

Press Release

2nd General Assembly of the European Bedding Industries' Association Montecatini (Italy), 20th & 21st September 2001

On 20th & 21st September 2001 the charming thermal city of Montecatini became the European capital of the bedding industry. Invited by EBIA (European Bedding Industries' Association), About 140 people came to Italy for two days of hard work, informal meetings and relaxation.

Most important items

After having expressed his sympathy to our American friends, Mr Rudolf Köberle & Mr. Alfred Ancion gave a short overview of the realization of EBIA since its foundation early 2000. EBIA is composed of seven national associations and two multinational groups; their representatives have worked in an amicable and effective way.

EBIA's Technical Committee gave a presentation on the different working items:

1. European recommendation on the use of the term 'latex'
2. Preparation of a test method on slats
3. Follow-up of several projects currently worked out by the European Commission:
 - General Safety Directive
 - Review of the eco-label for mattresses
 - End of life of mattresses, especially in view of the future Flemish legislation.
 - Environmental action programme
 - European chemicals policy

In the afternoon of 20th September, participants could choose between two parallel working sessions :

1. Technical working group during which the items under point 3 were discussed in depth.
2. The marketing working group dealt with problems related to guarantee and EBIA's European market survey.

As in Barcelona last year, the national representatives made a presentation on production, sales, distribution channels and their views on future market evolutions.

At this moment the European market is mediocre and the forecast for 2001 in terms of turnover shows a decrease of between -2% and -5%.

Two associate members, i.e. Bekaert Mattress Ticking (Belgium) and Leggett&Platt Europe (UK) have presented their companies to the audience.

Last but not least, Mr Bruno Vendroux gave a presentation on the marketing strategies of Electrolux, Electrolux's confrontation with the various distribution channels in Europe, the lifetime of white goods, etc as these can be compared with the mattresses industry.

The president, R. Köberle closed the General Assembly and announced that next year's meeting will be held on 19th & 20th September in Cannes (France).

Contact :

European Bedding Industries' Association
Mrs. Katia Thiebaut