

# PPE CONFERENCE 2014

The European Lead Market for Protective Textiles and Clothing

Get the Full Picture on PPE Innovation in Europe

## ***200 experts from the personal protective clothing and equipment sector gather for the 3<sup>rd</sup> PPE Lead Market Conference in Brussels***

*- Press Release -*

*Brussels, 20 November 2014:* The 3<sup>rd</sup> European Lead Market conference on Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) took place on 18-19 November in Brussels. It provided a broad range of information on major aspects driving innovation in the PPE sector in Europe, from evolving workplace health and safety policies, to regulation and standardisation, emerging technologies and market trends and the evolving needs of buyers, public procurers and end-users in the European and global markets. The conference continued the traditions of the two preceding editions in 2008 and 2011, featuring interesting speakers and a large audience of 200 participants from 23 countries representing the full PPE value chain. The event presented ample opportunities for open debate on key questions for the future of the PPE market and an excellent European networking platform.

This conference, like its predecessors was co-organised by the leading organisations involved in the PPE sector in Europe – the European Technology Platform for the Future of Textiles and Clothing (Textile ETP), the European Apparel and Textile Confederation (EURATEX), the European Textile Services Association (ETSA), the European Safety Federation (ESF) and the Enprotex Foundation – European Network of Public Procurers of PPE.

The first part of the conference was devoted to the overview of the regulatory developments and technology innovations affecting the PPE market. The European Agency for Occupational Health and Safety (EU OSHA) presented an inclusive review of the benefits and costs related to the investment in the occupational health and safety. Representatives of the European Commission spoke about the status of the pending PPE directive revision and presented new opportunities of public procurement of innovation in the PPE sector.

The EU co-financed Smart@Fire project was presented as an excellent example of how to use pre-commercial public procurement to fund development of the smart firefighter gear of the future based on a sound end-user specification process, a thorough market consultation and a pooling of financial resources of procurement organisations from several EU countries.

Research centres and technology suppliers presented new technology trends in functionalized textile materials, sensor and other smart function integration, challenges and potential solutions for PPE recycling as well as more sustainable finishing and cleaning technologies.

The second conference day was dedicated to technical, standards and end-user issues in PPE applications such as heat and flame, ballistic, high-visibility, electrostatic and electric arc protection as well as food contact use. A dedicated session organized by PPE procurers from the ENPROTEX network presented the results of a new study on the impact of contaminated PPE on the health of firefighters and how cleaning procedures and technologies can mitigate this underappreciated risk.

The Conference was concluded by a closing plenary devoted to the discussion on new initiatives for better collaboration between PPE manufacturers, service providers and end-users across Europe to jointly ensure adequate design and correct selection, use, care and maintenance of PPE, to carry out studies and research work together and to make use of the opportunities provided by European funding programmes and new ways of public procurement.

The co-organisers of the event will continue to work together to advance Europe's leading position in the PPE market and organize further joint initiatives and events in the coming years.

More information about the PPE Conference 2014 is available at: <http://www.textile-platform.eu/ppe-conference2014>

More information about the European PPE Lead Market Initiative is available at <http://www.textile-platform.eu/lead-market-protective-textile/>

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**ENPROTEX**  
Innovation procurement for protective textiles