

Iris Ceramica Group

A Shift In Mindset

Italy's economy clocked up impressive growth of 3.8% in 2022, and business and consumer confidence continued to strengthen into 2023, according to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, a grouping of affluent countries. The OECD noted that "employment continues to grow robustly", pushing unemployment to a historic low. The strength of the economy is also reflected in the role of the ceramics industry.

Italy-based Iris Ceramica Group is one of the leading lights in the sector of high-end ceramic surfaces for luxury market, delivering highly-tailored innovative solutions to its customers. Its activities span the spectrum from traditional handmade materials that are rooted in the centuries-old craftsmanship emblematic of the Emilia Romagna's region, where it is based, to a cutting-edge green hydrogen factory. The latter will help Iris deliver on its ESG goals, which are at the very heart of what the company does.

"Our distinguishing values - **Innovation, Sustainability, Excellent Quality** - and being one step ahead, are part of our DNA. We have always been driven by a strong pioneering spirit and a constant attention to environmental sustainability, often acting as a trailblazer in the ceramic world. We express distinctive authenticity," says Iris Ceramica Group president Romano Minozzi. "Ceramics make people feel comfortable, there is also a strong bond between nature, people and ceramics, tracing back to prehistoric times. Ceramics are connected to the earth and fire; they are noble-earth elements forged by fire."

Iris Ceramica Group's materials have also recently obtained the most meaningful sustainable certificates reflecting its commitment to the circular economy. Federica Minozzi, CEO, says that the company constantly seeks "to cultivate a more favourable human-industrial interface", fostering a novel industrial humanism that acknowledges that ecology and the economy are intrinsically linked. Industrial processes need to be re-evaluated overhauled "to uplift people's lives". To this end, Iris seeks to establish an ecosystem in which recycling and upcycling prevail, and pre-existing materials can be metamorphosed or elevated into new ones to prolong their lifespan in a new shape.

"Our commitment extends to recycling and reintegrating these materials into our economic framework - an endeavour that truly excites us," says Federica Minozzi. "Nowadays, everyone is compelled to demonstrate their environmental consciousness. However, our engagement goes far beyond surface-level actions, necessitating not only financial investment but also a fundamental shift in mindset, grounded in genuine commitment."

Iris Ceramica Group's green hydrogen factory will produce hydrogen within 2025 to be used

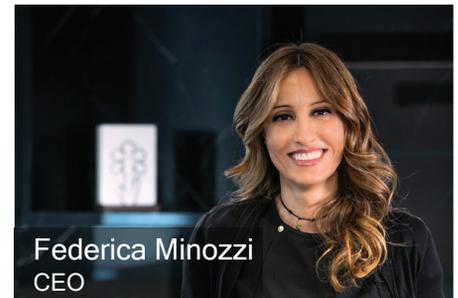


Romano Minozzi
President

in the company's kilns. The project is being developed in several phases, with initial stages already underway. This initiative marks the start of a new journey towards the decarbonisation of a particularly energy-intensive industrial sector, the contribution of which is crucial for achieving the energy transition objectives. Skill, technology, innovation and the determination to believe in a virtuous path are the key elements for the first ever **"green" ceramic industry**.

During Clerkenwell Design Week in May 2023, Iris Ceramica Group unveiled its new ICG Gallery in Central London, which further underlines its capabilities and commitments. The gallery introduces an entirely new concept that the company is eager to introduce to the market, and is expected to act as a blueprint for future ICG galleries in cities such as New York, Milan, Berlin and San Francisco. The gallery emphasises the company's core values through interactivity, immersion, and advanced technology, both to showcase the company's natural ceramic slabs and to convey its values. Upon entering the ICG Gallery, visitors are immersed in an augmented reality environment demonstrating the principles of Iris's eco-active materials known as Active Surfaces®. Active Surfaces® are highly technically complex and are antimicrobial, anti-odour, anti-pollutant, and easy to clean.

The gallery also gives visitors the opportunity to experience Iris's other innovative solutions, including "Hypertouch" which allows the user to control any device and equipment with a simple touch, and "Attract", the company's latest solution. Attract is integral to Iris Ceramica Group's future recycling plans and will enable it to move



Federica Minozzi
CEO

beyond traditional production methods - from a model of producing, selling, and prematurely discarding products, Iris envisages customers leasing materials for varying durations, with the company providing maintenance services. This approach fits with the reuse concept, wherein materials are repurposed rather than wasted.

"The "Attract" technology has received positive feedback in the London market, particularly among the most important architectural practices who now engage in the new concept of retrofitting," says Federica Minozzi. "This trend involves adapting buildings for different purposes without significant demolition, catering to varying needs like converting a space into a shop or a COVID testing clinic. This flexibility aligns with our vision of ceramic materials serving as adaptable "dresses" for environments, providing a means to change and repurpose spaces. We're focused on retrieving slabs post-use, reuse them as is, utilising our Designer's Lab for redesign, or even upscaling them into new forms or furniture."

The Italian group believes the London ICG Gallery will help inspire the architecture and design sectors, with professionals from each offering ideas and needs, and Iris Ceramica Group responds by creating bespoke solutions to align with these visions.

In everything it does, Iris remains true to the traditions of Italian ceramics - craftsmanship, creativity, experimentation, and a connection to the environment and society around.

"We serve as the custodians of ceramic culture and industry, not only in our local region but across the globe," says Romano Minozzi.