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Policy for wood consumption in Romania

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Summary

Throughout 1990 the raw material needs of the Romanian wood sector exceeded the available wood volume. In short, production capacities were too high. At the same time the production was intended mainly for export while imports were kept at minimum for the majority of products.

At the beginning of the transition period, removals fell, because of new forest management limits and changes in structure and legislation, arising from the transition to the market oriented economy. This caused a severe fall in production of all wood products. Privatisation, which is practically complete now, has been reflected in a new configuration of the Romanian wood industry. There are now more than 8000 small and medium size companies as well as some large companies set up by foreign investors. The latter have had a significant impact on the development and production of new value-added products in Romania.

Another important impact on the Romanian policy in the field of wood was due to the alignment to the European legislation – Directive 68/89 EEC, Directive 94/62 EEC, and Directive 88/378 EEC – and also by the adoption and harmonization of more than 87 % European standards regarding wood and wood products.

After hesitating at the beginning of the transition period, activities aiming at opening and improving the Romanian wood market resulted in complete liberalization of wood and wood products trade from 1 January 1998. At the end of 2002 there was a positive balance in the wood trade. 45 % of wood products exports are of secondary processed products. Furniture, the traditional product demanded by the markets, exceeded the level of production and export recorded in 1989. At the same time there has also been a significant increase of imports, representing for furniture 30 % of internal consumption. There are still differences between companies and sectors in the level of modernization, implementation of quality control systems, and management.

Professional associations play a major role in development of market economy. The strategy of medium term development (2010) issued by the Romanian Government takes into consideration trends in domestic and foreign markets with special emphasis on the suitable steps to support investment in the field with perspective of diversification and improvement of demandable products.

Key words: wood consumption, wood production, restructuring, privatisation, wood policy.
