



## **The industry of the plastic transformation shares its vision of the future in the day organized by ChemPlastExpo**

**Companies, business associations, and technology centers discussed the challenges of the circular economy and what the implementation of Industry 4.0 implies through success stories and innovative solutions for the plastics industry**

**The protagonists agree in diagnosing that the plastic has a lot of future and that the primary and transformation industry is an expanding sector that offers the necessary sustainable solutions**

**Barcelona, April 8, 2019.-** The conference that ChemPlastExpo 2019 met last week in Barcelona revolved around the theme "The future of the transformation of plastic" that is currently in force to discuss the most outstanding issues and that More worrying now in this industry.

Thus, protagonists like ERCROS, ANAIP, ITENE, ITOPLAS, INTRA AUTOMATION and the own organizers of ChemPlastExpo 2019 have debated about the situation of the European plastics strategy: from the transformation to new developments in packaging, as well as the circular economy that promotes recycling and environmental sustainability in companies.

This industry that represents more than 100,000 jobs in Spain and 1,500,000 in Europe and 4,000 companies in Spain and 60,000 in Europe has been immersed in a legislative-regulatory environment of high pressure since 2015 with directives, pacts, strategies and royal decrees that they have been responded with agility on the part of the industry with voluntary agreements that come to respond and to advance the needs of the future that are precisely in the industry, able to respond to what is posed to him and much more when the debate is not the plastic but how their waste is managed.

The industry has concrete answers from biopolymers, which are plastic materials that have a biological origin and are biodegradable by fermentation of sugars and/or lipids with applications for food and non-food packaging, catering and household utensils in general, textile uses: production fiber for non-woven, spinning, home textile, medical and surgical and suitable uses Biodegradability fresh or salt water.

Society must see plastics beyond the bag made of that material. The plastic is in everything that surrounds us and improves life with its durability, lightness, and adaptability. The solution lies in the Circular Economy that raises new lives for what was previously considered waste. As ITENE shared, these residues can be minimized, for example, by designing them with their benefits in mind, using them and optimizing them with ecodesign and using materials that are recyclable, compostable and/or reusable, that is, sustainable. Biodegradable, biobased materials, of cellulose origin, or recycled materials.

The industry itself in its transformation towards digitalization contributes to improving the sustainability of its processes, as explained by ITOPLAS, focused on accompanying the industry towards digitalization, interconnection, information analysis, and proactive automation.



INTRA AUTOMATION is a good example of how Industrial Robotics, whose applications it has shared with attendees, can reduce the carbon footprint of the manufacturers and transformers themselves by helping them to manufacture cleaner, more efficient and more sustainable.

The industry is the first interested in breaking the binomial economic development/generation of waste and environmental deterioration. The European plastics strategy 2018 already pointed to the causes of what is now perceived as a problem: the high dependence on virgin fossil raw materials, the low rate of recycling and reuse, and none of them resides in the industry, in which, However, if part of the solution rests.

Although this strategy encourages a change around the world, the solution will be possible as long as there is collaboration from the entire value chain of plastics including the administration and the final consumer.

The industry has taken the initiative with its voluntary commitments that aim to achieve 70% recycling and reuse of plastic containers by 2040, achieve 50% recycling and reuse of waste by 2040, commitments to use recycled plastic with large firms, accelerate the use of recycled plastic in contact with food, raise awareness of recyclers and processors with workshops, ensure the use of recycling in long-term flows and publish a catalog of items on the market with 50% or more of material recycling.

ANAIP detailed some of the concrete initiatives of the industry as an Initiative OCS (Operation Clean Sweep) to prevent the involuntary loss of pellets, the SIG for the collection of agricultural plastics, by the industry, and with a national scope, the creation of the Sectorial Group of Recycled Plastics that, among other things, will conduct an annual survey on the use of recycled material and a tool to monitor the consumption of recycled material, the participation of all interested parties, the revision of standards for the characterization of the material recycling and the opening of product standards that allow the use of recycled material.

It has also created "The Table of Plastics", whose goal and main intentions are to try to reverse the current positioning of the reputation image of plastics, both in the public and in politics, putting the industry value.

Both ANAIP and Plastics Europe also believe that communication is important to raise society's awareness of their obligations and role with campaigns such as the recently launched #NoCulpesAlPlástico (don't blame plastic) and #DesignedToProtect.

According to Leo Bernd, Director of ChemPlastExpo, "the day has been a success of content, speakers and the public and the perfect prelude to the themes that will be the protagonist of the fair next May in Madrid, offering a perfect opportunity to reel in a clear and it would be issues that matter so much to society and affect one of the most innovative and relevant industries that we have in our country".