



## SNL Financial hosts

December 2016

### STRADE dialogue event on EU Mining Competitiveness – report -

On **Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> December** SNL Financial, the lead partner in the STRADE consortium hosted a panel discussion on European Mining Competitiveness as part of our Horizon 2020 funded research project ‘Strategic Dialogue on Sustainable Raw Materials for Europe’ (STRADE).

The panel was chaired by the Director of Metals & Mining Research at SNL, Dr Chris Hinde. Dr Corina Hebestreit (Director of Euromines), Dr David Humphries (previous Senior Mineral Economist with Rio Tinto, currently an Honorary Lecturer, University of Dundee) and Al Gourley (Head of Mining Practice Group, Fasken Martineau LLP) completed the panel. Chris led an insightful discussion into the reasons why the EU tends to be lagging behind other industrialized regions in terms of mine productivity and cost and the steps that could be taken to reinvigorate the EU’s mining industry. The event was attended by consultancies, industries representatives and investors.

The discussion suggested that the low level of mining in the EU is attributed to many factors, the problem is multi- faceted. The main areas covered;

- The public perception of mining in the EU is incredibly poor. The fact is that as much as people may recognize the need for raw materials in their daily lives; they still don’t want mining to take place near to where they live - the ‘not in my back yard’ problem is still here.
- Land use policies in EU are not coherent with mining promotion.
- The legal system for permitting in most EU countries are laborious and confusing- they are unattractive to investors
- Mining is not made an attractive career route to school leavers or university graduates.

What can the EU do about this?

Panelists and participants discussed the options of the EU playing the role of oversight. I.e. sitting down with member states and explaining to them where their mining legal process might be confusing, ineffective and unattractive to investors, whilst at the same time sharing best practice from other member states We also explored how the EU could make geological information more publically available. Suggestions like this may not have much of an effect on actual exploration, however it may send a message to investors that Europe is at least ‘open for business.’

It is worth noting that the EU is excelling in some areas of our industry. For example in R&D, supplier technology, financing and in the mining services sector. As noted by a participant at the closing of the session, the only areas in which the EU is actually struggling is exploration and production.

The STRADE project will, over a three year period, aim to provide more concrete recommendations and detailed strategies for how the EU can support its member states to become competitive producers of the raw materials it relies on. Regardless, today was a very good start with some very experienced panelists and great audience participation.

