

## Ceramic Days 2014 find strong EU manufacturing sector key to growth and jobs



meetings, public events were held on 3-4 December.

On 3 December MEP Paul Rübig and MEP Elisabetta Gardini co-hosted the 15<sup>th</sup> European Parliament Ceramics Forum (EPCF). EPCF Chair MEP Rübig stressed the importance of the annual Forum stating that *"I am proud to be part of a platform that has enabled a constructive dialogue between industry experts and EU policy makers for more than 15 years. Dialogue is essential when working to reinforce growth and jobs in Europe."*

Three panels with speakers from the Parliament, Commission and industry explored key topics that impact the EU ceramic industry: circular economy, international competitiveness of SMEs and the future of EU ETS.

In his contribution to the first panel, Dr Heimo Scheuch, CU VP and CEO of Wienerberger AG, expressed that *"with respect to sustainable construction, the entire lifecycle of a clay construction product must be considered when discussing resource efficiency."*

MEP Anthea McIntyre, EPCF Vice-Chair, opened the panel on trade emphasising that EU policies should focus on *"facilitating trade and removing trade barriers, as exports play an essential role for the competitiveness of ceramic companies – particularly for SMEs."*

On climate and energy, MEP Antonio Tajani, EP VP and EPCF Vice-Chair, commented that *"it is possible to celebrate a marriage between industrial policy and*

Over 150 people attended Cerame-Unie's Ceramic Days 2014 on 1-5 December in Brussels. As well as sectoral

*climate and energy policies. This is essential to avoid carbon leakage."*

Daniel Calleja Crespo, Director General of DG Enterprise, gave the keynote speech at the cocktail reception. He noted that *"as Europe continues to fight its way out of the financial crisis, promoting industrial competitiveness is of the utmost importance. Manufacturing sectors like ceramics have been and will continue to be a vital part of the European economy and the creation of jobs."*

On 4 December a conference on research and innovation (R&I) investigated the role of EU funding in the ceramic sector.



Ahead of the Competitiveness Council which studied the link between R&I and EU competitiveness, a Commission official from DG Research R&I presented the opportunities available to industry through Horizon 2020. Other speakers shared facts and figures on H2020 schemes and tips and tricks for seeking EU funding for ceramic research projects. Panellists disclosed their practical experience with EU-funded projects on earthquake-resistant masonry (**INSYSME**), standardisation in refractories (**ReStaR**), innovative heat recovery (financed through SILC I and LIFE) and different projects related to silica.

The conference and the various success stories demonstrated the continued need for EU-funded programmes through Horizon 2020.

*"With high-level speakers and fully booked public events, the 2014 Ceramic Days were a resounding success,"* affirmed Alain Delcourt, CU President.

Visit the **CU website** for photos, presentations and agendas. The Ceramic Days 2015 will take place in Brussels from 30 November to 2 December 2015.

## Global refractory industry unites under WRA



Following successful international meetings organised by PRE in September 2013 and April 2014, the World Refractories Association (WRA) was set up and met again in November 2014 in London.

The newly-formed WRA, chaired by PRE President François Wanecq, is composed of continental associations including Europe (PRE), Latin America (ALAFAR) and North America (TRI) as well as national associations from China (ACRI), India (IRMA) and Japan (JRA). Multinational companies Magnesita Refratários S.A., RHI A.G. and Vesuvius plc are also direct members. The secretariat is in hands of PRE. A WRA General Assembly will be organised in conjunction with UNITECR on 14 September 2015 in Vienna, Austria. (av)

### Meetings and events

**16-18 March, Brussels**  
CU March meetings

**14 September, Vienna**  
WRA GA

**20-23 October, München**  
CERAMITEC 2015 Fair

## Short news and publications

- ⇒ **16 October 2014:** Astrid Volckaert participated in the CERAMITEC Roundtable on refractories, organised in Höhr-Grenzhausen, Germany, in preparation of the CERAMITEC 2015 Fair on 20-23 October 2015. The meeting discussed the topic: "Hidden Champions in their User Industries Market Trends + Innovation Potentials in Europe". Click [here](#) to see a video of the event.
- ⇒ **22-23 October 2014:** The EU-funded **ReStaR** project held its second meeting at the premises of ICAR in Moncel-lès-Lunéville, France. The project is now halfway to being finished in October 2015.
- ⇒ **27 October 2014:** The European Commission adopted the **Decision** determining the list of sectors exposed to significant risk of carbon leakage under the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS) for the period 2015-2019. The refractories sector was included in the list as its trade intensity is above 30%.
- ⇒ **27 November 2014:** 15 European industry associations signed a **joint document** highlighting the socio-economic implications of the inclusion of Al (Zr) Refractory Ceramic Fibres (RCF) on the REACH Annex XIV list (requesting authorisation). The European Commission is analysing the situation in greater detail. A decision will be taken by Member States in the course of 2015.
- ⇒ **4 December 2014:** The INTA Committee held a **public hearing** on how to effectively break the link between mineral extraction and conflict, while at the same time promote legitimate trade in the interest of economic development. INTA members assessed the Commission's proposals to encourage companies high in the supply chain to source minerals and gold responsibly from conflict areas. Speakers included OECD experts, upstream and downstream business representatives, think tanks and civil society organisations from Africa and Europe.
- ⇒ **27-29 May 2015:** The 2015 PRE Congress will be held at the Point Hotel Barbaros in Istanbul, hosted by SEREF, the Turkish Ceramic and Refractories Manufacturers Association. Please **book your hotel before 31 January** using the reservation form sent on 12 December. Should you require further information or assistance please contact Ani Deal at [events@cerameunie.eu](mailto:events@cerameunie.eu).



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