

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to welcome you on this sixty-second General convention of the EUEW.

First I want to thank the Polish association for the work done in organizing this event. It is not a little thing and it takes a lot of time and energy to get everything under control, and this must happen along to the current activities of the national association.

I am very happy to see a lot of attendees, on these conventions. It is a sign that people from our branch need to meet each other and to speak about the changing environment in which we are performing today. Globalization, internet sales, digitalization, new legislations, the world is changing rapidly and people are looking for signs and ideas to stay performant in the business.

Hopefully you will get some answers on your questions during this conference.

This changing world has obliged the EUEW to change too.

Past year we finalized a survey to better know what the wholesalers expect from the EUEW and the Board of Directors has taken important decisions to let the EUEW evolve in the direction expected by the wholesalers and the national associations.

A first important conclusion of the survey is that we need to be closer to the Wholesalers, for that reason an advisory Council has been set up where the wholesalers can discuss together and give suggestions to the Board. This should evolve in a meeting where the actual problems are discussed and where the wholesalers get the opportunity to propose to put in place working groups or lobby activities.

Beyond the Advisory Council we shall also increase the proximity of the EUEW to the wholesalers and the members. It was my dream that all presidents of the national associations participate to the Board meetings but this seems not to be easy to realize. For that reason the president together with the two vice-president will organize themselves to be present on a board meeting of the national association to have the opportunity to present the EUEW, explain what this association is doing and get feedback needed to improve our work.

The EUEW will also work on some horizontal topics that are important and are in fact our duty.

We want to improve the networking among wholesalers for example in articulation and divulgation of events, agendas.

We will also improve the contacts and cooperation with Cecapi, Europacable, Lighting Europe, FEST, AIE, and other professional associations at European level.

It is a wish of all the persons that participated to the survey that EUEW should provide statistical information of enough quality and representativeness. This will not be easy to realize but we shall work on it and succeed with the help of all of you.

We also want to make from our General Convention a real European event directly organized by the EUEW and not by the local association anymore. Each of our convention must attract all people that are interested in our business and it must become the place to be for all person with responsibilities in our branch.

We shall also change our communication policy, it will be mainly based on digital tools and increase the use of the website with relevant and up-to-date information.

All this will be done without forgetting to also promote the regular exchange of best practices between member associations since it is also our duty to maintain good working national associations

The adopted changes to the EUEW cannot be realized without an adapted professional structure of the organization.

Last afternoon the General Assembly decided to nominate Hans Hanegreef as our new General Secretary and his company Global Solutions as the secretariat of our association.

This will give to the EUEW the opportunity to realize the planned changes.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is not yet visible but our association has fundamental changed and will be able to evolve in a more active association that is much closer to the wholesaler.


Everything is in place and it is now the role of the wholesalers to also be present to steer the EUEW in the direction they want it to go.

A lot of challenges are waiting for us: Eco-design directive with the inclusion of criteria for resource efficiency, Reviews of the RoHS and the WEEE – directive, Review of the Construction Product Regulation, Review of the regulation on energy efficiency labeling, Circular economy package amongst others the plastic strategy and the interface between chemicals, products and waste legislation Strategy on low emission mobility (urban logistics, multimodal transports and Intelligent Transport Systems) Digital Single Market (platforms and access to information, Internet of Things) Single Energy Market.

These challenges cannot get a good solution for our branch without the coordinated input of the wholesalers on European level and nor the local associations neither our companies or groups are able to do it alone.

Ladies and Gentlemen, let us build together a stronger association for the wellbeing of the whole branch.

Thank you



João Bencatel
President EUEW