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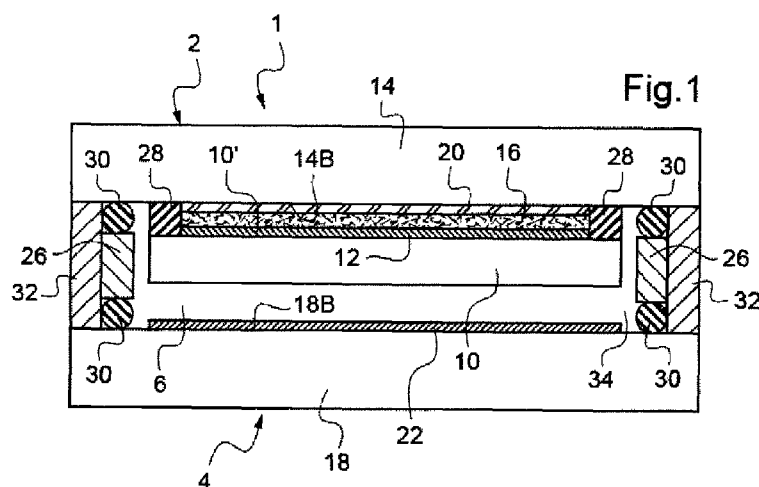
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(54) Title: ELECTROCHEMICAL GLAZING HAVING ELECTRICALLY CONTROLLABLE OPTICAL AND ENERGY-RELATED PROPERTIES



(57) Abstract: The invention relates to glazing (1) comprising a first glazing sheet (10; 10A, 10B) forming a substrate on which at least one film of an electrochemical system (12) is formed, said system having optical and/or energy-related properties that are electrically controllable, a second glazing sheet (14) forming a counter-substrate, and a third glazing sheet (18). The substrate has characteristics that allow it to be obtained by being cut from a motherboard on which motherboard at least one film of the electrochemical system (12) is formed. The substrate is located between the counter-substrate (14) and the third glazing sheet (18) and is set back relative to the counter-substrate (14) and relative to the third glazing sheet (18) over the entire circumference of the substrate (10; 10A, 10B).

ELECTROCHEMICAL GLAZING HAVING ELECTRICALLY CONTROLLABLE OPTICAL AND ENERGY-RELATED PROPERTIES

5

Background of the invention

The present invention relates to the field of electrochemical multiple glazing units having electrically
10 controllable optical and/or energy-related properties.

Certain characteristics of these glazing units can be modified using an appropriate power supply, especially the transmission, absorption and reflection of certain
15 wavelengths of electromagnetic radiation, especially in the visible and/or infrared, or even the diffusion of light. The transmission is generally varied in the optical (infrared, visible and ultraviolet) range and/or in other ranges of electromagnetic radiation, hence the device is
20 said to have variable optical and energy-related properties, the optical range not necessarily being the only range in question.

From the thermal standpoint, glazing whose transmission/absorption/reflection may be varied within at least part of the solar spectrum allows the solar heat
25 influx into rooms or passenger areas/compartments to be controlled when it is fitted as exterior glazing in buildings or as windows in transportation means of the type comprising automobiles, trains, airplanes, ships, etc., and thus it allows excessive heating of the latter
30 to be prevented should there be strong sunlight.

From the optical standpoint, the glazing allows the degree of vision to be controlled, thereby making it possible to prevent glare should there be strong sunlight, when it is mounted as exterior glazing. It may also have a
35 particularly advantageous shutter effect.

Description of the prior art

WO-2005/007398 describes laminated glazing incorporating an electrochromic, and more particularly an all-solid-state, electrochemical system having electrically controllable optical properties.

5 All the films of the electrochromic system are formed on the same glass substrate.

The substrate is laminated to a counter-substrate via a lamination interlayer so as to form a laminated glazing unit .

10 For certain applications such as in buildings, it is necessary for the substrate to be able to withstand significant temperature gradients. This is because, since the films formed on the substrate are absorbent in a plurality of solar spectral regions, the substrate is
15 liable to become very hot, especially in its central part. As for the peripheral part of the substrate, this is generally shaded, especially by the frame that holds the glazing. Because of this, the peripheral part remains cooler than the central part.

20 The temperature differences between the central part and the peripheral part of the glazing then induce mechanical stresses liable to break the glazing.

