PRESS RELEASE
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Competitiveness concerns and justified ETS benchmark corrections strongly supported by the European Parliament

Today the European Parliament has stated its strong support to the ceramic industry in a plenary vote. The European Parliament has adopted MEP Jarubas' Report on the ETS Benchmark Regulation, *Report on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 2003/87/EC as regards revised benchmark values for the heat and fuel benchmarks for the period from 2026 to 2030*, with a large majority of the votes: 474 for, 82 against and 28 abstentions. It gives the European Parliament a strong negotiation mandate for the trilogue with the Council, where the discussion on the ETS fallback benchmarks update will continue.

Thanks to the amendment negotiated in the ENVI Committee, the ETS fuel and heat benchmarks for the period 2026-2030 shall be further improved for all sectors, compared to the Commission's proposal, to a value equivalent to an indicative reduction rate of 12,5%. The majority of CO_2 allowances received by ceramic sectors under the ETS are allocated on the basis of the fallback benchmarks and Cerame-Unie has called on the EU co-legislator to apply the lowest possible reduction to the fallback benchmarks. Furthermore, the amendments approved today significantly improve the Commission's proposal by introducing sector specific fallback benchmarks already in the 2026-30 period, not only in 2030 as proposed under the ETS Review, in priority for ceramic tiles (NACE 2331) and refractories (NACE 2320) and for sectors where "*Union-wide ex-ante fuel benchmark do not adequately reflect the characteristics and emission performance of manufacturing processes …*".

The fallback benchmarks reduction rate shall be aligned with the industry's real decarbonisation potential, and not simply linearly reduced year by year. The EU-wide availability and affordability of alternative energy sources, infrastructure and technologies must also be taken into account.

The European ceramic manufacturers are facing persistently high energy costs, in particular since the energy crisis in 2022, declining production and growing international competition, resulting in a 30% decline in production, together with a 50% decrease in trade balance and a 10% loss in jobs. In such context, the EU climate policies must reinforce, rather than weaken, the competitiveness of the European industry: a successful climate transition can only be achieved if companies remain able to invest, manufacture and create jobs in Europe.

Cerame-Unie welcomes the strong support received from the Parliament and across the different political groups and expresses its **hopes for the equal support in the Council ahead of the trilogue negotiations in order to deliver the lowest possible reduction of the general heat and fuel benchmarks in combination with additional improvements through sector-specific fallback benchmarks for wall and floor tiles and refractories**. We hope an appropriate solution can be found also for the post-2030 period, under the ongoing EU ETS Directive review.

The EU ETS has a major impact on the competitiveness of the European ceramic industry with over 1200 industrial installations in the system, however less than 1% of the total industrial emissions in the EU ETS. The installations, in large majority small emitters (80%), represent a variety of ceramic sectors, such as: bricks and roof tiles, ceramic wall and floor tiles, refractories, sanitaryware, tableware, expanded clay, etc.

The European ceramic industry is committed to the 2050 EU climate neutrality objective, having reduced its total GHG emissions by around 33% since 1990, and by more than 45% compared to its emissions and production peak in the years 2000s.

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