL	**38762**	**35313**	**-8.9**

Wood Doors and frames

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
GERMANY	21290	14940	-29.8
SLOVENIA	11616	10219	-12.0
ITALY	5910	5103	-13.7
CZECH REPUBLIC	2890	3321	14.9
OTHER	4011	4487	11.9
TOTAL	**45717**	**38070**	**-16.7**

Parquet panels

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
GERMANY	32530	33605	3.3
ROMANIA	7688	7385	-3.9
NORWAY	4621	5105	10.5
SWITZERLAND	4404	4431	0.6
OTHER	29070	29592	1.8
TOTAL	**78313**	**80118**	**2.3**

Wooden Furniture

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
GERMANY	419401	400864	-4.4
ITALY	118197	114739	-2.9
POLAND	34111	38061	11.6
SLOVENIA	29496	31742	7.6
DENMARK	32832	31246	-4.8
HUNGARY	33467	29951	-10.5
ROMANIA	17766	27066	52.3
CZECH REPUBLIC	19638	22642	15.3
OTHER	80081	79398	-0.9
TOTAL	**784989**	**775709**	**-1.2**

Source: Eurostat supplied by BTS and analysed by hardwoodmarkets.com

Germany imports

Tropical Logs

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
CAMEROON	21292	23273	9.3
CONGO REPUBLIC	6155	10622	72.6
GABON	4437	6670	50.3
BURMA	3306	3080	-6.8
EQUAT. GUINEA	1352	2582	91.0
LIBERIA	1227	2107	71.7
CONGO (ZAIRE)	1046	1766	68.8
OTHER	5490	5217	-5.0
TOTAL	**44305**	**55317**	**24.9**

Beech Logs

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
FRANCE	12847	17627	37.2
DENMARK	874	2368	170.9
SWITZERLAND	1524	2319	52.2
BELGIUM	1549	1841	18.9
AUSTRIA	1252	1255	0.2
ROMANIA	1371	1075	-21.6
SLOVAKIA	641	996	55.4
OTHER	3507	3058	-12.8
TOTAL	**23565**	**30539**	**29.6**

Oak Logs

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
U.S.A.	1531	3008	96.5
HUNGARY	1235	2238	81.2
FRANCE	1864	1980	6.2
AUSTRIA	169	516	205.3
POLAND	487	422	-13.3
ROMANIA	172	359	108.7
BELGIUM	306	298	-2.6
OTHER	1442	869	-39.7
TOTAL	**7206**	**9690**	**34.5**

Other Hardwood Logs

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
U.S.A.	25737	48297	87.7
FRANCE	6778	7434	9.7
CANADA	2512	3048	21.3
FINLAND	4818	2713	-43.7
JAPAN	3124	2654	-15.0
POLAND	838	974	16.2
ROMANIA	413	820	98.5
OTHER	5614	5819	3.7
TOTAL	**49834**	**71759**	**44.0**

Tropical Sawn Lumber

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
MALAYSIA	23711	25913	9.3
GHANA	25658	22047	-14.1
NETHERLANDS	17781	15046	-15.4
BELGIUM	5988	7134	19.1
CAMEROON	3782	6225	64.6
INDONESIA	2757	4937	79.1
BRAZIL	1943	2059	6.0
SINGAPORE	1314	1698	29.2
BURMA	1459	1353	-7.3
DENMARK	1217	1299	6.7
IVORY COAST	1092	1225	12.2
TANZANIA	837	1051	25.6
OTHER	5240	5810	10.9
TOTAL	**92779**	**95797**	**3.3**

Beech Sawn Lumber

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
ROMANIA	15340	8959	-41.6
POLAND	8278	6767	-18.3
ITALY	1446	5862	305.4
AUSTRIA	3697	5725	54.9
SLOVAKIA	4399	4588	4.3
BOSN & HERZ	2768	4275	54.4
FRANCE	3763	4244	12.8
CZECH REPUBLIC	3748	3600	-3.9
SERB & MONT	3320	3001	-9.6
SLOVENIA	2643	2572	-2.7
OTHER	8159	8018	-1.7
TOTAL	**57561**	**57611**	**0.1**

Oak Sawn Lumber

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
U.S.A.	15838	13425	-15.2
UKRAINE	5623	6582	17.1
FRANCE	6480	4898	-24.4
CANADA	4271	2982	-30.2
CZECH REPUBLIC	2548	2790	9.5
POLAND	2813	2398	-14.8
LITHUANIA	607	2076	242.0
NETHERLANDS	1806	1600	-11.4
AUSTRIA	1374	1509	9.8
HUNGARY	1685	1298	-23.0
OTHER	4616	5101	10.5
TOTAL	**47661**	**44659**	**-6.3**

Other hardwood sawn

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
CANADA	33943	32900	-3.1
U.S.A.	26059	25937	-0.5
LITHUANIA	12409	11389	-8.2
LATVIA	5663	6831	20.6
RUSSIA	3073	5410	76.0
NETHERLANDS	4082	4369	7.0
BELARUS	2665	3606	35.3
POLAND	4325	3556	-17.8
FRANCE	1750	2783	59.0
AUSTRIA	2485	2280	-8.2
OTHER	12119	12845	6.0
TOTAL	**108573**	**111906**	**3.1**

Tropical Veneers

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
IVORY COAST	10432	10534	1.0
GHANA	5379	6235	15.9
ITALY	2817	5657	100.8
BRAZIL	4000	2152	-46.2
BELGIUM	1650	1667	1.0
FRANCE	2994	1662	-44.5
OTHER	8218	8414	2.4
TOTAL	**35490**	**36321**	**2.3**

Other Hardwood Veneers

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
U.S.A.	93996	104563	11.2
FRANCE	13830	21760	57.3
SWITZERLAND	17572	18808	7.0
ITALY	10852	11108	2.4
AUSTRIA	8930	10155	13.7
HUNGARY	9086	9480	4.3
OTHER	54780	56647	3.4
TOTAL	**209046**	**232521**	**11.2**

Softwood Veneers

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
U.S.A.	7181	7707	7.3
INDONESIA	2200	2728	24.0
SWITZERLAND	1788	1412	-21.0
ITALY	467	1090	133.4
FINLAND	3314	986	-70.2
SLOVENIA	457	790	72.9
OTHER	4221	3729	-11.7
TOTAL	**19628**	**18442**	**-6.0**

Tropical Plywood

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
INDONESIA	52745	62729	18.9
ITALY	9807	13837	41.1
BRAZIL	3594	7935	120.8
SPAIN	3148	6509	106.8
FRANCE	5674	5207	-8.2
BELGIUM	3583	3418	-4.6
OTHER	17176	13699	-20.2
TOTAL	**95727**	**113334**	**18.4**

Other Hardwood Plywood

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
FINLAND	89470	92267	3.1
ITALY	31260	25132	-19.6
LATVIA	13579	19692	45.0
RUSSIA	12504	14323	14.5
CZECH REPUBLIC	11799	11734	-0.6
POLAND	6958	9800	40.8
OTHER	53491	54950	2.7
TOTAL	**219061**	**227898**	**4.0**

Softwood Plywood

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
BRAZIL	38823	51393	32.4
FINLAND	30158	36905	22.4
FRANCE	17730	18246	2.9
CZECH REPUBLIC	5572	10599	90.2
AUSTRIA	10221	9569	-6.4
POLAND	7300	9188	25.9
OTHER	50900	38392	-24.6
TOTAL	**160704**	**174292**	**8.5**

Sleepers

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
FRANCE	2099	2445	16.5
NETHERLANDS	1156	999	-13.6
CZECH REPUBLIC	223	232	4.0
AUSTRIA	1	77	7600.0
OTHER	105	92	-12.4
TOTAL	**3584**	**3845**	**7.3**

Profiled Wood - Softwood

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
SWEDEN	27760	22994	-17.2
ITALY	8587	10214	18.9
FINLAND	10211	9528	-6.7
AUSTRIA	8415	6550	-22.2
OTHER	25914	21604	-16.6
TOTAL	**80887**	**70890**	**-12.4**

Profiled Wood - Hardwood

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
POLAND	8830	13271	50.3
ITALY	10809	9812	-9.2
BELGIUM	1473	5501	273.5
AUSTRIA	5113	5303	3.7
OTHER	28341	35379	24.8
TOTAL	**54566**	**69266**	**26.9**

Wood windows and frames

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
DENMARK	49609	39988	-19.4
POLAND	27491	25207	-8.3
AUSTRIA	22712	19450	-14.4
FRANCE	19674	17290	-12.1
OTHER	25444	21393	-15.9
TOTAL	**144930**	**123328**	**-14.9**

Wood doors and frames

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
SLOVENIA	24405	22035	-9.7
DENMARK	37999	19370	-49.0
HUNGARY	13964	16453	17.8
ITALY	16138	16377	1.5
OTHER	78306	69865	-10.8
TOTAL	**170812**	**144100**	**-15.6**

Parquet panels

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
SWEDEN	66376	57597	-13.2
AUSTRIA	18690	32755	75.3
SWITZERLAND	19833	21725	9.5
FINLAND	21644	20687	-4.4
OTHER	118104	135023	14.3
TOTAL	**244647**	**267787**	**9.5**

Wooden Furniture

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
POLAND	793162	937017	18.1
ITALY	632230	639314	1.1
DENMARK	343573	362526	5.5
CZECH REP.	146575	157822	7.7
AUSTRIA	177496	142284	-19.8
ROMANIA	101424	120118	18.4
NETHERLANDS	107409	103993	-3.2
FRANCE	84710	95140	12.3
OTHER	885404	1004517	13.5
TOTAL	**3271983**	**3562731**	**8.9**

Source: Eurostat supplied by BTS and analysed by hardwoodmarkets.com

Netherlands imports

Tropical Logs

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
GABON	7285	9563	31.3
CAMEROON	7475	7781	4.1
LIBERIA	234	2334	897.4
BURMA	1177	818	-30.5
GERMANY	1385	738	-46.7
SURINAM	537	538	0.2
BELGIUM	620	436	-29.7
OTHER	1536	1455	-5.3
TOTAL	**20249**	**23663**	**16.9**

Beech Logs

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
FRANCE	10	2009	19990.0
LUXEMBOURG	48	559	1064.6
EU-UNKNOWN	0	521	0.0
GERMANY	906	492	-45.7
BELGIUM	569	209	-63.3
POLAND	0	22	0.0
DENMARK	0	16	0.0
OTHER	22	18	-18.2
TOTAL	**1555**	**3846**	**147.3**