This is even more critical when the substrate is made of colored glass or, more generally, made of glass
25 absorbent in certain regions of the solar spectrum.

Brief description of the invention

The object of the invention is to provide
30 electrochemical glazing having electrically controllable optical and/or energy-related properties able to withstand significant thermal stresses while also limiting the manufacturing cost.

For this purpose, one subject of the invention is a
35 glazing unit comprising:

- a first glazing sheet forming a substrate on which at least one film of an electrochemical system is formed,

said system having optical and/or energy-related properties that are electrically controllable;

- a second glazing sheet forming a counter-substrate; and
- a third glazing sheet;

5 in which:

the substrate has characteristics that allow it to be obtained by being cut from a motherboard on which at least one film of the electrochemical system is formed;

10 the substrate is located between the counter-substrate and the third glazing sheet;

the substrate is set back relative to the counter-substrate over the entire circumference of the substrate; and

15 the substrate is set back relative to the third glazing sheet over the entire circumference of the substrate .

One possible way of preventing the glass substrate from breaking consists in thermally or chemically tempering it so that it can withstand a temperature difference between a point on the central part of the substrate and a point on the edge of the substrate of at least 50°C and preferably at least 100°C.

20 However, the films of many electrochemical systems having electrically controllable optical properties are liable to be severely damaged if they undergo the thermal tempering applied to the glass sheet, and it is not possible to chemically temper the glass sheet while the films are present on it.

30 Thermal tempering in fact consists in rapidly cooling, using air jets, the glass sheet heated to above 600°C, for example to 630°C.

35 Chemical tempering consists in immersing the glass sheet in a bath of molten salts (KNO₃ for soda-lime glasses) . Above a certain temperature (400°C) , there is a chemical exchange between KNO₃ and NaNC>3 salts, K⁺ replacing the smaller Na⁺. This replacement compresses the outer surfaces of the glass sheet and makes the glass more resistant to mechanical forces or to temperature

differences between the edges and the center of the glass. The nature of the ions depends on the chemical composition of the glass.

5 The same also applies to toughened glass, which is a thermally tempered glass the heating and principally cooling parameters of which are different from the thermal tempering parameters (longer cooling time) .

10 One possible solution would therefore consist in depositing the films of the electrochromic system on the substrate after the latter has been tempered or toughened.

However, this solution remains expensive.

15 So as to reduce cost, one idea of the invention is to cut the substrate after the films have been deposited so as to obtain a plurality of substrates from the same motherboard.

Cutting from a motherboard furthermore has the advantages of making the production line more flexible, of making the production process more stable and of providing higher yields.

20 However, tempered or toughened glass is difficult or even impossible to cut.

25 Setting one substrate back relative to the counter-substrate and to the third glazing sheet makes it possible to use glass that has, for example, not been tempered or even toughened. This has both the advantage of making it easy to cut the glass, and therefore obtaining the substrate by cutting it from a motherboard, and the advantage of not risking damage to the films of the functional system.

30 It has in fact been shown that the reason that such glass breaks is because of damage, even microscopic damage, to the surface state of the edges during the operation of shaping the glass and/or the manufacture of the glass and/or during even a very slight impact of the edge of the substrate with an external element.

35 This damage may be impossible to detect and may manifest itself only when the glazing is heated. Furthermore, such an impact may well occur after the

manufacture of the glazing, for example during its transportation or while it is being fitted into a building .

Each impact is liable to cause a microcrack in the surface of the edges of the substrate and each microcrack is liable to initiate crack propagation in the presence of a thermal gradient between the center and the edges of the glazing .

Setting the substrate back relative to the counter-substrate and relative to the third glazing sheet ensures that the glazing is held without contacting the substrate and ensures that the substrate is protected from any inadvertent contact.

For example, glass that has not been tempered or toughened may then be used as a substrate if the surface state of its edges is good enough. Experiments have shown that a thermally cut glass that has not been tempered or even toughened may have sufficient mechanical strength.

Furthermore, glass that is neither tempered nor toughened has fewer particles contaminating its surface, which particles are liable to cause defects (pinholes, short-circuits, etc.) in the final glazing.

Finally, glass that has not been tempered is flatter, which makes lamination easier and allows a thinner lamination interlayer to be used. The glass is even flatter if it has not been toughened.

