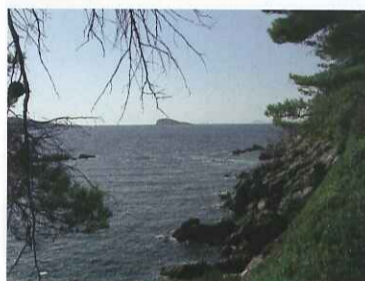


The eighth general meeting of EBIA took place in Dubrovnik last September. Founded in 2000, Ebia is made up of 8 national associations (Austria, Belgium, France, Italy, Germany, Netherlands, Portugal and Spain), 3 multinational corporations, 140 companies located in 11 nations and a series of supplier partners. From the very outset, the European Association of Bedding Industries has aimed at arousing interest and promoting the professional skills of its sector through a series of communications and research activities. Frank Verschuer, President of Ebia, opened the meeting, while the annual report was commented by the General Secretary. The firm OLMO undertook to present the member partners and this was followed up by a speech on the subject of "Recent results and activities of APL, Association for the Promotion of Bedding" held by the President of UFL, France. FlirtWorkS, a firm from the Netherlands, used a curious title to present its talk: "How to put your customers to bed". The densely packed agenda of meetings comprised numerous lectures among which: "The ergonomics of bedding" (Prof.

**In the foreground  
Giovanni Artioli and Francesco  
Spotorno Olmo (Olmo Giuseppe)**



Richard Goosens from the Dutch University of Delft), "New bedding systems improve the quality of sleep and reduce sickness and physical stress" (Prof. Bert Jacobsen, University of Oklahoma) and "Analysis of results from the Ebia consumer survey" (Christophe Vergult, Sr., Insites Consultant, Belgium). The meeting offered a useful opportunity to illustrate and discuss those themes and objectives that have always been pursued by the association, and which may be summarised in an analysis of consumer attitudes and expectations towards the mattress, leading to a definition of its main characteristics, a "psychologically" fair price and optimal lifespan. By means of an effective com-



**Gabriele Gamberoni (Bedding),  
Fabio Formenti (Gruppo  
Industriale Formenti),  
Valentino Stellini (Stellini  
Textile Group),  
Stefania Carniello (Imbotex).**



munications campaign to stimulate public awareness, EBIA has tried to offer consumers more information with regards to the choice of an ideal product for ensuring a better quality of life, as well as achieving interesting market results: in 2006 sales increased by 4.3% within EBIA, mattresses in PUR managed to undermine the traditional supremacy of spring mattresses, closely followed by Latex; the variable density of new mattress products proved to be the indispensable remedy for backache and correcting bad posture during sleep. As far as product guarantees are concerned, it was pointed out that the warranty periods adopted so far (up to 20 years in some cases, 10 years in almo-

st all) definitely need to be reviewed. The suggestion coming from the trade is to limit the guarantee and mattress replacement time span to 7 years. Introduced with the aim of promoting creativity and innovation in the sector, the EBIA prize was awarded for the first time on September 20 to Professor Anton Coenen, who has been operating for many years in the Netherlands, engaged in research into various aspects of sleep, its characteristics and quality, as well as a definition of the ideal bedding surface. ■

# EBIA

## European Bedding Industries' Association

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