Oak Logs

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
UKRAINE	663	1025	54.6
LUXEMBOURG	8	229	2762.5
DENMARK	198	185	-6.6
GERMANY	258	163	-36.8
U.S.A.	24	86	258.3
BELGIUM	433	40	-90.8
BOSN & HERZ	7	27	85.7
OTHER	47	47	0.0
TOTAL	**1638**	**1802**	**10.0**

Other Hardwood Logs

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
GERMANY	2016	1999	-0.8
BELGIUM	1329	946	-28.8
U.S.A.	175	279	59.4
CANADA	58	143	146.6
CHINA	0	74	0.0
EU-UNKNOWN	0	67	0.0
FRANCE	90	37	-58.9
OTHER	55	68	23.6
TOTAL	**3723**	**3613**	**-3.0**

Tropical Sawn Lumber

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
MALAYSIA	107187	155974	45.5
CAMEROON	23548	41081	74.5
BRAZIL	21120	25766	22.0
BELGIUM	16548	23917	44.5
INDONESIA	7826	21309	172.3
IVORY COAST	19217	8550	-55.5
GERMANY	4182	4159	-0.5
GHANA	3373	3655	8.4
SINGAPORE	4527	3143	-30.6
FRANCE	1155	1549	34.1
BURMA	906	1338	47.7
THAILAND	1495	1224	-18.1
OTHER	5372	5884	9.5
TOTAL	**216456**	**297549**	**37.5**

Beech Sawn Lumber

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
GERMANY	10165	8432	-17.0
BELGIUM	2074	1495	-27.9
FRANCE	643	1182	83.8
BOSN & HERZ	173	375	116.8
POLAND	370	337	-8.9
DENMARK	387	207	-46.5
CROATIA	301	202	-32.9
SERB & MONT	21	124	490.5
AUSTRIA	10	64	540.0
UKRAINE	91	61	-33.0
OTHER	444	296	-33.3
TOTAL	**14679**	**12775**	**-13.0**

Oak Sawn Lumber

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
FRANCE	11864	12168	2.6
U.S.A.	9628	11048	14.7
GERMANY	2858	2711	-5.1
BELGIUM	1710	2536	48.3
POLAND	1673	2418	44.5
CROATIA	1190	2043	71.7
CZECH REPUBLIC	1124	1943	72.9
CANADA	4316	1918	-55.6
UKRAINE	723	1198	65.7
LITHUANIA	317	785	147.6
OTHER	1112	1037	-6.7
TOTAL	**36515**	**39805**	**9.0**

Other hardwood sawn

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
U.S.A.	11740	22260	89.6
CANADA	12661	15659	23.7
LATVIA	3082	3547	15.1
LITHUANIA	922	1731	87.7
BELGIUM	2278	1502	-34.1
HUNGARY	1188	1486	25.1
EU-UNKNOWN	0	1469	0.0
POLAND	572	1025	79.2
FRANCE	993	942	-5.1
ESTONIA	285	620	117.5
OTHER	4597	2941	-36.0
TOTAL	**38318**	**53182**	**38.8**

Tropical Veneers

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
GABON	585	880	50.4
BELGIUM	861	490	-43.1
THAILAND	293	440	50.2
GERMANY	574	287	-50.0
FRANCE	111	180	62.2
SWEDEN	15	111	640.0
OTHER	1090	510	-53.2
TOTAL	**3529**	**2898**	**-17.9**

Other Hardwood Veneers

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
GERMANY	4786	3874	-19.1
POLAND	218	1054	383.5
BELGIUM	738	844	14.4
FRANCE	439	550	25.3
HUNGARY	145	366	152.4
DENMARK	371	209	-43.7
OTHER	1409	796	-43.5
TOTAL	**8106**	**7693**	**-5.1**

Softwood Veneers

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
U.S.A.	1698	1497	-11.8
BELGIUM	655	1437	119.4
SWEDEN	960	1301	35.5
GERMANY	763	260	-65.9
PORTUGAL	214	215	0.5
BRAZIL	223	174	-22.0
OTHER	595	642	7.9
TOTAL	**5108**	**5526**	**8.2**

Tropical Plywood

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
FRANCE	33260	39275	18.1
BELGIUM	30342	29275	-3.5
NON-EU SUPP.	0	25655	0.0
INDONESIA	12337	8204	-33.5
ISRAEL	4365	5632	29.0
EU SUPP.	0	2027	0.0
OTHER	7079	7298	3.1
TOTAL	**87383**	**117366**	**34.3**

Other Hardwood Plywood

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
FINLAND	16588	14925	-10.0
BELGIUM	8020	8630	7.6
RUSSIA	3763	3968	5.4
GERMANY	2087	1796	-13.9
FRANCE	302	1525	405.0
SLOVENIA	171	1105	546.2
OTHER	5562	4452	-20.0
TOTAL	**36493**	**36401**	**-0.3**

Softwood Plywood

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
FINLAND	27764	26013	-6.3
U.S.A.	6358	7712	21.3
FRANCE	7714	7455	-3.4
BELGIUM	2405	5419	125.3
CANADA	6867	5372	-21.8
EU SUPP.	0	4066	0.0
OTHER	17083	17818	4.3
TOTAL	**68191**	**73855**	**8.3**

Sleepers

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
GERMANY	498	703	41.2
BELGIUM	53	208	292.5
NORWAY	0	7	0.0
SWITZERLAND	52	3	-94.2
OTHER	38	2	-94.7
TOTAL	**641**	**923**	**44.0**

Profiled Wood - Softwood

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
FRANCE	1798	1443	-19.7
U.S.A.	6	1053	17450.0
RUSSIA	679	790	16.3
BELGIUM	561	786	40.1
OTHER	3327	3037	-8.7
TOTAL	**6371**	**7109**	**11.6**

Profiled Wood - Hardwood

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
INDONESIA	21230	30724	44.7
MALAYSIA	9802	10110	3.1
BELGIUM	3482	9056	160.1
BRAZIL	3015	5005	66.0
OTHER	19475	20360	4.5
TOTAL	**57004**	**75255**	**32.0**

Wood windows and frames

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
DENMARK	16329	12033	-26.3
GERMANY	1495	2519	68.5
U.K.	2260	1699	-24.8
POLAND	1103	1431	29.7
OTHER	3341	2986	-10.6
TOTAL	**24528**	**20668**	**-15.7**

Wood doors and frames

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
INDONESIA	11186	14420	28.9
MALAYSIA	2830	5097	80.1
CHINA	3238	4354	34.5
FRANCE	2115	3212	51.9
OTHER	15353	11088	-27.8
TOTAL	**34722**	**38171**	**9.9**

Parquet panels

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
BELGIUM	15134	15720	3.9
CHINA	4143	12031	190.4
INDONESIA	2645	9060	242.5
MALAYSIA	5285	5954	12.7
OTHER	41314	18690	-54.8
TOTAL	**68521**	**61455**	**-10.3**

Wooden Furniture

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
BELGIUM	155988	154768	-0.8
GERMANY	144311	154659	7.2
INDONESIA	79264	121927	53.8
ITALY	72572	72683	0.2
POLAND	44862	60204	34.2
ROMANIA	47025	51633	9.8
BRAZIL	30198	43745	44.9
CHINA	17074	27974	63.8
OTHER	191276	223719	17.0
TOTAL	**782570**	**911312**	**16.5**

Source: Eurostat supplied by BTS and analysed by hardwoodmarkets.com

Belgium-Lux. imports

Tropical Logs

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
NETHERLANDS	4100	1964	-52.1
FRANCE	791	1857	134.8
CAMEROON	4159	1650	-60.3
GERMANY	3070	1297	-57.8
GABON	1072	1291	20.4
CONGO (ZAIRE)	78	1219	1462.8
BURMA	229	381	66.4
OTHER	1519	1727	13.7
TOTAL	**15018**	**11386**	**-24.2**

Beech Logs

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
FRANCE	26646	28162	5.7
LUXEMBOURG	2324	2479	6.7
GERMANY	2407	2065	-14.2
NETHERLANDS	752	294	-60.9
BELGIUM	257	139	-45.9
POLAND	13	133	923.1
DENMARK	4	117	2825.0
OTHER	478	140	-70.7
TOTAL	**32881**	**33529**	**2.0**

Oak Logs

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
FRANCE	13507	7269	-46.2
NETHERLANDS	1136	718	-36.8
LUXEMBOURG	708	643	-9.2
U.S.A.	1085	587	-45.9
GERMANY	327	327	0.0
UKRAINE	776	283	-63.5
BOSN & HERZ	185	99	-46.5
OTHER	909	476	-47.6
TOTAL	**18633**	**10402**	**-44.2**

Other Hardwood Logs

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
FRANCE	16558	15337	-7.4
NETHERLANDS	8431	6104	-27.6
GERMANY	3712	4199	13.1
U.S.A.	4203	3544	-15.7
ARMENIA	277	1944	601.8
LUXEMBOURG	259	841	224.7
CANADA	523	728	39.2
OTHER	437	531	21.5
TOTAL	**34400**	**33228**	**-3.4**

Tropical Sawn Lumber

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
MALAYSIA	74510	117935	58.3
CAMEROON	19356	26503	36.9
BRAZIL	8917	15676	75.8
INDONESIA	7236	13987	93.3
NETHERLANDS	9982	12031	20.5
GHANA	3527	3775	7.0
IVORY COAST	1879	2571	36.8
FRANCE	939	2290	143.9
BURMA	481	1662	245.5
SINGAPORE	957	1632	70.5
PAPUA NEW GUINEA	1082	1363	26.0
GABON	1378	1248	-9.4
OTHER	6156	7611	23.6
TOTAL	**136400**	**208284**	**52.7**

Beech Sawn Lumber

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
FRANCE	5180	5689	9.8
GERMANY	2302	1994	-13.4
NETHERLANDS	1222	1447	18.4
POLAND	523	660	26.2
ITALY	414	655	58.2
ROMANIA	537	360	-33.0
SLOVENIA	22	272	1136.4
BOSN & HERZ	77	262	240.3
SPAIN	32	197	515.6
SLOVAKIA	606	195	-67.8
OTHER	1108	752	-32.1
TOTAL	**12023**	**12483**	**3.8**

Oak Sawn Lumber

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
U.S.A.	33386	29676	-11.1
FRANCE	14839	15303	3.1
GERMANY	3681	3584	-2.6
CANADA	1773	3071	73.2
POLAND	2448	2463	0.6
NETHERLANDS	1843	2250	22.1
UKRAINE	1118	1939	73.4
LITHUANIA	1521	1754	15.3
SLOVAKIA	302	678	124.5
CZECH REPUBLIC	724	594	-18.0
OTHER	3071	3289	7.1
TOTAL	**64706**	**64601**	**-0.2**