According to particular embodiments, the glazing unit according to the invention furthermore comprises one or more of the following technical features, applied individually or in any technically possible combination:

- the substrate is set back relative to the counter-substrate and/or the third glazing sheet over the entire circumference of the substrate by at least 1 mm, preferably at least 2 mm, more preferably at least 5 mm and even more preferably at least 10 mm;
- the substrate is made of glass that has not been thermally tempered, preferably that has not been

chemically tempered and more preferably that has not been toughened;

- the substrate is obtained by thermal cutting of the motherboard;

5 - the substrate is able to withstand a temperature difference between a point on the substrate and a point on the edge of the substrate of at least 50°C and preferably of at least 100°C;

10 - the substrate has a 4-point bending strength greater than or equal to 75 MPa, preferably greater than or equal to 100 MPa and more preferably greater than or equal to 120 MPa;

- the counter-substrate and/or the third glazing sheet are made of toughened or tempered glass;

15 - the counter-substrate is intended to be placed on the outside relative to the substrate, that is to say on the side on which sunlight is incident;

20 - the electrochemical system is formed from a multilayer of films comprising successively, from the substrate, a first electrode coating, a first electrochemically active film, an electrolyte film, a second electrochemically active film and a second electrode coating, all the films of the multilayer being formed on the substrate;

25 - the glazing is multiple glazing, the third glazing sheet being spaced from the substrate and separated from the substrate by a layer of gas or vacuum;

- the substrate is surrounded by said layer of gas or vacuum, preferably over the entire circumference and the entire thickness of the substrate;

30 - the glazing comprises a joint surrounding the substrate and in contact with the substrate over at least part of the circumference of the substrate, preferably in contact with the substrate over the entire circumference of the substrate ;

35 - the substrate is made of soda-lime-silica glass;

- all the films of the electrochemical system are formed on the substrate;

- the glazing comprises a fourth glazing sheet forming a second substrate, the second substrate being set back relative to the counter-substrate and to the third glazing sheet; and

- 5 - the glazing comprises a lamination interlayer, the substrate being laminated to the counter-substrate via the lamination interlayer.

Another subject of the invention is a process for manufacturing a glazing unit, comprising steps consisting
10 in:

- depositing at least one film of an electrochemical system, said system having optical and/or energy-related properties that are electrically controllable, onto a first glazing sheet that forms a motherboard and cutting
15 from the motherboard a substrate provided with at least one film of the electrochemical system;

- securing the substrate obtained by cutting to a second glazing sheet that forms a counter-substrate; and

- securing the counter-substrate to a third glazing
20 substrate,

in which the substrate is a glass sheet chosen and arranged so that:

- the substrate is located between the counter-substrate and the third glazing sheet;

25 - the substrate is set back relative to the counter-substrate over the entire circumference of the substrate; and

- the substrate is set back relative to the third glazing sheet over the entire circumference of the substrate.

30 According to particular embodiments, the manufacturing process according to the invention furthermore comprises one or more of the following technical features, applied individually or in any technically possible combination:

35 - the substrate is made of glass that has not been thermally tempered, preferably that has not been chemically tempered and more preferably that has not be toughened;

- the counter-substrate and/or the third glazing sheet is made of glass, the process comprising a step of tempering or toughening the counter-substrate and/or the third glazing sheet;
- 5 - the cutting of the substrate from the motherboard is carried out using a thermal cutting method, for example laser cutting;
- the glazing unit is moved without the substrate being placed in contact with a gripping or handling element;
- 10 - the at least one film deposited on the motherboard comprises at least one electrode coating, in which process all the films of the electrochemical system are preferably deposited on the motherboard, and in which the substrate obtained by cutting is preferably laminated to the
- 15 counter-substrate;
- the substrate is set back relative to the counter-substrate and/or the third glazing sheet over the entire circumference of the substrate by at least 1 mm, preferably at least 2 mm, more preferably at least 5 mm
- 20 and even more preferably at least 10 mm;
- the substrate is able to withstand a temperature difference between a point on the substrate and a point on the edge of the substrate of at least 50°C and preferably of at least 100°C;
- 25 - the substrate has a 4-point bending strength greater than or equal to 75 MPa, preferably greater than or equal to 100 MPa and more preferably greater than or equal to 120 MPa;
- the counter-substrate is intended to be placed on the
- 30 outside relative to the substrate, that is to say on the side on which sunlight is incident;
- the electrochemical system is formed from a multilayer of films comprising successively, from the substrate, a first electrode coating, a first electrochemically active
- 35 film, an electrolyte film, a second electrochemically active film and a second electrode coating, all the films of the multilayer being formed on the substrate;

