

3rd EURATEX CONVENTION: OUTLOOK 2015 FASHION AND TEXTILES IN EUROPE

With the support of the Belgian textile and fashion associations Fedustria and Creamoda, EURATEX Convention attracted about 120 participants representing industry, associations, local agencies and academics. This annual high-level meeting brought together European experts to exchange views on the future of clothing and textiles in Europe.

Mr. Serge Piolat, as President-elect of EURATEX and in the name of Mr Paccanelli, the current President, in his opening speech underlined the importance of re-inventing manufacturing to assure the competitiveness of the European companies. He welcomed the statement of President Juncker focusing, among other political goals, on strengthening the industrial base by increased investment in infrastructure, education, research and innovation.



*Mr Serge Piolat, EURATEX
President-elect*

The speakers of the opening panel of the Convention made an overwhelming review of the perspectives of the world and the EU economic development with an aim to estimate the place of textile and apparel sector in it for the near future. Edwin De Boeck, Chief economist of KBC¹, presented a detailed outlook of the macro-economic environment in Europe and the world. He shed cautious optimism for 2015 because of the increased export possibilities and the expected lower raw material and oil prices. However, the economic stabilisation in Europe is still strongly depending on an unknown evolution of the investment trends while the consumer confidence is still low.

Gildas Minvielle from IFM-Paris in his turn proved that the economic crisis influenced the textile and clothing sales in the EU countries. It caused decreasing of consumption combined with an acceleration in the uneven changes of household consumption patterns across Europe with Northern part being more inclined to transform it (e.g. multi-channeling, quality/price balance...). At the same time, the EU import structure changed - Mediterranean countries stabilised their share and China decreased its relative role in the EU import to the benefit of the other Asian countries due to changing inner-China consumer pattern. Moreover, Mr. Minvielle underlined a positive trend for the European exports of apparel and textile products to the world. This is driven by the huge potential for the European manufacturers of the growing consumption needs of the middle class in the emerging markets.

Professor Marc Van Parys from Technical University HoGent brought to discussion new horizons open for the European textile and apparel industry through the innovation and modernisation. In his vivid presentation Mr. Van Parys demonstrated astonishing examples of the most groundbreaking and sustainable processes of innovative production and finishing for the textile and apparel goods. He underlined that the excellent research and innovative products and processes resulting from projects and tests should be brought to the market as a way to shape the future of the European industry.

¹ KBC is a leading Belgian bank: <https://www.kbc.be/>



During the afternoon session the Convention participants had a chance to join the debate over the technology developments affecting the market of Personal Protective Equipment. The speakers presented the EU policies and regulatory changes influencing this sector, as well the peculiarities of public procurement of personal protective equipment.

The successful EURATEX Convention in Brussels proved that every year this event becomes a unique platform for an open and progressive debate on the current challenges and future opportunities of the textile and fashion industry in Europe.



EURATEX is the European Apparel and Textile Confederation representing interests of the European textile and clothing industries at the level of the EU institutions. As the voice of the European industry, EURATEX aims to create a favorable environment within the European Union for the manufacture of textile and clothing products. EURATEX's member federations directly or indirectly represent in the EU some 173.000 companies of an industry with a turnover of €166.500 million, employing 1.66 million workers.



Fedustria represents the textile, woodworking and furniture industry's companies. In Belgium, these sectors account for 40,321 jobs in 2,031 companies and generate a turnover of 10.3 billion euros. Fedustria acts as a representative of these industries, provides an active protection of the common interests of the members and a large range of specialised services, is a common training and meeting platform for its members and also supplies accurate and up-to-date information.



Creamoda unites Belgian clothing manufacturers and fashion brands. Its major task is to defend and serve its members in all areas of economic life. Diffusing information and advising members of the association in international, economic, social, technical and legal matters is the core business of Creamoda. Membership also means a lot of seminars about relevant topics and networking with other companies and relations of Creamoda.

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