

PRESS RELEASE

## The EU Recovery Package: Addressing the most urgent needs and contributing to a more resilient Europe

**16 July 2020, Brussels – Ahead of the European Council summit on 17-18 July, Cerame-Unie calls on the Member States to quickly reach an agreement on the Recovery Plan and stresses the urgency of securing immediate access to liquidity particularly for SMEs.**

The European ceramic industry welcomes the European Commission Recovery Plan (“Next Generation EU”) presented on 27 of May as the way forward to boost economic growth towards the green and digital objectives and to build a more resilient European society.

In driving the resumption of European economic activities, Cerame-Unie points out the need for the initiatives and funding programmes of the Recovery Plan to guarantee EU SMEs immediate access to finance and to safeguard their liquidity. In that respect, Cerame-Unie President Alain Delcourt stresses that *“not only is it essential that EU member states swiftly approve and implement the EU Recovery Plan, but it is also vital to guarantee today effective access to liquidities for small and medium sized businesses in all EU countries”*.

The ceramic industry further welcomes the emphasis put on the renovation wave within NextGen EU and highlights the necessity to support the construction sector as a multiplier factor in terms of job creation and green investments, while also keeping in mind the need to promote social housing.

Continued efforts to accelerate the transition towards a circular economy are welcome too, as it should support principles such as industrial sovereignty and resilience of the Single Market by strengthening our supply chains. Furthermore, Cerame-Unie recalls that in this period of acute vulnerability for our businesses, it will be even more important to effectively make use of our trade policy instruments against unfair trade practices disrupting the Internal Market and undermining the competitiveness of European manufacturing.

Cerame-Unie highlights the potential for ceramic products to contribute to the objectives of the Recovery Plan, thanks to the essential role they play in a wide range of key value chains and eco-systems (from construction to transport, electronics, the health sector or culture and including all high temperature processes relying on ceramic refractories). The ceramic industry is ready for fostering a green and sustainable transition from all sides of the market, due to its products’ notable properties of durability, recyclability and contribution to hygiene and healthy living conditions.

The EU ceramic industry looks forward to a swift conclusion of the negotiations at European Council level to quickly unlock funding for targeted businesses, affected workers and households, thereby restoring confidence and setting the right conditions for investments needed for a green and digital transition.

*The European ceramic industry covers a wide range of products including abrasives, bricks & roof tiles, clay pipes, wall & floor tiles, refractories, sanitaryware, table- & ornamentalware, technical ceramics, expanded clay and flower pots. The industry generates over 200,000 direct jobs and a production value of €31 billion in the EU.*

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