

EuPCfocus



EUROPEAN PLASTICS CONVERTERS NEWSLETTER
 PROVIDING EUPC MEMBERS WITH A BRIEF OVERVIEW
 OF EUPC ACTIVITIES AND ISSUES

February 2009

20th Anniversary in Portugal



European Plastics Converters (**EuPC**) will be celebrating its 20th anniversary during the Annual Meeting and General Assembly in Cascais, Portugal, which will be held in Cascais, Portugal from 3-5 June 2009. The **EuPC** General Assembly will take place on 5 June 2009, and will be preceded by the Packaging Forum and the Divisions Building and Construction Division, Automotive and Transport Division, and the EuPF (European Plastic Films) Plenary meeting on 4 June 2009.

EuPC urges EU support for Processors

EuPC has told EU officials that financial support for the automotive industry needs to be extended to component suppliers. The financial crisis is now being followed by an industrial crisis and the EU members states and the EU Commission need to assist all EU companies to navigate through these very difficult waters. This message has been restated by **EuPC** in a series of high-level meetings held with the European Commission and the European Investment Bank. These meetings aimed to secure support for the processing industry and to highlight the strategic importance of the plastics conversion economy. In December, **EuPC** led a delegation of European CEOs supplying the automotive industry that met with officials from the Automotive

Unit of the European Commission's DG Enterprise. Extending automotive support down the supply chain to component suppliers is important because of the close integration of the supply chain and the strategic importance of retaining the skills of component manufacturers within the EU. Thousands of job losses in the automotive supply chain and many bankruptcies are ongoing as the start-up in January was very weak. The threats facing plastics converters in all sectors were reiterated in a meeting held with members of the cabinet of Günter Verheugen, vice-president of the European Commission, on 16 January. **EuPC** also had talks with the European Investment Bank on 21 January to ensure access to funding in the supply chain. Dangis invited a representative of the bank to attend **EuPC**'s National Plastics Association meeting to be held on 10 March.

EuPC Business Survey

EuPC and its national associations have started a quarterly business tendency survey in order to track the economic health of the European plastics converting companies. This survey is composed of six questions

for the four main end markets (packaging, B&C, automotive and consumer goods) plus a general question on the general economic situation in the industry.

Unfortunately, the conclusions of this first survey are not surprising. All markets are affected by the economic downturn. The next surveys will give us the indication whether or not the situation will continue deteriorate in the next quarters.

VinylFoundation

The Vinyl Foundation launched in 2008 has gone through its first years' activity and closed the financial year with almost 1.0 million €. With this new structure in place PVC converters and compounders that contribute to this funding mechanism are visible on the positive list via the website www.vinylfoundation.org

Even in these difficult economic times it remains vital to support the future development of the PVC markets.

The funding received in 2008 was used to co-finance some sectoral recycling activities and the Recovinyl schemes in many EU countries. The total recycled PVC volume reached over 200.000 T in 2008.

| | Overall Economic Situation | Packaging Industry | Building & Construction Market | Automotive Industry | Consumer Goods Market |
|--|----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Q1 2009 | | | | | |
| How would you describe the general economic situation in your industry? | ↓ | ↓ | ↓ | ↓ | ↓ |
| Which turnover do you expect for this quarter, compared to the preceding one? | N/A | ↓ | ↓ | ↓ | ↓ |
| How would you describe the situation regarding the export? | N/A | ↓ | ↓ | ↓ | ↓ |
| How will your prices evolve? | N/A | ↓ | ↓ | ↓ | ↓ |
| How will your earnings be? | N/A | ↓ | ↓ | ↓ | ↓ |
| Which evolution in raw material prices do you expect? | N/A | ↓ | ↓ | ↓ | ↓ |

The Vinyl Foundation needs to receive more and more support from converters and compounders as it will soon become the "license to operate" in the PVC business. Companies that do contribute are being made public via the positive list and public authorities are being made aware of this for public procurement purposes. This can only be achieved if the whole PVC industry chain continues to work together to improve PVC recycling in Europe and work out new programmes towards sustainability. The use of more PVC recyclates in new and existing products will be the focus of the future activities around the Vinyl Foundation. The word needs to be spread in our industry. Join the Vinyl Foundation to save guard a healthy future business in PVC. Companies that support the Vinyl Foundation may benefit from extra PR and marketing support and make use of the Vinyl 2010 logo on their websites. For more information please contact Bianka Nagy. (bianka.nagy@eupc.org)

Internal News

EU funded projects

FlowFree

The EU funded projects Flowfree and Polycond has finished in early 2009. The FlowFree Project which aims at the development of a high output processing method for the extrusion of solid thermoplastic sheet and profile, has concluded with following findings.

