

KEY MESSAGES

Dinner debate

Achieving Responsible and Sustainable Mining in Europe

Wednesday 30th November 2011

19:00 – 21:00

Members Salon, European Parliament

Chaired by Paul Rübzig, Member of the European Parliament (MEP)

**“The EU mining sector should be further supported and promoted in a fair competitiveness and sustainable way”,
said MEP Paul Rübzig**

Raw materials are critical for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth in Europe. In the face of an increasing world demand and the growing EU dependence on imports, sustainable raw materials supply from European sources is becoming more than ever a necessity.

Aware of these challenges to be met urgently, the EU re-launched its Raw Materials Strategy and released a Flagship Initiative for a Resource Efficient Europe. Responsible and sustainable mining has a key role to play in overcoming the raw materials and economic crisis Europe is facing today. Mining is undoubtedly an engine for growth and jobs.

“We have the knowledge and the technology in Europe but European companies have sold out their know how. Further support from the EU is therefore needed to reverse the trend.”, said **Corina Hebestreit, Director of Euromines**.

Innovation is the cornerstone of the EU Raw Materials Strategy and Europe 2020. “We should invest more on research. There are some projects on mining but we have to go further”, added Ms Hebestreit. New technologies improving resource efficiency and the efficient use of materials must be fostered. **Abraão Carvalho - Head of Unit in DG Enterprise, European Commission** - stated that Europe has the technology but

regrettably, it is not fully exploited. He is in favour of building alliance with key counterparts like Canada and Brazil in order to share best practices on sustainable and responsible mining. “We need to shape the future of the sector”, he argued.

Improving the image of this industry through training and educational seminars should be part of the new vision for mining activities. Raising awareness on the importance of raw materials and the efforts put by the private sector would help shift the general perception from a polluting industry to a smart, modern, safe and environmentally friendly sector. **András Krolopp - Senior Policy Advisor in CEEweb for biodiversity** - is convinced that mining industry can contribute to restoring biodiversity.

The Rosia Montana Gold Corporation’s project in Romania is a perfect example of the potential of responsible and sustainable mining. “Mining is a catalyst for the economic and social development of Romania”, **Ionel Blănculescu, former Romanian Minister** said. In the run up to Romania’s accession in 2007 some 400 state-run mining operations out of a total of 600 including Rosia Montana, were closed with the loss of thousands of jobs and industry knowledge in a formerly buoyant sector of the economy of what is the second poorest EU member state. The completion of the mining sector modernisation programme would ensure modern mining methods allowing Romania and its communities the opportunities to address existing economic, environmental and cultural challenges that would otherwise remain stagnant or into decline. (www.rmgc.ro/)

“The EU mining sector should be further supported and promoted in a fair competitiveness and sustainable way”, concluded **MEP Paul Rübiger**.

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