- the glazing is a multiple glazing unit, the third glazing sheet being spaced from the substrate and separated from the substrate by a layer of gas or vacuum;
- the substrate is surrounded by said layer of gas or vacuum, preferably over the entire circumference and the entire thickness of the substrate;
- the glazing comprises a joint surrounding the substrate and in contact with the substrate over at least part of the circumference of the substrate, preferably in contact with the substrate over the entire circumference of the substrate ;
- the substrate is made of soda-lime-silica glass;
- all the films of the electrochemical system are formed on the substrate;
- securing a fourth glazing sheet that forms a second substrate to the counter-substrate, the second substrate being set back relative to the counter-substrate and the third glazing sheet; and
- laminating the substrate to the counter-substrate via a lamination interlayer.

Another subject of the invention is a process for manufacturing a plurality of glazing units, each glazing unit being obtained by a process as described above, the substrate of each of the various glazing units being obtained by cutting them from the same motherboard.

Brief description of the drawings

- The invention will be better understood on reading the following description, given merely by way of example and with reference to the appended drawings, in which:
- figures 1 to 3 are schematic cross-sectional views of a glazing unit according to three embodiments of the invention ;
 - figure 4 is a schematic view showing a process for measuring the strength of the edge of a glass sheet; and

- figure 5 is a graph illustrating the results of an experiment measuring the strength of the edge of various cut glass sheets.

The drawings are of course not to scale, for the sake of clarity, because the thickness differences, especially between the substrate and the deposited layers, are substantial - for example differing by about a factor of 500 .

Description of the preferred embodiments

The glazing unit 1 illustrated in figure 1 is a double glazing unit.

It comprises a first laminated glazing pane 2 and a second glazing pane 4 spaced from the first glazing pane 2 and separated from the latter by a layer 6 of gas, for example argon, or by a vacuum 6 .

However, the invention is not limited to this type of glazing. Possible variants include single glazing, the glass sheets of which are all laminated together, or triple glazing or any other multiple glazing.

The term "double glazing" is understood to mean an assembly of two spaced glazing panes separated by a layer of gas or vacuum and the term "triple glazing" is understood to mean an assembly of three spaced glazing units separated by two layers of gas or vacuum, respectively. As described above, at least one of the spaced glazing panes of a multiple glazing unit may be laminated .

The laminated glazing pane 2 comprises:

- a first glazing sheet 10 forming a substrate on which an electrochemical system 12 is formed, the electrochemical system having electrically controllable optical and/or energy related properties, this system being called a "functional" system in the remainder of the description; and

- a second glazing sheet 14 forming a counter-substrate, the counter-substrate 14 being laminated to the substrate 10 using a lamination interlayer 16.

5 The functional system 12 is of the all-solid-state type, that is to say that the films of the functional system 12 are formed on the same substrate 10. Further details will follow.

10 In the case of figure 1, the functional system 12 is formed on the outside face 10A of the substrate 10, that is to say the face on which sunlight is intended to be incident .

The second glazing pane 4 comprises a third glazing sheet 18.

15 The substrate 10 is located between the counter-substrate 14 and the third glazing sheet 18. The substrate is furthermore set back relative to the counter-substrate and to the third glazing sheet over its entire circumference .

20 The substrate is set back relative to the counter-substrate and the third glazing sheet by at least 2 mm, for example.

The substrate 10 is thus made of glass that has not been tempered. It may, for example, be a soda-lime-silica glass .

25 The term "soda-lime-silica glass" is understood to mean a glass the composition of which comprises silica (SiO_2), as a network-forming oxide, sodium oxide (soda, Na_2O) and calcium oxide (lime, CaO) . This composition preferably comprises the following constituents having
30 contents by weight that vary within the limits given below :

SiO_2	60 -- 75%
Al_2O_3	0 - 10%
B_2O_3	0 - 5%, preferably 0%
CaO	5 - 15%
MgO	0 - 10%
Na_2O	5 - 20%
K_2O	0 - 10%

- 12 -

BaO 0 - 5%, preferably 0%.

Soda-lime-silica glasses have a relatively high thermal expansion coefficient, generally between $7 \times 10^{-6} \text{ K}^{-1}$ and $10 \times 10^{-6} \text{ K}^{-1}$.

