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EU Live Issues

Towards an EU Industrial Strategy

UEPG signed the Joint Declaration for an ambitious EU industrial strategy, along with 128 associations representing a diverse range of sectors. This Joint Declaration aims at cooperating with the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Competitiveness Council, to define and implement an ambitious and coordinated European Industrial Strategy. The Joint Declaration is calling to strengthen and modernising the EU's industrial base, and calls upon the European Commission to reaffirm its commitment to reaching the target of 20% of GDP from industry, with an ambitious and realistic timeline.



All signatories came together to call the European Commission to adopt an Action Plan to tackle the challenges that the industrial sectors are facing, in the framework of a Communication that would include concrete steps and milestones.

Respirable Crystalline Silica (RCS)

The EU Commission has issued a proposal on 13 May 2016 [2016/0130(COD)] to include "work involving exposure to respirable crystalline silica dust generated by a work process" in Annex I of the Carcinogens and Mutagens Directive (2004/37/EC). It proposed the establishment of a binding occupational exposure limit at 0.1 mg/m³ (respirable

fraction, 8h TWA) in Annex III of the Directive. This limit value had been approved by the EC tripartite Advisory Committee for Safety and Health at work. This proposal of the European Commission triggered the ordinary legislative procedure requiring amendments, opinions and approval by the EU Council and the European Parliament.

On 13 October 2016, the EU Council adopted its position to the Carcinogens and Mutagens Directive (CMD). There were no modifications of the proposed limit values for RCS but few additions into the proposal like 'Residual Risks'.



The vote at Employment and Social Affairs Committee level took place on 28 February 2017 and approved a

compromise amendment on a Binding Occupational Threshold Limit Value of 0.05 mg/m³ to be implemented in 10 years with a review in 5 years and a stronger recital 6 in favour of NEPSI.



The trilogue negotiations between the European Parliament, the Council and the European Commission have started on 30 March 2017. The Council and the Commission keep a strong position. The Maltese EU Council Presidency intends to find an agreement on the first batch of substances by the end of its Presidency in June 2017.

MEP Claude Rolin (EPP, Belgium), Rapporteur for a second batch of substances,

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mixtures and processes under the CMD has underlined his will to support the inclusion of NEPSI into Annex III B of the directive to have a strengthened legal framework.

In the meantime, NEPSI – with the strong support of UEPG and its Members – drafted Position Papers and briefed MEPs, Governments and Permanent Representations. NEPSI Employers Signatories met on 30 March 2017 and required a NEPSI working group on standardisation for common measurement control and protocol and a NEPSI PR & Communications Strategy to prepare and support members with common messages and tools once the directive is approved and published.

Natura 2000 Action Plan

On December 2016, the European Commission published the Fitness Check of the EU Birds and Habitats Directives (Nature Directives) and concluded that, within the framework of broader EU biodiversity policy, the directives remain relevant and fit for purpose. However, in the key findings it was also mentioned that there is a need for substantial improvement in their implementation.

On 27 April 2017, the European Commission published an “EU Action Plan for nature, people and the economy”, to correct the deficiencies encountered and to improve the protection of nature and biodiversity in the EU. The purpose of this Action Plan is to reconcile biodiversity protection and economic activities, while improving the management of the Natura 2000 network through 15 actions to be carried out between 2017 and 2019.

Next steps

On 6 June 2017, the European Commission and the European Committee of the Regions will co-organise a high level conference to present the EU Action Plan. UEPG Secretary General Dirk Fincke has been invited to be a panellist on the session "Smarter implementation of the Nature Directives for nature, people and the economy", which will be a good opportunity to show that the European Aggregates Industry is actively working on the improvement of the conservation of biodiversity, developing

innovative approaches such as “Temporary Nature”, and to convey once again the message that our industry is not an obstacle but part of the solution and ready to cooperate for the better implementation of the EU Nature Directives.

Natura 2000 Proclamation Day

The European Commission, the European Parliament, the European Committee of Regions and the European Council came together on the 15 May 2017 to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the EU Birds and Habitats Directives and the EU Life Programme which were established on 21 May 1992.



This event was also the joint declaration of EU institutions to proclaim the 21 May each year, the Natura 2000 Day. UEPG was welcomed at this event by the European Commission as an important stakeholder and a close ally to improve the implementation of Nature Directives. European Commission officers thanked UEPG for the active contribution in the consultation process to develop the Action Plan and referred to the UEPG position as a useful reference document.

DDR Expo 2017

Having worked intensively and contributed to the EU Construction and Demolition Waste Protocol and to the legislative process of the Waste Framework Directive, the European Aggregates Industry is now widely recognised as a prominent stakeholder by EU institutions and a growing number of NGOs.

In this framework, the UEPG Technical Committee agreed to become an institutional partner to the Demolition, Decontamination and Recycling Expo (DDR Expo) organised by the European Demolition Association on 14-16 June 2017, in Brussels.

