



PRE Congress 2022

13 June 2022, Vienna – The 2022 European Refractories Producers Federation (PRE) Congress took place on 1-3 June in Vienna, Austria, and was kindly hosted by Austrian Mining and Steel Association and co-organised by PRE.

Around 55 PRE members, executives from the refractory industry and national associations from all over Europe gathered in person for a 3-day Congress to discuss important information and key updates pertaining to the refractory industry at European level.

The Congress opened on Wednesday 1 June with the PRE Executive Committee where industry topics and administrative matters were discussed.

On the following day, the meeting sessions started with the PRE Economic Committee where members were presented with statistics concerning the 2021 trends of the European Refractory industry, the related European Union trade figures and the evolution of raw material prices and freight costs. Following this, Mr. Patrick Bikard, PRE President, gave a presentation on 'The Refractory Industry and its Decarbonisation Pathway: Outlining the importance of Governmental action for the Green Transition'. After the presentation, a public conference took place covering the topics of the 'Fit For 55' package. The Conference opened with a Keynote Speech by Dr. Othmar Karas, Vice-President of the European Parliament, and was followed by an interesting panel debate involving government and industry representatives. Following the conference, each member took part in one of the 3 workshops that had been organised on the following topics:

1. Regulatory Framework for Decarbonisation
2. Pathway to Decarbonisation: what are the solutions?
3. Sustainable Finance: Opportunity and Challenges for the Refractory Industry.

These workshops allowed to listen to key stakeholders selected for their intimacy with the above topics and to follow up these introductory presentations with in-depth discussions between the participants.

Once the meetings, public conference and workshops drew to a close, members were welcome to take part in a guided sightseeing tour of Vienna as part of the social programme organised by Austrian Mining and Steel Association. The day ended with a beautiful gala dinner in a restaurant allowing to admire the Vienna skyline.

On Friday 3 June, the General Assembly concluded the Congress. It was introduced by a very interesting presentation from Voestalpine on their own decarbonisation pathway. Key outcomes of the workshops were then presented and discussed. The Cerame-Unie staff enriched these presentations by sharing the key actions they are undertaking on the European lobbying front. The topics included trade, chemical

issues, environment, research, and circular economy. Finally, a discussion and vote took place where Mr. Christian Meyre was appointed PRE President from 2023 to 2025. The name of the future vice-president is still to be determined and will be discussed during next PRE meetings. Mr. Patrick Bikard, who has faithfully served as PRE President since 2017, was warmly thanked for his work and dedication to the industry. Lastly, a teaser was presented for the 2023 PRE Congress which will take place in Prague, Czech Republic, where we look forward to seeing everyone.