However, as a variant, a glass of any suitable composition, for example a high thermal expansion coefficient glass like soda-lime-silica glass, may be used or, also as a variant, a glass with a thermal expansion coefficient lower than that of soda-lime-silica glass, like borosilicate glasses or a film glass, may be used. This substrate may be float glass, glass manufactured by the fusion-draw (up & down) process, or an extremely thin film glass (50 μm thick, for example) .

It should be noted that the term "borosilicate glasses" is understood to mean glass having the following composition by mass:

SiO ₂	78 - 86%
B ₂ O ₃	8 - 15%
Al ₂ O ₃	0.9 - 5%
MgO	0 - 2%
CaO	0 - 1.5%
Na ₂ O	0 - 4%
K ₂ O	0 - 7%.

For example, the substrate 10 is thinner than the counter-substrate 14.

The substrate 10 has, for example, a thickness equal to 4 mm or less in the case of soda-lime-silica glass, for example a thickness equal to 1.6 mm.

The substrate 10 is able to withstand an edge stress, generated by a 4-point bending test, that is greater than or equal to 50 MPa and preferably greater than or equal to 80 MPa.

The substrate is also able to withstand a temperature difference between a point on the central part, or any other point, of the substrate 10 and a point on the edge of the substrate 10 of at least 50°C and preferably of at least 100°C.

As for the counter-substrate 14, this is made of thermally or chemically tempered glass, toughened glass, or even glass that has not been tempered and the thermal expansion coefficient of which is near to that of the substrate 10, when the latter is made of low thermal expansion coefficient glass. The counter-substrate is preferably made of thermally tempered glass. The glass is for example a soda-lime-silica glass.

The third glass sheet 18 is made of thermally or chemically tempered glass or of toughened glass and preferably of thermally tempered glass, for example a soda-lime-silica glass. This glass may also be laminated if necessary, especially in the case of a skylight for safety reasons.

However, as a variant, the counter-substrate 14 and/or the third sheet 18 are made of a flexible material, for example a plastic.

The counter-substrate 14 and/or the third glazing sheet 18 have for example a thickness greater than or equal to 2 mm in the case of tempered or toughened soda-lime-silica glass, preferably a thickness greater than or equal to 5 mm.

As illustrated in figure 1, the glazing unit 1 defines an internal space 34 around the substrate 10 and between the substrate 10 and the third glazing sheet 18, separating the substrate from the third glazing sheet.

The internal space 34 is filled with a gas such as air, argon, krypton or a mixture of these gases, or else it is under partial vacuum in which the pressure is for example less than or equal to 10 mbar.

The substrate 10 is thus surrounded by the internal space 34, further reducing the risk of damaging the substrate 10. In particular, the substrate 10 is freed from any edge stress due to a direct contact with another element of the glazing unit 1.

The glazing unit 1 comprises means 26, 32 for holding the counter-substrate 14 and the third glazing sheet 18.

These holding means comprise a spacer bar 26 and an adhesive joint 32.

The spacer bar 26 is arranged around the substrate 10 and between the counter-substrate 14 and the third sheet 18, along the edges of the counter-substrate 14 and the third sheet 18.

The spacer bar 26 is designed to keep the counter-substrate 14 separated from the third glazing sheet 18 by a certain distance.

The spacer bar 26 is thus rigid, unlike the joint 32. The spacer bar is for example a strip, for example a metal strip.

The adhesive joint 32 is designed to hold the counter-substrate 14 and the third glazing sheet 18 together.

The adhesive joint is provided between the counter-substrate 14 and the third glazing sheet 18, for example over the entire circumference of the edges of the counter-substrate 14 and the third glazing sheet 18.

The adhesive joint 32 surrounds the spacer bar 26.

It is for example made of a polysulfide.

It should be noted that the joint 32 also seals the internal space 34.

The glazing unit 1 furthermore comprises sealing means 28, 30.

The sealing means comprises a first seal 28 placed between the substrate 10 and the counter-substrate 14 and around the functional system 12 over its entire circumference, sealing the latter. It is for example made of polyisobutylene. This seal 28 ensures the vacuum tightness of the internal space 34 and the functional system 12.

Two seals 30, which may also be made of polyisobutylene or of another suitable material, extend between the counter-substrate 14 and the spacer bar 26 and between the spacer bar 26 and the third glazing sheet 18, respectively, so as to seal the internal space 34 at the spacer bar 26.