The DDR Expo will be the first European trade fair specialised in demolition, decontamination and recycling. Beyond a fair trade event, bringing together clients and service providers, it will be an opportunity to meet European decision-makers and to find out about all the novelties of the industry.



The format of the event will be a Forum of 3 days with conferences and networking events with a large exhibition area where businesses will have an opportunity to showcase their new products, services or machinery.

UEPG will have a workshop session on Thursday, 15 June dedicated to recycling of aggregates. We will also provide support to the European Demolition Association (EDA) to organise the session on Wednesday, 14 June on Respirable Crystalline Silica (RCS).

UEPG Secretary General Dirk Fincke will be a panellist at the Plenary Session on Friday, 16 June with the European Commission, debating the “Update of the Waste Framework Directive”.

For further details on the programme and for registrations, please do not hesitate to contact us or visit the DDR Expo website: www.ddrexpo.com

UEPG News

75 Years FEDiEX

In 2017, the Belgium Aggregates Producers Association, FEDiEX is celebrating 75 years. Over the year, the Association organised thematic events under the patronage of the King of Belgium with the participation of relevant Ministries, Authorities and Experts according to the theme proposed.



From Occupational Health and Safety, Environmental and Biodiversity to Economic, Resource-Efficient aspects the Association is show-casing its good practices and exchanges with the professionals of the sector on the future of the industry in Belgium. Each event is followed by a site visit to illustrate and promote the activities all over Belgium. The next thematic workshop is planned on 23 June on 'Nature and Biodiversity'. For more information visit www.fediex.be.

30 Years of Excellence

Time not only to review the past achievements of passionate and strongly committed national associations and aggregates producing companies, but a good opportunity to undertake an outlook on what kind of major challenges are might laying ahead.



Jim O'Brien, Honorary President and UEPG President 2009-2012 brilliantly managed to outline 30 years and 10 Presidencies in less than 30 minutes. UEPG President Jesús Ortiz described a number of tasks UEPG might have to address in the next few years. The Ceremony

took place in the prestigious Kursalon Hübner and was accompanied by classical Austrian Music performed by the ['Ensemble Wild'](#).

UEPG took this opportunity to produce a brochure on the activities and added value of the European Aggregates Association delivering to its Members.

UEPG Delegates Assembly 2017

On Monday 22 May 2017, the Austrian Chamber of Commerce (WKÖ) and the Forum Rohstoffe hosted the UEPG Entrepreneurs' Forum with more than 50 participants including Ministers' Representatives and experts from the whole industry. After an introduction from Mrs Huber-Wilhelm, Forum Rohstoffe President, and Dr Leitl, WKÖ President, presentations focused on Business and Economic Perspectives, Health and Safety aspects, new technologies and extractive industry acceptance among citizen in Austria. UEPG Delegates were then invited for a site visit of Hollitzer Quarry from the Rohrdorfer Company in Bad Deutsch-Altenburg.

The UEPG Delegates Assembly took place on 23 May. It was the opportunity to review one year of intensive work from Working Groups, Task Forces and Committees and agreed on UEPG 2017-2018 priorities, actions, membership and budget.

Upcoming UEPG events

In 2017, UEPG has joined the European Minerals Day (EMD) edition as partner. UEPG Members could join the event over the year.

What is the European Minerals Day?

The European Minerals Day (EMD) offers the opportunity to promote our sector and be more visible over quarry open days and related public events in Europe. It allows for decision-makers and citizens to explore and experience the world of minerals. The EMD is a great platform to engage with decision-makers, key stakeholders and Youth about the world of minerals and to learn more on the extractive industries. More information: www.mineralsday.eu

- The Launch event will take place on 22 September in Estonia and will be co-hosted by Nordkalk and the Estonian UEPG Member Kunda Nordic.
- The actual launch event of the European Minerals Days will take place on 22-24 September and satellite events all over the year.

- Do not miss this opportunity and join the EMD 2017 Edition. For more information, contact the UEPG General Secretariat at secretariat@uepg.eu.

- 12-13 June** Marine Aggregates TF Meeting and site visit, Belgium
- 14-16 June** DDR Expo, Brussels
- 20 June** Better Implementation and Regulatory Enforcement TF Meeting, Brussels
- 21 June** Market Based Instruments WG Meeting, Brussels
- 12 Sept.** RDS and EPD WG Meeting, Brussels
- 14-15 Sept.** Recycling TF Meeting, Norway
- 18 Sept.** Biodiversity TF Meeting, Brussels
- 18 Sept.** Water Management TF Meeting, Brussels
- 19 Sept.** Air Quality WG Meeting, Brussels
- 22 Sept.** EMD Launch event, Estonia (co-hosted by Kunda Nordic)
- 12-13 Oct.** Committees Meetings, Brussels
- 16 Nov.** Board Dinner Meeting, Tallinn, Estonia
- 17 Nov.** EU Presidency Conference "Sustainable supply of aggregates", Tallinn, Estonia