- Successful Optimisation of Process Technology and capability.
- Robust gas delivery system comprising a pump and an injector valve being capable of adding scCO₂ at high pressure into a polymer melt

stream whilst maintaining a stable and controllable extrusion process.

• CO₂ assisted polymer extrusion system has been developed to show CO₂ plasticisation effect, with a capability to produce a *foamfree* PVC extrudate. For more information please contact Bianka Nagy. (bianka.nagy@eupc.org).

Netviewer (web meetings)

EuPC will be using Netviewer, an online tool, to hold meetings and conferences over the internet. In this way a great deal of travel can be avoided and shared results can be achieved faster than ever before. The next HSE meeting on 19 March 2009, will be a web meeting. For more information, please contact Song-Lâ Ophaso (song.la.ophaso@eupc.org).

EU Regulatory News Maritime Pollution

On mid 2008 MEP Meijer sent a written question to the EC asking to give an answer on plastic waste in the oceans; he affirms that between the coasts of Japan and USA there is a 30 meter thick plastic waste as large as France, Spain and Portugal put together. At the end of 2008, Mr. Dimas responded on behalf of the Commission affirming that the Commission is aware of the existence of a growing amount of plastic waste concentrated in the Pacific Ocean and the related environmental problems; nevertheless it's a problem for which an international consensus is needed. At International level and concerning garbage from ships a consensus has been reached within the International Maritime Organization (IMO). At Eu level, these provisions were acknowledged by Directi-

ve 2000/59/EC on port reception facilities for ship-generated waste, which provides a framework aiming at ensuring that EU Member States are providing sufficient facilities in European ports and effective procedures for delivery. In addition, the European Maritime Safety Agency is monitoring the effective implementation of the directive by the Member States. The main problem that has been noticed both at EU and International level is an inadequate waste management; to this extent, the recent Waste framework Directive (2008/98/EC) strengthened the 'polluter pays' principle, based on which the cost of disposing of waste must be borne by the holder or the previous holders of waste or the producer of the product from which the waste came. For more information please contact Paolo Bochicchio (paolo.bochicchio@eupc.org)

European Parliament Elections

The Elections of the European parliament will take place between 4 and 7 June 2009 in the 27 member states of the European Union. There will be 736 Members of the European Parliament to be elected and to represent around 500,000,000 European citizens. It was foreseen that the 2009 elections would have been regulated by the treaty of Lisbon, which increases the powers of the European Parliament. However, primarily because of the failure of the Irish referendum, the framework established by the Treaty of Nice will be used again; this situation will have an effect also on the total number of MEP's to be elected: 736 MEP's under the Treaty of Nice – 751 under the Treaty of Lisbon. For more information please contact Paolo Bochicchio. (paolo.bochicchio@eupc.org)

EuPC Upcoming events

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|----------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| 10-11 March 2009 | NPA Platform Meeting | Brussels, EuPC offices |
| 10 March 2009 | Communication Committee Meeting | Brussels, EuPC offices |
| 10 March 2009 | Trade Committee Meeting | Brussels, EuPC offices |
| 19 March 2009 | HSE Meeting | Brussels, EuPC offices |
| 3 June 2009 | Steering Committee Meeting | Cascais, Portugal |
| 5 June 2009 | General Assembly | Cascais, Portugal |
| 15 September 2009 | Packaging Excom | Brussels, EuPC offices |
| 16 September 2009 | Steering Committee Meeting | Brussels, EuPC offices |
| 22-23 September 2009 | NPA Platform Meeting | Copenhagen, Denmark |