However, it should be noted that the holding and sealing means are, as a variant, different. The number, arrangement and the nature of the holding and sealing means are of any suitable type.

5 Next, the glazing unit 1 is encapsulated in a frame (not illustrated) of any suitable type.

As illustrated in figure 1, the glazing unit 1 advantageously comprises a solar-protection film 20 formed on the inside face 14B of the counter-substrate 14, that
10 is to say the side facing toward inside the building. This film reflects in the near infrared and thus limits the heat influx through the glazing unit 1.

Furthermore, the glazing unit 1 also advantageously comprises a low-E (low-emissivity) film 22, formed on the
15 outside face 18B of the third glazing sheet 18, that reflects the radiation in the range emitted by a black body at a temperature of 20°C, namely in the mid-infrared, and thus prevents radiative heat loss from inside the building - especially useful in the wintertime.

20 In the case of glazing possessing other glazing sheets, the low-E film 22 is advantageously formed on the sheet that is closest to the inside of the building and the film 20 is formed on the glazing sheet closest to the outside .

25 The functional system 12 will now be described in greater detail.

In the present example, the functional system is an electrochromic system, that is to say a system the transparency of which is reversibly switched by applying
30 an electric field; but, more generally, as a variant, the functional system may be an electrochemical system of any suitable type having electrically controllable optical and/or energy-related properties.

As a variant, the functional system 12 is for example
35 a gasochromic system or a system the transmissivity of which does not vary in the visible range but in other ranges of the electromagnetic spectrum, for example in the infrared .

Since the electrochromic system is of the all-solid-state type it comprises for example:

- a first electrode coating formed on the substrate 10, for example based on tin-doped indium oxide (ITO) or a Ag-based TCC (transparent conductive coating) ;
- a first film of an electrochromic material formed on the first electrode coating, for example based on nickel oxide or iridium oxide or a mixture of both;
- a film forming the electrolyte is formed on the first film of electrochromic material and is, for example, based on tantalum oxide or a $W\text{O}_3/\text{Ta}_2\text{O}_5$ bilayer;
- a second film of electrochromic material is formed on the film forming the electrolyte and is, for example, based on tungsten oxide; and
- a second electrode coating is formed on the second film of electrochromic material and is, for example, based on ITO.

However, as a variant any suitable all-solid-state electrochromic system might be used.

Applying a first electrical potential between the electrode coatings causes alkali ions such as H^+ or Li^+ or K^+ or even Ag^+ to be inserted into the first electrochromic film and ions to be extracted from the second electrochromic film, causing the functional system 12 to become colored.

Applying an electrical potential of opposite polarity causes the same ions to be extracted from the first electrochromic film and to be inserted into the second electrochromic film, causing the system 12 to become bleached.

Such all-solid-state electrochromic systems may be switched a very large number of times and for more than ten years, permitting them to be used as architectural glazing .

The lamination interlayer 16 ensures adhesion between the substrate 10 and the counter-substrate 14 such that the counter-substrate 14 supports the substrate 10.

The lamination interlayer 16 here is in contact with the functional system 12 of the solar-protection film 20.

The lamination interlayer is for example a film made of a thermoplastic, for example PU (polyurethane), EVA or
5 PVB.

The lamination interlayer 16 typically has a thickness of between 0.3 mm and 5 mm.

The lamination of the counter-substrate 14 and the substrate 10 is achieved by means of the lamination
10 interlayer 16. The lamination is typically obtained by heating the glazing unit 1 to a temperature of about 120°C for 15 min, but there are many heating options.

EXAMPLE :

The substrate 10 is a 6 mm thick sheet of soda-lime-silica glass.
15

The functional system 12 is an all-solid-state electrochromic system deposited directly onto the substrate 10 and consisting of the following multilayer, starting from the substrate 2:

20 a 500 nm thick film of ITO forming a first electrode coating / a 55 nm thick film of iridium oxide forming a first electrochromic layer / a 100 nm thick layer of WO_3 / a 300 nm thick layer of tantalum oxide forming the electrolyte / a 400 nm thick layer of H^+ -doped tungsten
25 oxide forming a second electrochromic layer / a 100 nm thick layer of ITO forming a second electrode coating.

The lamination interlayer 16 is in contact with the functional system 12. The lamination interlayer is a 0.76 mm thick sheet of polyurethane.