Other hardwood sawn

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
U.S.A.	15077	13867	-8.0
FRANCE	3658	4948	35.3
CANADA	4237	4160	-1.8
LITHUANIA	2011	2742	36.4
NETHERLANDS	2052	2718	32.5
GERMANY	1465	1616	10.3
AUSTRALIA	826	1079	30.6
LATVIA	357	801	124.4
BELARUS	246	503	104.5
POLAND	484	467	-3.5
OTHER	2134	1878	-12.0
TOTAL	**32547**	**34779**	**6.9**

Tropical Veneers

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
GHANA	2632	4658	77.0
IVORY COAST	2833	3028	6.9
FRANCE	1721	2309	34.2
GERMANY	2111	1660	-21.4
CHINA	653	545	-16.5
ITALY	958	541	-43.5
OTHER	5126	3942	-23.1
TOTAL	**16034**	**16683**	**4.0**

Other Hardwood Veneers

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
U.S.A.	13392	14310	6.9
GERMANY	5240	4975	-5.1
CROATIA	2364	4415	86.8
FRANCE	2352	3200	36.1
SPAIN	2023	1975	-2.4
CANADA	975	1100	12.8
OTHER	4680	3360	-28.2
TOTAL	**31026**	**33335**	**7.4**

Softwood Veneers

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
GERMANY	3697	3315	-10.3
FRANCE	2905	2610	-10.2
ITALY	202	1033	411.4
NETHERLANDS	690	942	36.5
U.K.	334	401	20.1
SPAIN	29	229	689.7
OTHER	1571	946	-39.8
TOTAL	**9428**	**9476**	**0.5**

Tropical Plywood

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
INDONESIA	101928	101352	-0.6
NETHERLANDS	8391	8825	5.2
MALAYSIA	2668	4215	58.0
BRAZIL	3042	4202	38.1
FRANCE	3624	3866	6.7
GERMANY	3231	2904	-10.1
OTHER	6774	6750	-0.4
TOTAL	**129658**	**132114**	**1.9**

Other Hardwood Plywood

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
NETHERLANDS	7340	8033	9.4
GERMANY	2297	3351	45.9
FINLAND	926	1702	83.8
CZECH REPUBLIC	676	946	39.9
POLAND	1095	790	-27.9
SPAIN	676	503	-25.6
OTHER	1864	1785	-4.2
TOTAL	**14874**	**17110**	**15.0**

Softwood Plywood

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
BRAZIL	20384	33577	64.7
NETHERLANDS	4957	6091	22.9
RUSSIA	5158	3491	-32.3
GERMANY	3537	3319	-6.2
FRANCE	2544	2192	-13.8
LATVIA	1028	1339	30.3
OTHER	11859	7870	-33.6
TOTAL	**49467**	**57879**	**17.0**

Sleepers

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
FRANCE	3563	1770	-50.3
BELGIUM	398	794	99.5
GERMANY	31	314	912.9
NETHERLANDS	449	237	-47.2
OTHER	48	184	283.3
TOTAL	**4489**	**3299**	**-26.5**

Profiled Wood - Softwood

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
FRANCE	4430	4393	-0.8
NETHERLANDS	5215	4108	-21.2
GERMANY	1873	1622	-13.4
LUXEMBOURG	1091	1604	47.0
OTHER	2558	1929	-24.6
TOTAL	**15167**	**13656**	**-10.0**

Profiled Wood - Hardwood

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
INDONESIA	26580	55552	109.0
FRANCE	14962	17786	18.9
NETHERLANDS	12863	13356	3.8
MALAYSIA	5778	10121	75.2
OTHER	16975	26666	57.1
TOTAL	**77158**	**123481**	**60.0**

Wood windows and frames

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
DENMARK	18915	18042	-4.6
GERMANY	4628	5171	11.7
U.K.	3457	3871	12.0
BELGIUM	4077	3714	-8.9
OTHER	6324	6164	-2.5
TOTAL	**37401**	**36962**	**-1.2**

Wood doors and frames

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
GERMANY	8999	9778	8.7
NETHERLANDS	8938	8865	-0.8
SPAIN	5049	5165	2.3
FRANCE	4933	4312	-12.6
OTHER	11087	12177	9.8
TOTAL	**39006**	**40297**	**3.3**

Parquet panels

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
FRANCE	19978	15674	-21.5
NETHERLANDS	12375	10848	-12.3
GERMANY	7101	7011	-1.3
CHINA	2380	5254	120.8
OTHER	13245	14298	8.0
TOTAL	**55079**	**53085**	**-3.6**

Wooden Furniture

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
GERMANY	147746	162972	10.3
ITALY	172007	162847	-5.3
NETHERLANDS	120463	128774	6.9
FRANCE	119698	118803	-0.7
INDONESIA	65272	72564	11.2
SWEDEN	59812	64724	8.2
POLAND	41854	54947	31.3
DENMARK	31042	31566	1.7
OTHER	175998	201541	14.5
TOTAL	**933892**	**998738**	**6.9**

Source: Eurostat supplied by BTS and analysed by hardwoodmarkets.com

Continued from page 1

year, with particularly strong growth in imports from Eastern Europe, notably Slovakia and Romania. Hardwood sawn lumber imports from Bosnia, Hungary and Croatia were also on the rise.

Netherlands

Flood of tropical sawn

Import data for the Netherlands needs careful interpretation since large volumes of wood are transhipped through the nation's ports to other European countries. The Dutch furniture sector is relatively small and has never been a major market for hardwoods. However Dutch importers have traditionally been significant suppliers of hardwood to German and Belgian furniture manufacturers. The Dutch construction sector is also a very significant user of tropical hardwoods, particularly Malaysian meranti for window frames.

Last year's data for the Netherlands indicates high levels of import of primary hardwood products compared with 1999. The data for tropical hardwood sawn lumber is particularly striking. By value, imports of tropical sawn lumber from the two major supplying countries, Malaysia and Cameroon, were up 45% and 75% respectively last year. High levels of import partly reflect bouyant construction activity in the Netherlands during 2000. However evidence of overstocking and weaker demand for tropical hardwoods this year suggests that Dutch importers may have overbought. One country that did not benefit from the Dutch boom in imports last year was the Ivory Coast, which saw sales to this important market fall by over 50%.

Imports from US rise

The statistics reveal that a relatively high value of hardwood sawn lumber was imported from the US and Canada during 2000. However anecdotal reports suggest slowing demand for American hardwoods in the Netherlands since the last quarter of 2000 due to the weak euro. Overall indications for the Dutch market this year are less bouyant than during 2000. GDP growth for the Netherlands reached 2.8% last year, but year-on-year growth slid to only 2% during the first quarter of 2001, well below expectations. Euroconstruct estimate the value of construction sector grew 4.9% during 2000, and forecast 2.7% growth during 2001.

Belgium-Lux

Mixed fortunes

2000 seems to have been a fairly mixed year for the Belgian hardwood importing industry. GDP growth during 2000 was running at 3.1% and is forecast by *The Economist* to reach a fairly respectable 2.6% during 2001. According to Euroconstruct, construction sector activity grew rapidly by 4.6% last year, but is expected to shift down a gear during 2001 to only around 0.8% growth. Despite reasonably strong underlying economic performance, for certain hardwood items market problems arose due to the weak euro and also from the continuing shift in furniture manufacturing facilities from Belgium to lower cost Eastern European locations. In part this move reflects Belgium's tax burden, amongst the highest in the world. Belgium's imports of wood furniture were up 7% during 2000 compared with the previous year, with a particularly sharp rise in imports from Poland (up 30%).

Import data for Belgium needs to be considered in the light of the nation's role in the transhipment of wood products to other European countries. Belgium imports a significant volume of tropical hardwood each year, a significant proportion of which is subsequently shipped to Germany, Netherlands, and

Continued page 12

France imports

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
Tropical Logs			
GABON	93015	109310	17.5
LIBERIA	16628	34794	109.2
EQUAT. GUINEA	10550	17533	66.2
CAMEROON	41335	14413	-65.1
CONGO REPUBLIC	7457	8400	12.6
BELGIUM	2696	3867	43.4
CENT. AFR. REP.	2039	3727	82.8
OTHER	5887	8097	37.5
TOTAL	**179607**	**200141**	**11.4**
Beech Logs			
GERMANY	5886	3471	-41.0
BELGIUM	602	522	-13.3
SWITZERLAND	1121	491	-56.2
SPAIN	398	447	12.3
U.S.A.	0	258	0.0
SLOVAKIA	113	97	-14.2
ROMANIA	147	81	-44.9
OTHER	820	230	-72.0
TOTAL	**9087**	**5597**	**-38.4**
Oak Logs			
GERMANY	10717	14973	39.7
BELGIUM	2634	1520	-42.3
ROMANIA	940	1097	16.7
U.S.A.	596	1037	74.0
SLOVAKIA	987	652	-33.9
AUSTRIA	747	441	-41.0
SWITZERLAND	396	434	9.6
OTHER	1821	1508	-17.2
TOTAL	**18838**	**21662**	**15.0**
Other Hardwood Logs			
U.S.A.	7848	7756	-1.2
BELGIUM	7734	5310	-31.3
CANADA	2213	2408	8.8
SPAIN	1862	2270	21.9
GERMANY	1706	2149	26.0
ITALY	424	516	21.7
ROMANIA	43	272	532.6
OTHER	1568	1374	-12.4
TOTAL	**23398**	**22055**	**-5.7**
Tropical Sawn Lumber			
BRAZIL	61993	88668	43.0
CAMEROON	17299	39006	125.5
MALAYSIA	18240	30309	66.2
GHANA	15083	17725	17.5
IVORY COAST	12609	13682	8.5
BELGIUM	9574	11226	17.3
CONGO REPUBLIC	5657	4715	-16.7
INDONESIA	2256	3394	50.4
GABON	1575	2447	55.4
NETHERLANDS	1647	2347	42.5
GERMANY	903	1472	63.0
BURMA	2419	1273	-47.4
OTHER	4743	7983	68.3
TOTAL	**153998**	**224247**	**45.6**
Beech Sawn Lumber			
SPAIN	2262	1713	-24.3
SLOVAKIA	1847	1685	-8.8
POLAND	791	1538	94.4
BOSN & HERZ	2920	1122	-61.6
SWITZERLAND	957	1064	11.2
GERMANY	2044	865	-57.7
SLOVENIA	737	788	6.9
ITALY	616	779	26.5
ROMANIA	677	535	-21.0
BELGIUM	591	492	-16.8
OTHER	1603	1323	-17.5
TOTAL	**15045**	**11904**	**-20.9**
Oak Sawn Lumber			
U.S.A.	14166	16624	17.4
BELGIUM	5249	5205	-0.8
CANADA	2652	4314	62.7
GERMANY	1285	2084	62.2
ITALY	1123	1613	43.6
UKRAINE	840	1556	85.2
SLOVAKIA	506	1397	176.1
LITHUANIA	368	1049	185.1
CROATIA	424	729	71.9
POLAND	493	708	43.6
OTHER	2998	3725	24.2
TOTAL	**30104**	**39004**	**29.6**
Other Hardwood Sawn			
U.S.A.	18738	19201	2.5
CANADA	9707	10705	10.3
BELGIUM	6298	3904	-38.0
GERMANY	4109	3855	-6.2
POLAND	1329	1764	32.7
NETHERLANDS	2334	1635	-29.9
LATVIA	550	1421	158.4
ITALY	642	1004	56.4
ROMANIA	232	774	233.6
FINLAND	959	738	-23.0
OTHER	4940	5318	7.7
TOTAL	**49838**	**50319**	**1.0**
Tropical Veneers			
GABON	6942	14003	101.7
GHANA	4459	3690	-17.2
SPAIN	1635	2346	43.5
BELGIUM	1873	2073	10.7
EQUAT. GUINEA	1553	2011	29.5
CAMEROON	780	1797	130.4
OTHER	10922	7102	-35.0
TOTAL	**28164**	**33022**	**17.2**

