

EDUCATION ON REFRACTORIES IN EUROPE - A SURVEY

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ABSTRACT

During the 10 past years, the Federation for International Refractory Research and Education (FIRE) has significantly contributed to change the general opinion about refractory materials in Europe upon young people. As a matter of fact, refractory materials were, in the past, usually associated to old well-known materials mainly applied in heavy declining industries (for steel, cement and glass making... etc.). This negative image was the main reason which led to high difficulties in recruiting high potential students in the field of refractory materials.

To overcome this situation, FIRE aimed at implementing a new training methodology based on a relevant interconnections between the main experts within academic poles within Europe (Aachen, Freiberg, Leoben, Limoges and Orléans), but also worldwide (Nagoya, Wuhan, Rolla, Montreal and Sao Carlos) with most industrial leaders in refractory materials production (Almatis, Alteo, Calderys, Elkem, Imerys, Kerneos, Magnesita, Pyrotek, RHI, St-Gobain) and also some end user companies (Posco, TataSteel, Tenaris). In fact, most of these companies have important bases in Europe.

FIRE's mission is to stimulate progress in research and education at Master and PhD level supporting high level international cooperation programs and promoting the mobility of the students. Starting from an inventory of trained students in the last ten years, in an European perspective, it is today time to analyze their placement and professional evolution, and also draw some perspectives for the future of education on refractories in Europe.