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Plastics industry plays key role in Europe's energy efficiency targets Plastics, a sustainable solution for the future

In the aftermath of EU Sustainable Energy Week, leaders of the European plastics industry met in Brussels on Wednesday, 24 June, for the conference **EU investing in its future – Plastics Construction Solutions** organised jointly by the European Plastics Converters (EuPC) and PlasticsEurope bringing together more than 100 participants. The event focused specifically on how the plastics industry, in particular the building and construction sector, contributes to the European Commission's agenda of growth, jobs, investment and energy efficiency.

Opening the conference, Czech Member of European Parliament **Martina Dlabajová** and winner of the 2015 MEP Awards in the category "Employment and Social Affairs", underlined the importance of plastics construction to the EU economy. *"It combines design, innovations and new opportunities for SMEs. The plastics industry brings highly qualified jobs to the European labour market. It is therefore crucial to emphasize the importance of matching skills and qualifications with the demand of the labour market"*.

The building and construction sector is the second biggest market for plastics in Europe. An exposition of plastics applications and a live demonstration of a flooring installation during the conference allowed the participants to understand the important role plastics play in modern buildings. In the words of **Frédéric Midy**, CEO EMEA Aliaxis and Chairman of EuPC's Building & Construction division: *"Just try to imagine a world without plastic in construction – it's almost impossible! Plastics products bring solutions and allow innovative developments in the field, while keeping in mind the wellbeing of the population. Creating new innovative applications that respect sustainable development is a challenge, and definitely an opportunity that the industry is ready to address head on"*.

Richard Thommeret, Corporate Strategic Marketing Director Construction & Energy of Solvay, confirmed that *"plastics offer smart and innovative solutions for the world's big challenges such as resource depletion, urbanisation and evolving demography"*. According to Thommeret, speaking as member of PlasticsEurope's Building and Construction Working Group, the main assets of plastics are not only their contribution

to energy savings as many of them are very good insulators but also their versatility, durability, capacity for innovation and cost-effectiveness which are visible in almost every aspect of our daily life. He also highlighted the significant advances made in the environmental performance of plastics in production as well as in the end-of-life phases.



Frédéric Midy, Martina Dlabajová, Richard Thommeret

Editor's note

The European plastics industry makes a significant contribution to the welfare in Europe by enabling innovation, creating quality of life to citizens and facilitating resource efficiency and climate protection. More than 1.6 million people are working in more than 50,000 companies (mainly small and medium sized companies in the converting sector) to create a turnover around 300 bn EUR per year.

This conference is organized jointly by:

EuPC is the leading EU level trade association, based in Brussels, representing European plastics converters. EuPC now totals 51 European plastics converting national and European industry associations; it represents more than 50,000 companies, producing over 45 million tonnes of plastic products every year.

PlasticsEurope is one of the leading European trade associations with centres in Brussels, Frankfurt, London, Madrid, Milan and Paris. We are networking with European and national plastics associations and have more than 100 member companies,



producing over 90% of all polymers across the EU28 member states plus Norway, Switzerland and Turkey.

This conference is an Energy Day of the EU Sustainable Energy Week.