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
Other Hardwood Veneers			
GERMANY	7842	7909	0.9
SPAIN	3681	6120	66.3
U.S.A.	4726	5969	26.3
ITALY	6308	5731	-9.1
BELGIUM	2869	4569	59.3
SWITZERLAND	1362	2203	61.7
OTHER	4514	5292	17.2
TOTAL	**31302**	**37793**	**20.7**
Softwood Veneers			
FINLAND	8290	9276	11.9
PORTUGAL	5468	4833	-11.6
SPAIN	2871	3571	24.4
SWEDEN	1010	1452	43.8
U.S.A.	578	1260	118.0
BRAZIL	319	820	157.1
OTHER	3394	2841	-16.3
TOTAL	**21930**	**24053**	**9.7**
Tropical Plywood			
INDONESIA	22224	28126	26.6
BELGIUM	13793	13055	-5.4
GABON	11302	6137	-45.7
IVORY COAST	4215	5129	21.7
BRAZIL	2946	4838	64.2
MALAYSIA	4904	3481	-29.0
OTHER	12912	15352	18.9
TOTAL	**72296**	**76118**	**5.3**
Other Hardwood Plywood			
FINLAND	18302	18240	-0.3
GERMANY	4896	5674	15.9
RUSSIA	2773	4223	52.3
BELGIUM	3984	3920	-1.6
ITALY	2866	3800	32.6
SPAIN	1547	1873	21.1
OTHER	9185	9899	7.8
TOTAL	**43553**	**47629**	**9.4**
Softwood Plywood			
FINLAND	13971	17393	24.5
GERMANY	7054	8791	24.6
BELGIUM	6727	7834	16.5
BRAZIL	5126	6449	25.8
AUSTRIA	3938	4427	12.4
U.K.	3313	4187	26.4
OTHER	20853	21553	3.4
TOTAL	**60982**	**70634**	**15.8**
Sleepers			
IVORY COAST	2240	2886	28.8
CAMEROON	3360	2423	-27.9
BELGIUM	1103	710	-35.6
GERMANY	126	297	135.7
OTHER	512	293	-42.8
TOTAL	**7341**	**6609**	**-10.0**
Profiled Wood - Softwood			
GERMANY	6766	8235	21.7
ITALY	4129	4902	18.7
BELGIUM	2893	2772	-4.2
LUXEMBOURG	1637	2347	43.4
OTHER	6468	7005	8.3
TOTAL	**21893**	**25261**	**15.4**
Profiled Wood - Hardwood			
ITALY	10100	15175	50.2
BELGIUM	6908	6793	-1.7
GERMANY	5451	6642	21.8
POLAND	849	4031	374.8
OTHER	17518	24726	41.1
TOTAL	**40826**	**57367**	**40.5**
Wood windows and frames			
DENMARK	9828	21736	121.2
POLAND	3755	3687	-1.8
HUNGARY	26	2641	10057.7
BELGIUM	2858	2580	-9.7
OTHER	7033	9397	33.6
TOTAL	**23500**	**40041**	**70.4**
Wood doors and frames			
BELGIUM	7672	7999	4.3
SPAIN	3580	6027	68.4
GERMANY	3262	3925	20.3
NETHERLANDS	2545	3433	34.9
OTHER	12725	16685	31.1
TOTAL	**29784**	**38069**	**27.8**
Parquet panels			
BELGIUM	22327	30625	37.2
GERMANY	12447	15269	22.7
SWEDEN	6531	7997	22.4
ITALY	3096	3673	18.6
OTHER	12942	11935	-7.8
TOTAL	**57343**	**69499**	**21.2**
Wooden Furniture			
ITALY	484487	504543	4.1
BELGIUM	241098	278075	15.3
GERMANY	172671	193684	12.2
SPAIN	160857	158312	-1.6
BRAZIL	62612	88394	41.2
ROMANIA	75500	86029	13.9
INDONESIA	63785	83865	31.5
DENMARK	63210	68519	8.4
OTHER	485916	581208	19.6
TOTAL	**1810136**	**2042629**	**12.8**

Source: Eurostat supplied by BTS and analysed by hardwoodmarkets.com

Italy imports

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
Tropical Logs			
CAMEROON	47793	45611	-4.6
LIBERIA	7725	16207	109.8
GABON	14214	14673	3.2
CONGO REPUBLIC	8771	11572	31.9
BURMA	3036	5309	74.9
NIGERIA	1553	2090	34.6
IVORY COAST	1163	2031	74.6
OTHER	4877	7749	58.9
TOTAL	**89132**	**105242**	**18.1**
Beech Logs			
SWITZERLAND	22561	22933	1.6
FRANCE	8507	19482	129.0
AUSTRIA	12005	13489	12.4
GERMANY	8190	6340	-22.6
CROATIA	7165	4098	-42.8
SLOVENIA	2811	2275	-19.1
BELGIUM	2731	1884	-31.0
OTHER	4788	1769	-63.1
TOTAL	**68758**	**72270**	**5.1**
Oak Logs			
HUNGARY	2831	3887	37.3
FRANCE	2102	3008	43.1
CROATIA	1476	1294	-12.3
AUSTRIA	1111	1096	-1.4
GERMANY	526	774	47.1
SLOVENIA	316	356	12.7
ROMANIA	256	254	-0.8
OTHER	444	389	-12.4
TOTAL	**9062**	**11058**	**22.0**
Other Hardwood Logs			
FRANCE	43425	43032	-0.9
U.S.A.	28038	39027	39.2
HUNGARY	21493	20849	-3.0
CROATIA	10911	16482	51.1
AUSTRIA	7366	12059	63.7
ROMANIA	4903	6589	34.4
SLOVENIA	5376	4735	-11.9
OTHER	26066	29241	12.2
TOTAL	**147578**	**172014**	**16.6**
Tropical Sawn Lumber			
CAMEROON	37516	63494	69.2
IVORY COAST	59385	60469	1.8
INDONESIA	23758	20004	-15.8
MALAYSIA	18394	19628	6.7
NIGERIA	17193	17755	3.3
GHANA	10604	12747	20.2
BRAZIL	8283	9123	10.1
GABON	2149	5884	173.8
BURMA	4119	4253	3.3
CONGO REPUBLIC	2093	2754	31.6
THAILAND	2494	2298	-7.9
URUGUAY	3440	2061	-40.1
OTHER	12108	16892	39.5
TOTAL	**201536**	**237362**	**17.8**
Beech Sawn Lumber			
CROATIA	33875	36398	7.4
BOSN & HERZ	30775	36132	17.4
SLOVENIA	19166	21008	9.6
SERB & MONT	9678	8853	-8.5
POLAND	7810	8643	10.7
AUSTRIA	7654	8369	9.3
ROMANIA	7412	8337	12.5
GERMANY	8009	7634	-4.7
SLOVAKIA	6433	7275	13.1
ALBANIA	4779	6383	33.6
OTHER	20958	21899	4.5
TOTAL	**156549**	**170931**	**9.2**
Oak Sawn Lumber			
CROATIA	28909	25242	-12.7
U.S.A.	19809	21565	8.9
FRANCE	4476	8438	88.5
HUNGARY	4289	4757	10.9
UKRAINE	2822	3278	16.2
SLOVENIA	2508	2878	14.8
ROMANIA	3206	2551	-20.4
AUSTRIA	1112	1513	36.1
CANADA	1083	1165	7.6
BOSN & HERZ	650	1114	71.4
OTHER	5060	4838	-4.4
TOTAL	**73924**	**77339**	**4.6**
Other hardwood sawn			
U.S.A.	101151	115091	13.8
HUNGARY	27726	27506	-0.8
CROATIA	12223	14797	21.1
ROMANIA	8988	12377	37.7
CANADA	13351	11886	-11.0
RUSSIA	15707	11537	-26.5
SPAIN	9788	11201	14.4
AUSTRIA	6141	7341	19.5
POLAND	8321	7339	-11.8
SLOVENIA	3965	7283	83.7
OTHER	39558	44047	11.3
TOTAL	**246919**	**270405**	**9.5**
Tropical Veneers			
IVORY COAST	19753	22495	13.9
CAMEROON	15065	17993	19.4
GHANA	13428	15051	12.1
GERMANY	1570	2344	49.3
BRAZIL	1117	2206	97.5
SPAIN	1229	2034	65.5
OTHER	7657	10858	41.8
TOTAL	**59819**	**72981**	**22.0**