30 The interlayer 16 is in contact with the functional system.

The solar-protection film 20 is a silver (Ag) unilayer, bilayer or trilayer film formed directly on the inside face 14B of the counter-substrate 14.

35 The low-E film is an Ag unilayer, bilayer or trilayer film formed directly on the outside face 18A of the third glazing sheet 18.

All the films are produced by magnetron sputtering.

The arrangement of the device 1 is therefore the following :

(building exterior) tempered or toughened glass sheet / solar-protection film / 0.76 mm thick polyurethane lamination interlayer / 100 nm of ITO / 400 nm of tungsten oxide / 300 nm of tantalum oxide / 100 nm of tungsten oxide / 55 nm of iridium oxide / 1.6 mm thick sheet of glass that has not been tempered or toughened / gas-filled cavity / low-E film / 6 mm tempered glass sheet.

Figure 1a illustrates a variant of the first embodiment of figure 1, in which equivalent elements have been given identical reference numbers. Only the differences between the glazing unit of figure 1 will be described below.

In this variant, the spacer bar 26 is arranged between the substrate 10 and the third glazing sheet 18.

The seals 30 are still placed between the substrate 10 and the spacer bar 26 and between the third glazing sheet 18 and the spacer bar 26.

The adhesive joint 32 here is placed directly in contact with the substrate 10, which allows the active area of the functional system 12 to be increased.

The internal space 34 around the substrate 10 is eliminated .

The internal space 34 here only extends between the substrate 10 and the third glazing sheet 18.

Figure 2 illustrates a second embodiment of the invention in which equivalent elements have been given identical reference numbers. Only the differences between the first embodiment will be described below.

The functional system 12 here is formed on the inside face 10B of the substrate 10.

The seal 28 is absent as it is no longer required.

The outline of the lamination interlayer 16 follows the edges of the substrate 10.

In this second embodiment, the films are less mechanically stressed and the electrochromic films can therefore be more fragile.

The first electrochromic film is for example a tungsten oxide film into which lithium ions are inserted during deposition forming $\text{WO}_x:\text{Li}$, or a tungsten oxide film onto the surface of which film lithium ions are deposited.

5 The second electrochromic film is for example made of tungsten-doped nickel oxide (NiWO_x).

The insertion ions are in this example lithium ions but they may also be other alkali ions such as H^+ or K^+ or even Ag^+ .

10 It should be noted that the functional system 12 will advantageously be covered by a protective film for example made of SiO_2 deposited onto the functional system 12.

Figure 2a illustrates a variant of the second embodiment of figure 2 in which equivalent elements have
15 been given identical reference numbers. Only the differences between the glazing of figure 2 will be described below.

This variant is analogous to the variant of figure 1a of the first embodiment.

20 In this variant, the spacer bar 26 is arranged between the substrate 10 and the third glazing sheet 18.

The spacer bar 26 presses against the substrate 10 around the functional system 12.

25 The seals 30 are again placed between the substrate 10 and the spacer bar 26 and between the third glazing sheet 18 and the spacer bar 26.

The adhesive joint 32 is placed directly in contact with the substrate 10.

30 The internal space 34 around the substrate 10 is eliminated.

The internal spacer bar 34 only extends between the substrate 10 and the third glazing sheet 18.

35 Figure 3 illustrates a third embodiment of the invention in which equivalent elements have been given identical reference numbers. Only the differences between the first embodiment will be described below.

Here the functional system 12 is not an all-solid-state system, that is to say only some of the films of the

functional system 12 are deposited onto a first glass substrate 10A, the rest being deposited onto a second glass substrate 10B.

5 The substrates 10A and 10B have the same characteristics as the substrate 10 of the aforementioned embodiments, that is to say that they are set back relative to the counter-substrate 14 and the third glazing sheet 18 and that they have the same characteristics as the substrate 10.

10 The substrates 10A and 10B are furthermore laminated to the counter-substrate using a lamination interlayer 16.

The functional system 12 illustrated in figure 3 comprises :

- an electrode coating 12A formed on the substrate 10A;
- 15 - an active medium 12B; and
- an electrode coating 12C formed on the counter-substrate 10B.

The active medium may be of any suitable type, that is to say any organic, polymer or hybrid medium.

