

Press Release

A workshop on **Materials for the 2020 Challenges** took place on 10 July 2012 in Brussels for discussing the role of Materials as a key enabler element for boosting the industrial and technological growth in Europe. The workshop was organised by STOA (the Parliament's own Science and Technology Options Assessment body), together with four organisations representing the science and technology materials community at European level: E-MRS, FEMS, EMF, EuMaT. The Workshop was chaired by Prof. António Correia de Campos and Dr. Paul Rubig, members of the European Parliament and STOA Committee and was supported by the presence of selected eminent speakers from the European organisations involved in the organisation of the workshop, and other speakers from major European industrial firms. Of particular relevance was the attendance of Dr. Herbert Von Bose, Director responsible for Industrial Technology within the Directorate-General for Research and Innovation of the European Commission, who provided essential information and comments on the role and position of Materials research in the future 'Horizon 2020'.

Through a pre-recorded video, Prof. Jerzy Buzek, EP President during the first half of the 7th legislative period, insisted on the crucial role of Materials for achieving success in all three main 'Horizon 2020' pillars, and asked for a clear dedicated space for Materials R&D within the future implementing structures of 'Horizon 2020'. Relevant benefit from Materials Science for all industrial sectors could be expected through a radical change in the approach to Materials Science by moving to a materials design approach, where the design of the materials and components/systems is regarded as one single integrated exercise.

Dr. Von Bose stressed the importance of ensuring coherence among the future Commission initiatives involving aspects of Materials R&D in order to achieve a real continuum from basic research to applied research. This will imply a real need to 'work together', both at the level of Commission services and at that of external systems/organisations representing the Materials community at the different stages of the value chain.

Prof. Yuan Tseh Lee (Nobel laureate) spoke about the importance of sustainability and the potential role of Materials Science and Technology in this respect: *Innovations from materials science play a huge role, such as enabling us to harvest solar energy ever more efficiently.*

In their concluding remarks, Prof. Correia de Campos and Dr. Rubig confirmed the commitment of the European Parliament to consider Materials R&D a crucial element in supporting and driving the future European industrial and societal growth. Many of the issues impacting the industrial competitiveness, the improvement of social and health conditions, and the sustainable use of energy and natural resources pass through a future better and improved use of traditional materials and/or through the development of totally new materials perfectly designed for specific applications. They also stressed the importance of drawing political attention towards creating the conditions for decreasing the European dependency on materials produced outside Europe and stimulating the creation of European producers of strategic materials for the European industry. Among these issues, normative and regulatory impacts on the use of traditional and/or innovative materials in commercial or industrial products is a topic that the European Parliament intends to tackle.

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