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
Other Hardwood Veneers			
GERMANY	32015	42781	33.6
U.S.A.	16746	18480	10.4
FRANCE	14995	16284	8.6
SWITZERLAND	8793	8379	-4.7
TURKEY	8812	8376	-4.9
CROATIA	5950	7068	18.8
OTHER	34674	45380	30.9
TOTAL	**121985**	**146748**	**20.3**
Softwood Veneers			
U.S.A.	8255	5877	-28.8
GERMANY	2556	3150	23.2
SPAIN	2125	2630	23.8
SWITZERLAND	872	2387	173.7
IVORY COAST	1908	2122	11.2
AUSTRIA	3081	1933	-37.3
OTHER	3700	2995	-19.1
TOTAL	**22497**	**21094**	**-6.2**
Tropical Plywood			
FRANCE	21454	17479	-18.5
INDONESIA	10230	10486	2.5
GABON	555	4439	699.8
MOROCCO	2050	3299	60.9
BRAZIL	3418	3238	-5.3
SPAIN	1325	1389	4.8
OTHER	5242	7734	47.5
TOTAL	**44274**	**48064**	**8.6**
Other Hardwood Plywood			
FINLAND	20419	24313	19.1
RUSSIA	18877	20036	6.1
AUSTRIA	4946	6269	26.7
CZECH REPUBLIC	3020	4263	41.2
SPAIN	2715	3123	15.0
UKRAINE	918	2659	189.7
OTHER	10488	14500	38.3
TOTAL	**61383**	**75163**	**22.4**
Softwood Plywood			
AUSTRIA	12578	13272	5.5
BRAZIL	5391	11431	112.0
RUSSIA	8653	10683	23.5
FINLAND	7091	7930	11.8
GERMANY	6014	6175	2.7
FRANCE	5070	5015	-1.1
OTHER	30912	26076	-15.6
TOTAL	**75709**	**80582**	**6.4**
Sleepers			
FRANCE	1503	2850	89.6
LUXEMBOURG	827	2424	193.1
AUSTRIA	162	373	130.2
BOSN & HERZ	0	106	0.0
OTHER	121	190	57.0
TOTAL	**2613**	**5943**	**127.4**
Profiled Wood - Softwood			
AUSTRIA	33430	32008	-4.3
GERMANY	1783	2557	43.4
ROMANIA	587	794	35.3
PORTUGAL	416	566	36.1
OTHER	2853	2369	-17.0
TOTAL	**39069**	**38294**	**-2.0**
Profiled Wood - Hardwood			
INDONESIA	30642	28621	-6.6
NIGERIA	13780	16504	19.8
IVORY COAST	11197	12742	13.8
PARAGUAY	7160	6893	-3.7
OTHER	46789	63597	35.9
TOTAL	**109568**	**128357**	**17.1**
Wood windows and frames			
DENMARK	8629	15539	80.1
SWITZERLAND	7816	4377	-44.0
AUSTRIA	1336	2406	80.1
GERMANY	386	904	134.2
OTHER	3174	3709	16.9
TOTAL	**21341**	**26935**	**26.2**
Wood doors and frames			
ROMANIA	4476	5729	28.0
GERMANY	2401	3366	40.2
INDONESIA	1880	2373	26.2
BELGIUM	673	867	28.8
OTHER	5527	5873	6.3
TOTAL	**14957**	**18208**	**21.7**
Parquet panels			
GERMANY	8664	10351	19.5
AUSTRIA	7145	8499	19.0
BELGIUM	2919	4369	49.7
SWEDEN	3262	3758	15.2
OTHER	14408	15292	6.1
TOTAL	**36398**	**42269**	**16.1**
Wooden Furniture			
FRANCE	55256	72120	30.5
ROMANIA	37987	45756	20.5
GERMANY	31198	37062	18.8
INDONESIA	21467	27037	25.9
SWITZERLAND	25611	25749	0.5
SLOVENIA	21581	24066	11.5
CHINA	12679	20326	60.3
AUSTRIA	20686	19877	-3.9
OTHER	134019	158197	18.0
TOTAL	**360484**	**430190**	**19.3**

Source: Eurostat supplied by BTS and analysed by hardwoodmarkets.com

European annual review

Continued from page 11

France. Perhaps due to increased constraints on tropical log exports, Belgium's imports of tropical logs declined 24% by value during 2000. However this decline was more than offset by the 50% increase in the value of tropical sawn imports, a trend which seems to have benefitted all the main supply regions. Belgium seems to have joined other European countries in the over-exuberant purchase of Far Eastern sawn lumber last year, which was available at relatively low prices due to large-scale transshipment of wood from the Indonesian Island of Sumatra via Peninsular Malaysia. Heavy stocking is now contributing to slow export sales of Asian meranti throughout Northern Europe.

Belgium's imports of oak logs fell by 44% during 2000 compared with the previous year, with a particularly large drop in imports from France. The latter may have resulted from reduced availability of French oak logs last year as much milling and harvesting activity focused on beech following the storms of December 1999.

Imports of profiled wood form an increasingly important component of the Belgian hardwood trade, reaching a value of 123 million euros during 2000, 60% up on the previous year. Indonesia made particularly strong inroads into the Belgian market.

France

Bouyant demand

The year 2000 seems to have been particularly bouyant for the French hardwood trade. The value of imports of most hardwood products were at high levels. Only beech logs and lumber went against the trend, with imports falling significantly as an inevitable consequence of heavy stocking following the storms of December 1999.

The French economy grew strongly during 2000, at around 3%. However there are signs of weakening this year. Year-on-year growth in GDP fell from 2.9% to 2.7% between the fourth quarter of 2000 and first quarter of 2001. Construction sector activity grew strongly last year, at around 5.9%, but is forecast by Euroconstruct to grow by less than 1% this year as a result of slowing housing starts. The important French furniture sector was bouyant during 2000, and signs of continuing confidence have been apparent at this year's shows. However the sector is coming under pressure from imports. Wood furniture imports into France increased by 13% in 2000, with Belgium, Germany, Brazil, Romania and Indonesia expanding market share.

Tropical logs up 11%

The value of France's tropical log imports during 2000 was up 11% on the previous year. Purchases from Gabon increased after a poor year in 1999, while considerable growth in imports from Liberia and Equatorial Guinea made up for reduced availability from Cameroon. Tropical sawn imports were also on the rise, with all three major supplying countries - Brazil, Cameroon, and Malaysia - benefitting from the trend.

Anecdotal evidence of a return to oak in the French furniture sector is supported by the data which shows a growing level of oak imports in both sawn and log form. But this trend may also partly reflect French harvesting and milling operations focusing on beech in the wake of the storms which led to a temporary short-fall in availability of domestic oak. While starting from a small base, in % terms there was significant growth in French imports of oak sawn lumber from Eastern Europe, notably the Ukraine, Slovakia, Lithuania and Croatia, perhaps signalling a longer term trend.

Strength in the French hardwood flooring sector is indicated by a significant increase in the import value of profiled

Continued on page 14

Spain imports

Tropical Logs

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
CAMEROON	22410	11958	-46.6
CENT. AFR. REP.	6928	9715	40.2
EQUAT. GUINEA	6283	5283	-15.9
GABON	4670	5021	7.5
CONGO REPUBLIC	1542	3362	118.0
LIBERIA	1297	3112	139.9
FRANCE	1678	2693	60.5
OTHER	3263	4843	48.4
TOTAL	**48071**	**45987**	**-4.3**

Beech Logs

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
FRANCE	10619	15691	47.8
GERMANY	1575	2161	37.2
BELGIUM	2900	1382	-52.3
UKRAINE	1611	937	-41.8
ROMANIA	94	925	884.0
POLAND	574	666	16.0
SLOVAKIA	130	283	117.7
OTHER	920	403	-56.2
TOTAL	**18423**	**22448**	**21.8**

Oak Logs

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
FRANCE	12388	13894	12.2
GERMANY	3097	5007	61.7
U.S.A.	2889	3105	7.5
UKRAINE	898	2238	149.2
ROMANIA	110	275	150.0
PORTUGAL	99	112	13.1
POLAND	433	111	-74.4
OTHER	327	207	-36.7
TOTAL	**20241**	**24949**	**23.3**

Other Hardwood Logs

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
U.S.A.	5527	12316	122.8
FRANCE	7499	10059	34.1
POLAND	1422	1871	31.6
U.K.	550	468	-14.9
CANADA	156	397	154.5
ESTONIA	0	324	0.0
GEORGIA	0	287	0.0
OTHER	1329	1186	-10.8
TOTAL	**16483**	**26908**	**63.2**

Tropical Sawn Lumber

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
CAMEROON	49823	68589	37.7
IVORY COAST	56341	53459	-5.1
BRAZIL	28109	35111	24.9
CENT. AFR. REP.	6607	7304	10.5
CONGO REPUBLIC	5854	5862	0.1
GHANA	4061	2648	-34.8
FRANCE	1737	1823	5.0
PORTUGAL	1510	1785	18.2
CHILE	1710	1392	-18.6
GERMANY	675	1091	61.6
GABON	1270	815	-35.8
GUINEA	164	669	307.9
OTHER	6069	6578	8.4
TOTAL	**163930**	**187126**	**14.1**

Beech Sawn Lumber

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
GERMANY	18443	15275	-17.2
FRANCE	10524	12757	21.2
UKRAINE	2739	3215	17.4
SWITZERLAND	1204	2014	67.3
ROMANIA	761	1903	150.1
BELGIUM	892	1073	20.3
SLOVENIA	494	692	40.1
TURKEY	0	535	0.0
SLOVAKIA	46	401	771.7
RUSSIA	173	392	126.6
OTHER	1217	2433	99.9
TOTAL	**36493**	**40690**	**11.5**

Oak Sawn Lumber

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
U.S.A.	94364	119351	26.5
FRANCE	5994	8615	43.7
CANADA	7037	6308	-10.4
BELGIUM	2064	2988	44.8
GERMANY	1612	2347	45.6
UKRAINE	1016	1707	68.0
POLAND	163	1314	706.1
CROATIA	0	921	0.0
HUNGARY	479	653	36.3
ITALY	495	500	1.0
OTHER	902	1946	115.7
TOTAL	**114126**	**146650**	**28.5**

Other hardwood sawn

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
U.S.A.	15777	19736	25.1
CANADA	5880	8401	42.9
FRANCE	4983	4278	-14.1
LATVIA	1625	2511	54.5
CHILE	1249	1702	36.3
BELGIUM	373	490	31.4
GERMANY	443	417	-5.9
ROMANIA	114	227	99.1
LITHUANIA	139	224	61.2
POLAND	64	171	167.2
OTHER	1205	1046	-13.2
TOTAL	**31852**	**39203**	**23.1**

Tropical Veneers

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
IVORY COAST	10874	13753	26.5
GHANA	4387	5475	24.8
EQUAT. GUINEA	4206	3501	-16.8
BRAZIL	597	1740	191.5
CAMEROON	1516	1600	5.5
PORTUGAL	568	1266	122.9
OTHER	3789	5420	43.0
TOTAL	**25937**	**32755**	**26.3**

