



European Furniture Industries Confederation

## European furniture industry experiences shortages of supplies

**Brussels, 12 November 2020** - The EU furniture industries contribute greatly to the EU economy, generating a yearly turnover of 96 billion Euros and employing around 1 million workers in 120.000 enterprises across the EU. Furniture is a complex product and diverse materials are used in their production, such as wood, textile, steel, glass, composites foam or plastics. The smooth functioning of our industry relies on predictable and constant supplies of these materials.

Over the past months, many furniture companies in Germany, Italy, France, Belgium, Sweden, Austria, the Netherlands, Hungary, Ireland and Latvia have experienced shortages in some materials, facing delays in deliveries. Delivery bottlenecks are especially expected to increase in the next months and beginning of next year. Production cannot be organised as wished and some companies have even had to completely shut down production due to the lack of materials and have faced penalties from distributors. All these obstacles impact the margin of profitability of the furniture industry, weakening thousands of companies.

Shortages and price increases have been reported over particleboards and MDF boards, foams and padding materials (polyether and cold cure), metal components such as innersprings bags, fittings (from Asia), steel, latex and non-woven materials, elastic mattress components, melamine films/foils, but also appliances for kitchens (without which kitchens cannot be delivered to the final customer).

We understand that in the case of spring core products, our suppliers are under pressure due to increasing demand of the furniture industry, as well as upstream supplies with rolled and refined wire. In the case of foams, there seems to be a shortage due to a standstill of TDI production and a *force majeure* declared at the same time by major chemical producers. We also understand that some materials, such as non-wovens, may be increasingly needed to produce face masks and medical protection gear, or in the case of latex, for the production of medical gloves. In the case of kitchen appliances, the problem is to be traced back in difficulties in production lines due to components made in China, Turkey and Poland.

Nonetheless, furniture manufacturers hereby express concerns over continued shortages of materials and the resulting implications throughout the value chain and call on material suppliers to stabilise the supplies of materials that are necessary for the production of furniture.

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*EFIC is the European Furniture Industries Confederation, representing over 70% of the total turnover of the European Furniture Industries, a sector employing 1 million people in about 120.000 enterprises across the EU and generating a turnover of 96 billion Euros. The EFIC membership is composed of 16 national federations and one individual company member: <https://www.efic.eu/about-our-members>*

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