

Germany

## 71<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting of the VKI

On 17.05.2017, the Annual Members' Meeting of Germany's Ceramic Industry Association (VKI) was held in Selb. At this meeting, the statistics of the member companies for 2016 were published.

### Rolf-Michael Müller re-elected as Chairman

During this year's annual meeting of the members, the current Chairman, Rolf-Michael Müller, was confirmed in his office as Chairman of Verband der Keramischen Industrie e. V. (VKI – Association of the German Ceramics Industry).

Henri Steinmetz (CEO at CeramTec GmbH) and Nicolas Luc Villeroy (Director at Villeroy & Boch AG) were elected as Vice-Chairmen. Other members of the Board are Joachim Heym (MD Sat chunk Willich GmbH), Roland P. Rauschert (MD at Paul Rauschert Steinbach GmbH), Christian Strootmann (CEO at BHS tabletop AG), Christian R. W. Seltmann (MD at Porzellanfabriken Christian Seltmann GmbH) as well as Uwe Dötsch (MD at Zehendner Keramik GmbH).

### Political vying for social benefits costs jobs

VKI Chairman Rolf-Michael Müller warned that the political parties in Germany's Bundestag election campaign are outbidding each other with promises of social benefits. A reversal of the Agenda 10 reforms as demanded by several parties would result in wage incidentals climbing to the highest level in the world. A comparative study conducted by the OECD shows that employees and employers in Germany are subject to a well above-average burden of taxes and levies. It would be far more important to strengthen Germany as a centre for industry by encouraging investment. With the maximum power price continuing to rise because of the Renewable Energies Act levy and grid fees in Germany as well as additional levies affecting labour, these investments will not be made. The still very robust job driver Germany shouldn't be taken for granted. The VKI Chairman criticizes that in this legislative term the German government had mainly burdened the economy with more regulations and additional bureaucracy. The policy makers should take care not to overdo it.

**Tab. Figures development for the whitewares, technical ceramics and stove tile industry sectors of VKI** (Source: Association statistics)

	2015	2016	Variation 2015/2016 [%]
<b>Porcelain Industry</b>			
Sales volume [t]	30 668	30 357	-1,0
Turnover [1000 EUR]	313 027	314 374	0,4
Domestic [1000 EUR]	154 085	159 906	3,8
Export [1000 EUR]	158 942	154 468	-2,8
Number of employees (December)	3450	3386	-1,9
<b>Manufactures</b>			
Sales volume [t]	276	235	-14,9
Turnover [1000 EUR]	50 627	49 865	-1,5
Domestic [1000 EUR]	30 431	30 599	0,5
Export [1000 EUR]	20 196	19 266	-4,6
Number of employees (December)	1003	1004	0,1
<b>Porcelain Industry with Manufactures</b>			
Sales volume [t]	30 944	30 592	-1,1
Turnover [1000 EUR]	363 654	364 239	0,2
Domestic [1000 EUR]	184 516	190 505	3,2
Export [1000 EUR]	179 138	173 734	-3,0
Number of employees (December)	4453	4390	-1,4
<b>Technical Ceramics</b>			
Sales volume [t]	47 132	36 019	-23,6
Turnover [1000 EUR]	784 135	754 050	-3,8
Domestic [1000 EUR]	282 190	292 089	3,5
Export [1000 EUR]	501 946	461 961	-8,0
Number of employees (December)	6059	5837	-3,7
<b>Stove Tile Industry</b>			
Turnover [1000 EUR]	9291	9584	3,1
Number of employees (December)	184	180	-2,2
<b>VKI Total</b>			
<b>Turnover [1000 EUR]</b>	<b>1 157 080</b>	<b>1 127 872</b>	<b>-2,5</b>
<b>Number of Employees (December)</b>	<b>10 696</b>	<b>10 407</b>	<b>-2,7</b>

### Guest of honour – Steffen Kampeter

The General Secretary of the Confederation of German Employers' Associations (BDA), Steffen Kampeter was this year the guest of honour. He stated: "We must dare to create more industry. Instead of new statutory claims and regulations, we need good and modern jobs with more flexibility, a nationwide digitisation campaign for better living and working conditions and world-class education and training to foster all talents and aptitudes in Germany,"