Other Hardwood Veneers

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
U.S.A.	36956	53926	45.9
GERMANY	13076	14559	11.3
ITALY	5707	4764	-16.5
FRANCE	2135	2664	24.8
U.K.	1048	2441	132.9
CROATIA	1420	2361	66.3
OTHER	8191	11973	46.2
TOTAL	**68533**	**92688**	**35.2**

Softwood Veneers

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
U.S.A.	8563	8567	0.0
CHILE	2213	2996	35.4
GERMANY	1586	1742	9.8
SOUTH AFRICA	2690	1669	-38.0
BRAZIL	610	1412	131.5
AUSTRALIA	488	1071	119.5
OTHER	5634	5065	-10.1
TOTAL	**21784**	**22522**	**3.4**

Tropical Plywood

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
FRANCE	5586	5616	0.5
FINLAND	1073	1146	6.8
BRAZIL	372	773	107.8
IVORY COAST	621	415	-33.2
GERMANY	180	346	92.2
GABON	288	247	-14.2
OTHER	851	742	-12.8
TOTAL	**8971**	**9285**	**3.5**

Other Hardwood Plywood

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
FINLAND	9535	12414	30.2
RUSSIA	3168	3315	4.6
FRANCE	1434	1667	16.2
GERMANY	817	1047	28.2
SWEDEN	0	153	0.0
LATVIA	0	149	0.0
OTHER	945	267	-71.7
TOTAL	**15899**	**19012**	**19.6**

Softwood Plywood

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
FINLAND	4130	4789	16.0
AUSTRIA	440	4393	898.4
GERMANY	1260	2898	130.0
FRANCE	3428	2134	-37.7
PORTUGAL	500	1472	194.4
POLAND	508	1007	98.2
OTHER	1456	1630	12.0
TOTAL	**11722**	**18323**	**56.3**

Sleepers

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
FRANCE	2491	3480	39.7
U.S.A.	16	733	4481.3
BRAZIL	58	429	639.7
CAMEROON	0	103	0.0
OTHER	111	195	75.7
TOTAL	**2676**	**4940**	**84.6**

Profiled Wood - Softwood

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
PORTUGAL	7685	3486	-54.6
ITALY	2008	2535	26.2
HONDURAS	689	960	39.3
LATVIA	693	601	-13.3
OTHER	5063	2070	-59.1
TOTAL	**16138**	**9652**	**-40.2**

Profiled Wood - Hardwood

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
CHINA	7002	9444	34.9
FRANCE	7740	8654	11.8
POLAND	2413	5953	146.7
INDONESIA	4329	4407	1.8
OTHER	24272	26478	9.1
TOTAL	**45756**	**54936**	**20.1**

Wood windows and frames

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
DENMARK	9689	16097	66.1
POLAND	3323	2877	-13.4
FRANCE	675	1323	96.0
SWITZERLAND	0	595	0.0
OTHER	1258	821	-34.7
TOTAL	**14945**	**21713**	**45.3**

Wood doors and frames

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
PORTUGAL	3253	2521	-22.5
U.S.A.	1085	1298	19.6
FRANCE	1305	1023	-21.6
GERMANY	537	487	-9.3
OTHER	2602	2557	-1.7
TOTAL	**8782**	**7886**	**-10.2**

Parquet panels

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
SWEDEN	13782	15631	13.4
DENMARK	5516	5791	5.0
INDONESIA	3461	5784	67.1
BELGIUM	1260	4281	239.8
OTHER	19594	29210	49.1
TOTAL	**43613**	**60697**	**39.2**

Wooden Furniture

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
ITALY	57024	69745	22.3
INDONESIA	34792	46714	34.3
FRANCE	36139	35463	-1.9
GERMANY	15473	16891	9.2
CHINA	9116	15970	75.2
PORTUGAL	13348	15782	18.2
SWEDEN	8666	13735	58.5
DENMARK	6113	9793	60.2
OTHER	62983	76694	21.8
TOTAL	**243654**	**300787**	**23.4**

Source: Eurostat supplied by BTS and analysed by hardwoodmarkets.com

Portugal imports

Tropical Logs

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
GABON	24794	31266	26.1
CAMEROON	33409	25742	-22.9
CONGO REPUBLIC	18681	18520	-0.9
CONGO (ZAIRE)	7870	10513	33.6
CENT. AFR. REP.	1300	5141	295.5
LIBERIA	1894	3436	81.4
EQUAT. GUINEA	2819	2655	-5.8
OTHER	2593	4008	54.6
TOTAL	**93360**	**101281**	**8.5**

Beech Logs

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
FRANCE	1811	2240	23.7
ITALY	45	375	733.3
SPAIN	33	103	212.1
U.K.	82	84	2.4
DENMARK	9	35	288.9
IRISH REPUBLIC	0	18	0.0
...	0	0	0.0
OTHER	35	0	-100.0
TOTAL	**2015**	**2855**	**41.7**

Oak Logs

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
FRANCE	2512	2665	6.1
SPAIN	1226	710	-42.1
ROMANIA	91	455	400.0
U.S.A.	226	352	55.8
GERMANY	0	31	0.0
DENMARK	0	16	0.0
ITALY	5	14	180.0
OTHER	132	0	-100.0
TOTAL	**4192**	**4243**	**1.2**

Other Hardwood Logs

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
FRANCE	7066	8633	22.2
U.S.A.	10591	8372	-21.0
SPAIN	6313	5661	-10.3
CANADA	2853	1712	-40.0
U.K.	1342	1536	14.5
SWEDEN	263	243	-7.6
LATVIA	0	133	0.0
OTHER	339	81	-76.1
TOTAL	**28767**	**26371**	**-8.3**

Tropical Sawn Lumber

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
BRAZIL	22914	25233	10.1
CAMEROON	7395	13895	87.9
IVORY COAST	5464	3688	-32.5
CONGO REPUBLIC	3335	3301	-1.0
GABON	1030	1634	58.6
SPAIN	2045	1548	-24.3
NIGERIA	188	1504	700.0
CENT. AFR. REP.	1497	1241	-17.1
CONGO (ZAIRE)	1183	794	-32.9
GHANA	1791	601	-66.4
MOZAMBIQUE	443	510	15.1
SWEDEN	324	238	-26.5
OTHER	729	1290	77.0
TOTAL	**48338**	**55477**	**14.8**

Beech Sawn Lumber

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
SPAIN	848	1197	41.2
FRANCE	542	972	79.3
DENMARK	417	628	50.6
GERMANY	233	329	41.2
SWEDEN	115	50	-56.5
CROATIA	91	48	-47.3
BELGIUM	0	35	0.0
BOSN & HERZ	0	27	0.0
ROMANIA	0	23	0.0
SLOVENIA	11	20	81.8
OTHER	61	11	-82.0
TOTAL	**2318**	**3340**	**44.1**

Oak Sawn Lumber

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
U.S.A.	14405	17084	18.6
CANADA	2909	2855	-1.9
NETHERLANDS	869	2226	156.2
SPAIN	3525	2182	-38.1
FRANCE	987	908	-8.0
CROATIA	631	818	29.6
BELGIUM	258	378	46.5
HUNGARY	163	329	101.8
DENMARK	0	300	0.0
ROMANIA	0	264	0.0
OTHER	668	675	1.0
TOTAL	**24415**	**28019**	**14.8**

Other hardwood sawn

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
U.S.A.	8137	8078	-0.7
FRANCE	2862	2688	-6.1
SPAIN	1855	1815	-2.2
SWEDEN	1201	1201	0.0
CANADA	1456	1152	-20.9
TURKEY	296	272	-8.1
CHINA	0	186	0.0
DENMARK	96	176	83.3
NETHERLANDS	0	93	0.0
CYPRUS	0	91	0.0
OTHER	1920	386	-79.9
TOTAL	**17823**	**16138**	**-9.5**

Tropical Veneers

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
BRAZIL	2900	4543	56.7
SPAIN	1621	1620	-0.1
GERMANY	423	675	59.6
GABON	0	580	0.0
IVORY COAST	600	555	-7.5
EQUAT. GUINEA	596	527	-11.6
OTHER	1757	1738	-1.1
TOTAL	**7897**	**10238**	**29.6**

Other Hardwood Veneers

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
U.S.A.	4124	5743	39.3
SPAIN	4385	5401	23.2
GERMANY	2479	5326	114.8
FRANCE	2347	3722	58.6
CANADA	1535	2133	39.0
HUNGARY	1009	821	-18.6
OTHER	3048	3966	30.1
TOTAL	**18927**	**27112**	**43.2**

Softwood Veneers

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
SOUTH AFRICA	1430	2255	57.7
SPAIN	970	1965	102.6
U.K.	179	490	173.7
FRANCE	156	417	167.3
GERMANY	231	267	15.6
BRAZIL	376	111	-70.5
OTHER	1034	252	-75.6
TOTAL	**4376**	**5757**	**31.6**

Tropical Plywood

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
SPAIN	552	507	-8.2
BRAZIL	302	300	-0.7
CAMEROON	83	299	260.2
GABON	0	294	0.0
LITHUANIA	0	104	0.0
FRANCE	151	95	-37.1
OTHER	363	188	-48.2
TOTAL	**1451**	**1787**	**23.2**

Other Hardwood Plywood

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
FINLAND	4310	6220	44.3
GERMANY	598	1975	230.3
U.K.	803	1576	96.3
SPAIN	1775	1401	-21.1
SWEDEN	165	159	-3.6
NETHERLANDS	0	52	0.0
OTHER	187	116	-38.0
TOTAL	**7838**	**11499**	**46.7**

Softwood Plywood

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
SPAIN	1452	1586	9.2
GERMANY	54	532	885.2
BRAZIL	236	415	75.8
AUSTRIA	0	380	0.0
FRANCE	132	283	114.4
FINLAND	406	240	-40.9
OTHER	683	392	-42.6
TOTAL	**2963**	**3828**	**29.2**

Sleepers

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
GERMANY	0	115	0.0
AUSTRIA	0	6	0.0
...	0	0	0.0
...	0	0	0.0
OTHER	2963	0	-100.0
TOTAL	**2963**	**121**	**-95.9**

Profiled Wood - Softwood

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
SPAIN	3094	2510	-18.9
ITALY	836	562	-32.8
FRANCE	124	244	96.8
BELGIUM	124	187	50.8
OTHER	329	410	24.6
TOTAL	**4507**	**3913**	**-13.2**

Profiled Wood - Hardwood

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
SPAIN	11001	12903	17.3
BRAZIL	8125	7935	-2.3
ITALY	1942	1965	1.2
SWEDEN	662	1497	126.1
OTHER	8414	6860	-18.5
TOTAL	**30144**	**31160**	**3.4**

Wood windows and frames

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
SPAIN	655	1606	145.2
DENMARK	2494	1369	-45.1
POLAND	879	707	-19.6
FRANCE	270	177	-34.4
OTHER	708	97	-86.3
TOTAL	**5006**	**3956**	**-21.0**

Wood doors and frames

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
SPAIN	15024	18029	20.0
BRAZIL	557	1011	81.5
ITALY	88	669	660.2
FRANCE	352	370	5.1
OTHER	582	671	15.3
TOTAL	**16603**	**20750**	**25.0**

Parquet panels

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
SPAIN	3856	4181	8.4
BRAZIL	1520	2355	54.9
SWEDEN	1480	2319	56.7
NETHERLANDS	1803	1840	2.1
OTHER	7472	6760	-9.5
TOTAL	**16131**	**17455**	**8.2**

Wooden Furniture

Value (euro 000s)	1999	2000	% chg
SPAIN	70595	72689	3.0
ITALY	19785	22860	15.5
U.K.	15016	13894	-7.5
FRANCE	10152	10945	7.8
GERMANY	3532	4482	26.9
NETHERLANDS	2034	3252	59.9
BELGIUM	3890	3061	-21.3
BRAZIL	1291	2422	87.6
OTHER	9228	11977	29.8
TOTAL	**135523**	**145582**	**7.4**

Source: Eurostat supplied by BTS and analysed by hardwoodmarkets.com

Continued from page 13

hardwood (which includes unassembled components for parquet) and of parquet panels. Another potentially significant trend is the 70% increase in the import value of wood windows and frames into France, notably from Denmark and Hungary.

Italy

All round rise in imports

As in France, Italy also experienced bouyant levels of hardwood trading during 2000. Imports of all hardwood products were up on the previous year. The Italian economy grew by 2.7% during the year, with growth excelerating to 3.2% in the last quarter. GDP growth this year is forecast at around 2.2%. According to Euroconstruct, construction sector activity was strong last year, growing 5.6%, and is forecast to continue to grow at reasonably bouyant level of 2.9% this year. Italy's world-leading furniture sector was a strong buyer of hardwood during 2000, and evidence from recent shows indicates confidence in the sector remains high. Import penetration into the Italian furniture market is increasing, but remains small compared with the overall size of the Italian industry.

Underlying economic bouyancy is reflected in the high value of imports last year. Tropical log imports were up 18%, with Liberia, Gabon and Congo (Brazzaville) filling the gap in supplies resulting from Cameroon's log export regulations. However Cameroon has now overtaken Ivory Coast as the major supplier of tropical sawn lumber to Italy.

Temperate imports well up

The import value of temperate hardwood logs and lumber was also well up on the previous year. Despite the weak euro, Italian buying of American hardwoods was at relatively high levels during 2000. The value of European hardwood imports from many countries in both Eastern and Western Europe also increased during 2000, with a few exceptions. For example, the value of oak sawn lumber imports from Croatia, now Italy's major supplier of this product, were down nearly 13% between 1999 and 2000.

The strength of Italy's furniture sector during 2000 is reflected in bouyant levels of hardwood veneer import, both tropical and temperate. There was also significant growth in Italy's imports of further processed wood products during 2000, notably of profiled wood (up 17% by value), wood window frames (up 26%), wood doors (up 22%), and parquet panels (up 16%).

Spain

Growing strongly

Hardwood imports into Spain grew strongly last year, with import values for all the major products recording significant growth. Spain's economy has been bouyant since the introduction of the euro which has served to keep interest rates low and raised levels of confidence over exchange rate volatility. GDP grew by 3.7% in 2000. Nevertheless the pace of economic growth is expected to slow during 2001 as domestic demand falls back. According to Euroconstruct, construction sector activity grew at the rapid rate of 6.5% last year, but may fall to less than 3% this year. Spain's important furniture sector has benefited from inward investment over recent years and has been performing well on international markets. But the Spanish furniture sector is subject to increased competition at home. Imports of wood furniture into Spain increased by 23% during 2000, with particularly strong growth in imports from Italy, Indonesia and China.

Reflecting reduced availability following Cameroon's log export ban, the overall value of tropical log imports remained flat during 2000 compared with the previous year.

Increasing imports from CAR

However Spanish importers significantly increased their purchases of logs from the Central African Republic. Imports of tropical sawn were also at high levels last year, rising 14% by value compared with the previous year. As in Italy, Cameroon replaced Ivory Coast as Spain's major supplier of tropical sawn lumber. Spain is buying an increasing amount of flooring lumber from Brazil. Strength in the wood flooring sector is also reflected in a 39% increase in Spain's imports of parquet panels.

Despite the weak euro, Spain was a bouyant market for American hardwoods during 2000, the value of US oak and other hardwoods increasing by 27% and 25% compared to the previous year. Spain's furniture sector is now a major market for American oak, cherry, maple, walnut and ash. Im-

Continued on page 15

Exchange rates

		One GB pound (£)			One US Dollar ($)			One Euro		
		30-Mar	27-Apr	25-May	30-Mar	27-Apr	25-May	30-Mar	27-Apr	25-May
Argentina	Peso	1.421	1.4357	1.4199	0.9996	0.9993	0.9995	0.8836	0.892	0.8564
Australia	Aus.$	2.9117	2.8174	2.736	2.0481	1.961	1.9259	1.8106	1.7503	1.6501
Bangladesh	Taka	76.9114	77.7255	76.8572	54.1	54.1	54.1	47.825	43.287	46.353
Belgium	Belgian Fr.	64.8747	64.9335	66.8871	45.6334	45.1962	47.082	40.34	40.34	40.34
Belize	B$	2.8007	2.8303	2.7987	1.97	1.97	1.97	1.7415	1.7583	1.6879
Bolivia	Boliviano	9.2123	9.3429	9.3102	6.48	6.503	6.5535	5.7284	5.8043	5.6151
Botswana	Pula	7.9936	8.0555	7.9455	5.6227	5.607	5.5928	4.9705	5.0045	4.792
Brazil	Real	3.0807	3.1931	3.3684	2.167	2.2225	2.371	1.9157	1.9837	2.0315
Fr. Africa*	CFA Fr.	1054.91	1055.87	1087.64	742.03	734.93	765.59	655.96	655.96	655.96
Canada	Canadian $	2.2386	2.2133	2.1962	1.5746	1.5405	1.5459	1.392	1.375	1.3245
Chile	Peso	845.526	861.661	861.127	594.750	599.750	606.150	525.759	535.307	519.349
China	Yuan	11.768	11.892	11.7589	8.2777	8.2773	8.2771	7.3175	7.3879	7.0919
Czech Republic	Koruna	55.6846	55.5773	56.87	39.169	38.684	40.031	34.625	34.527	34.299
Denmark	Danish Krone	12.0122	12.0159	12.3675	8.4495	8.3635	8.7055	7.4694	7.4649	7.4589
Estonia	Kroon	25.1686	25.1794	25.9451	17.7038	17.5259	18.263	15.65	15.643	15.648
Europe	Euro	1.6082	1.6097	1.6581	1.1312	1.1204	1.1671	1	1	1
Finland	Markka	9.5619	9.5706	9.8586	6.726	6.6615	6.9395	5.9457	5.9457	5.9457
France	Franc	10.5491	10.5587	10.8764	7.4203	7.3493	7.6559	6.5596	6.5596	6.5596
Germany	D-mark	3.1454	3.1482	3.2429	2.2125	2.1913	2.2827	1.9558	1.9558	1.9558
Ghana	Cedi	10570.00	10811.20	10868.00	7435.00	7525.00	7650.00	6572.57	6716.45	6554.55
Guyana	Guyanese $	256.608	259.324	256.427	180.500	180.500	180.500	159.562	161.105	154.652
Hong Kong	HK$	11.0878	11.2051	11.0808	7.7993	7.7992	7.7998	6.8946	6.9612	6.6829
India	Rupee	66.2845	67.3123	66.7209	46.625	46.852	46.965	41.217	41.818	40.24
Indonesia	Rupiah	14810.0	16917.0	16273.5	10417.5	11775.0	11455.0	9209.1	10509.8	9814.7
Irish Republic	Punt	1.2666	1.2677	1.3059	0.8909	0.8824	0.9192	0.7876	0.7876	0.7876
Italy	Lira	3113.91	3116.73	3210.51	2190.35	2169.37	2259.89	1936.27	1936.27	1936.27
Japan	Yen	178.161	177.842	171.451	125.32	123.785	120.69	110.78	110.48	103.4
Kenya	K. Shilling	110.604	111.431	112.445	77.8	77.56	79.15	68.775	69.226	67.816
Korea South	Won	1892.22	1905.78	1831.36	1331.00	1326.50	1289.10	1176.60	1183.97	1104.50
Liberia	Liberian $	1.4217	1.4367	1.4207	1	1	1	0.384	0.8926	0.8568
Malaysia	Ringgit	5.4023	5.4595	5.3985	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.3592	3.3917	3.2558
Myanmar	Kyat	9.5445	9.5963	9.6346	6.7137	6.6794	6.7818	5.9349	5.9617	5.7753
Netherlands	Guilder	3.544	3.5472	3.654	2.4929	2.469	2.572	2.2037	2.2037	2.2037
New Zealand	NZ$	3.5146	3.4868	3.3474	2.4722	2.4269	2.3563	2.1854	2.1661	2.0189
Nigeria	Naira	174.152	172.045	161.954	122.500	119.750	114.000	108.290	106.883	97.675
Papua NG	Kina	4.6539	4.195	4.454	3.2736	2.9199	3.1352	2.8939	2.6062	2.6862
Philippines	Peso	70.4073	73.1281	71.7784	49.525	50.9	50.525	43.78	45.431	43.29
Poland	Zloty	5.8124	5.7145	5.7005	4.0885	3.9775	4.0126	3.6143	3.5501	3.438
Portugal	Escudo	322.416	322.708	332.417	226.790	224.617	233.989	200.482	200.482	200.482
Romania	Leu	39220.5	40500.6	40711.6	27588.0	28190.0	28657.0	24387.8	25161.0	24553.3
Russia	Rouble	40.9251	41.6026	41.3367	28.787	28.957	29.097	25.448	25.846	24.93
Singapore	Singapore $	2.5668	2.6134	2.5707	1.8055	1.819	1.8095	1.5961	1.6236	1.5504
Solomon Islands	Slmn. Is. $	7.4394	7.5895	7.5486	5.2329	5.2826	5.3135	4.6259	4.715	4.5261
South Africa	Rand	11.3875	11.4613	11.2409	8.0101	7.9775	7.9125	7.0809	7.1204	6.7795
Spain	Peseta	267.582	267.825	275.883	188.220	186.417	194.195	166.386	166.386	166.386
Sweden	Krona	14.6707	14.6252	15.019	10.3195	10.1797	10.572	9.1225	9.0859	9.058
Taiwan	$	46.6906	47.3077	47.5918	32.8425	32.928	33.5	29.033	29.39	28.703
Tanzania	Shilling	1222.62	1280.10	1265.80	860.00	891.00	891.00	760.24	795.26	763.41
Thailand	Baht	63.9672	65.6579	64.7036	44.995	45.7005	45.545	39.776	40.79	39.023
Uganda	New Shilling	2537.65	2564.51	2532.31	1785.00	1785.00	1782.50	1577.95	1593.20	1527.25
United Kingdom	£	1	1	1	0.7034	0.6960	0.7039	0.6218	0.6213	0.6031
U.S.A	US $	1.4217	1.4367	1.4207	1	1	1	0.884	0.8926	0.8568
Venezuala	Bolivar	1005.460	1022.580	1018.970	707.250	711.755	717.255	625.209	635.277	614.544
Vietnam	Dong	20676.5	20927.0	20783.4	14544.0	14566.0	14629.5	12856.9	13000.9	12534.6
Zimbabwe	$	78.2334	79.0545	78.2068	55.03	55.025	5.05	48.647	49.113	47.167

*Cameroon, CAR, Congo, Gabon & Cote d'Ivoire

European annual review

Continued from page 14

ports of beech also increased during early 2000, notably of logs from France and Germany, partly reflecting increased availability following the December 1999 storms.

Spain is relying increasingly on imported hardwood veneers, a trend which reflects growth in the nation's furniture sector, and perhaps also a return to fashion of high quality real wood in place of non-wood substrates. By value, imports of tropical and temperate hardwood veneers increased by 26% and 35% respectively during 2000.

After a reasonably bouyant start to 2001, there are some signs that hardwood lumber demand in Spain has now fallen away. Demand for American hardwoods has wavered in the face of the continuing weakness of the euro. Import demand for beech has suffered from over-stocking.

Portugal

Boost from quality furniture

Like Spain, Portugal has benefited from membership of the euro which has contributed to generally low interest rates, greater price stability and firm economic growth. However consumer spending and investment are expected to grow at a slower pace during 2001 due to the government's implementation of tighter monetary policy as the country faces a looming budget crises.

Hardwoods imported into Portugal are destined for three main end-user sectors; pulp and paper (eucalyptus - excluded from the import data), joinery and furniture. Demand for imported hardwoods has been rising in Portugal as the quality of interior fitting and the demand for high-end furniture increases. The Portuguese furniture industry is made up of about 3,000 companies, a few of which are large manufacturers.

Major buyer of tropical logs

Portugal has traditionally been a major buyer of tropical hardwood logs, imports of which were up 8% by value during 2000 compared with the previous year. An increase in imports from Gabon compensated for a major fall in imports from Cameroon. There are around 300 small sawmills in Portugal where logs are often cut through and through for re-sale as boules.

Portugal is a significant buyer of African and Brazilian sawn lumber, partly a reflection of strong linguistic and trade links left over from its colonial past. Last year there was a trend amongst some importers to switch from their main African suppliers to Brazilian shippers in an effort to benefit from greater ease of access and improved payment terms.

US leading temperate supplier

The US is the leading supplier of temperate hardwoods to Portugal, with a strong focus on white oak, as in Spain. Portuguese end-users have often prefered to buy temperate hardwood in log form, believing they are getting a better deal for species where the kiln-dried, square-edged lumber option is costly such as with American cherry. But this attitude may now be changing. The value of US sawn lumber imported into Portugal increased by 19% during 2000, while imports of US logs were well down on the previous year. However, since the last quarter of 2000, the continuing weakness of the euro against the US dollar has created unease in the market and a reluctance to maintain stock levels.

Association Profile - TTF - UK and Eire

Members 530

The Timber Trade Federation (TTF) represents 530 British timber importers and distributors, for which there is section dedicated to the hardwood trade known as the National Hardwood Division. Specialised hardwood members 156. The Federation, whose office is in central London, takes a keen interest in environmental matters and was responsible for forming the "Forests Forever" campaign over a decade ago. TTF, through its new Director General, has strong political links and also works internationally with other organisations such as ITTO and UCBD. The Board of TTF is made up of members who appoint a secretariat which has the responsibility of informing and advising members on trade issues. The Federation originally formed the Timber Research & Development Association, which is now a private technical services company, with which TTF still maintains close links. TTF provides statistical and market information to its members and works with promotional bodies such as "wood.for good."

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www.ttf.co.uk

Hardwood Events

Date	Event	Venue	Target audience	Contact
2001				
7-8 Jun	American Hardwood Export Council Southeast Asia Convention	White Swan Hotel Guangzhou, China	Trade, manufacturers architects, designers	AHEC Wash. DC Tel: (202) 463 2720 Fax: (202) 463 2787, www.ahec.org
24-29 Sept	FIM	Valencia, Spain	Furniture industry	
4-5 Oct	ATIBT 50th Anniversary Forum	FAO Headquarters Rome	Tropical forestry, trade and industry	ATIBT, Paris, Tel: +33 143 42 42 00 Fax: +33 1 43 42 55 22, www.atibt.com
1-3 Oct	Tropical Forestry Research in the New Millennium	Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	Tropical forestry	www.frim.gov.my
25-26 Oct	American Hardwood Export Council European Convention	Dublin	Timber trade	AHEC London, Tel (+44) 0207 626 4111 Fax, (+44) 0207626 4222
5-10 Nov	Batimat	Paris, France	International building industry	
6-10 Nov	Maderalia	Valencia, Spain	Suppliers to the furniture industry	
20-24 Nov	The Fifth Plywood and Tropical Timber International Congress and Expo	Belem, Brazil	Timber and plywood trade	contact WR Sao Paulo email: wrsp@uol.com.br

Easing African forward market
Demand for forward contracts of most African hardwoods has eased off in most European markets, including Spain and the UK. Slowing forward demand reflects reasonably high stocks in Europe and uncertainty over underlying economic conditions. Importers are also preparing for the anticipated slowdown in end-user demand over the summer months. **Page 3**

Meranti prices slide even further
The European forward market for dark red meranti and seraya remains very subdued. After a few months of stability at low levels, there are reports of even cheaper offers for meranti during May as mills are seeking cash to cover costs. The Japanese market for seraya lumber also remains weak, although prices in Japan are holding steady at low levels for the time being. **Page 5**

Glimmers of light in the US
In May, the US Federal Reserve reduced interest rates to 4%, the lowest rate in seven years. President Bush was also on track to introduce far-reaching tax cuts. These measures hold out reasonable prospects for better US hardwood demand later in the year. But, for the time-being, overall demand levels are subdued and the market is highly competitive. Buyers throughout the trading chain are tending only to replace rather than build inventories. Demand from the U.S. furniture sector is still confined, reflecting both current economic conditions and a longer term trend towards increased market penetration by overseas manufacturers. **Page 6**

US export markets competitive
Export markets for American hardwood are highly competitive. Buyers everywhere continue to adopt a wait-and-see approach to purchasing, an attitude encouraged by widespread perceptions of ready availability. As the domestic market has slowed in the U.S., many producers are seeking to keep as much volume moving on the international market as possible. **Page 6 & 7**

US production cuts begin to balance supply and demand
Hardwood saw mills in North America have responded relatively quickly to the downturn in demand by reducing production. Already there are signs that the price slide is slowing. Exceptions are tulipwood and ash, supplies of which remain in excess of demand. **Page 3**

Divided market for beech
Different market conditions prevail for unsteamed and steamed sawn beech. Availability of unsteamed and lighter sawn beech from new season logs - qualities preferred by many buyers - is relatively limited in Western Europe and prices have remained reasonably stable. By contrast, stocks of steamed beech in darker colours produced from storm felled logs remain very high, particularly in France. Demand for the latter product, which is of less interest to major buyers in China and Spain, has also been relatively weak. Supplies of sawn beech from Eastern Europe have been increasing over recent months, and there is intense competition for market share between Romanian, Croatian, Yugoslavian, Bulgarian and Ukrainian suppliers. **Page 8**

Switch to European oak may disrupt market
Due to low availability of green beech logs and subdued demand for beech lumber, many mills in Western Europe have switched to cutting oak. In France, there is high availability of oak logs from storm damaged forests. However it is not easy for specialist beech mills to switch to oak - raising concerns that inexperienced producers may disrupt the market. **Page 8**

Global Witness to monitor forestry in Cameroon
Global Witness, the UK based environmental organisation, has been appointed as an independent monitor of forestry operations in Cameroon. The organisation is also setting alarm bells ringing over logging operations in Liberia. **Pages 3 & 4**

Mahogany logging recommences
The rains in northern Brazil are now over and logging operations have recommenced. New season mahogany lumber should start to become available from Belem by end June. News of tightening environmental controls suggest harvest levels will be at least as restricted as last year, and shippers are already signalling their intention to push for higher prices. It remains to be seen whether these can be made to stick as the economy has cooled in the U.S., the dominant market for American mahogany. **Page 4**

Weak plywood demand
Indonesian plywood mills have reasonable stocks of logs at present, but export demand is currently subdued with weak buying in Japan and the U.S. UK demand for Far Eastern hardwood plywood remains steady at relatively low levels. UK importers are buying Far Eastern plywood principally from Indonesia, as Malaysian mills find prevailing European prices unattractive. **Page 5**

European hardwood review
Some highlights from our review of 2000:

■The value of Germany's imports of hardwood logs were significantly higher during 2000 than the previous year, while imports of sawn lumber were static.

■By value, Dutch imports of tropical sawn lumber from Malaysia and Cameroon were up 45% and 75% respectively last year.

■Belgium's imports of tropical logs declined 24% by value during 2000, but the fall was more than offset by a 50% increase in tropical sawn imports

■2000 was a very bouyant year for the hardwood trade in France, Spain, Portugal and Italy. The value of imports of most hardwood products in all four countries was higher than the previous year

■High levels of wood furniture import into EU countries suggest domestic furniture industries are coming under pressure

Pages 1 & 9-15