20 EP-A-0612826 describes for example organic active media. They are generally gels or organic solutions that can undergo a reduction-oxidation reaction when an electrical potential is applied - these becoming colored or bleached accordingly.

25 WO-A-03/098339 describes an all-polymer active medium. In these systems, two polymer electrochromic films, into which and from which ions can be inserted and extracted respectively, are separated by an organic electrolyte .

30 EP-0253713 and EP-0670346, EP-0382623, EP-0518754 or EP-0532408 describe hybrid electrochromic systems. In these systems, the electrochromic films are solid-state films, for example identical to those of the all-solid-state systems, but the electrolyte is a polymer or an organic gel. It may be formed by a lamination interlayer
35 which is an ionomer.

The seal 28 in this third embodiment has both a sealing function and a holding function, the substrate 10A

being held secure to the substrate 10B by the seal 28 alone, which is for example made of polyisobutylene.

Figure 3a illustrates a variant of the third embodiment of figure 3 in which equivalent elements have
5 been given identical reference numbers. Only the differences between the glazing unit of figure 3 will be described below.

This variant is analogous to the variants in figures 1a and 2a.

10 In this variant, the spacer bar 26 is arranged between the substrate 10 and the third glazing sheet 18.

The spacer bar 26 presses against the substrate 10 around the functional system 12.

15 The seals 30 are again placed between the substrate 10 and the spacer bar 26 and between the third glazing sheet 18 and the spacer bar 26.

The adhesive joint 32 is placed directly in contact with the substrate 10.

20 The internal space 34 around the substrate 10 is eliminated.

The internal space 34 only extends between the substrate 10 and the third glazing sheet 18.

25 The advantage of the third embodiment relates to the intrinsically lower possible cost of the functional system compared to the systems of the two first embodiments.

The all-solid-state system according to the two first embodiments has the advantage of allowing the substrate 10 to be cut from a single motherboard on which all the films are present, whereas in the third embodiment only the
30 electrode coating is optionally present on the motherboard from which the substrates 10A and 10B are cut. Both the cost and the flexibility of manufacturing the glazing according to the two first embodiments may thus prove to be more advantageous despite the intrinsically higher
35 cost.

Figure 4 illustrates the test that was carried out on the glass sheets intended to be used as substrates. It is

a standard 4-point bending test as defined for example by the DIN EN 1288-3:2000 standard.

This test consists in cutting a test piece from a glass sheet and placing the test piece on two parallel support rollers 40 spaced 100 mm apart.

Two rollers called load rollers 42, parallel to each other and parallel to the support rollers, are spaced 20 mm apart and are placed symmetrically with respect to the plane of symmetry of the two support rollers.

10 The load rollers are applied to the glass sheet along the direction of the symmetry plane and toward the support rollers with a load that increases at a constant rate of $2\text{N/mm}^2\text{s}$ until the glass sheet breaks.

15 The moment at which the sheet breaks determines the bending strength of the test piece.

Experiments were carried out on 9 sets of glass substrate samples using the 4-point bending test described above so as to evaluate the bending strength of each of the samples.

20 In the following, abbreviations have been used to describe the process used to cut the test pieces tested:

- LBIS stands for laser beam induced separation: a 1064 nm wavelength 10 W Nd:YAG laser was used, the cutting speed was about 100 mm/s;
- 25 - TLS stands for thermal laser separation: a 10.6 μm wavelength 150 W CO_2 laser was used, the cutting speed was at least 600 mm/s;
- ETC stands for electro-thermal cutting, a process developed by PicoDRILL, a company based in Lausanne
- 30 (Switzerland), which consists in cutting the glass by locally heating it along the cutting line using an electrical discharge between two conducting points through the glass. This local heating may optionally be followed by cooling, for example using compressed air. The voltage
- 35 between the two points is about 2 to 25 kV, typically 10 kV for a cutting speed of the order of cm/s;
- ETEC (or ETC_Chamfering) stands for electro-thermal edge chamfering, also a process developed by PicoDRILL in

Lausanne (Switzerland) , which consists in heating, with dielectric losses, an end of the glass to be chamfered, using a strong electric field generated at a conducting point that moves along this end. This heating results in a local stress which leads to a part of the end "debonding" in the form of a glass fiber which can then be removed. The speed of this process is typically about 20 - 30 mm/s;

- mechanical cutting with 45° shaping ("45") or rounded joint shaping ("C"), mechanical cutting with a diamond wheel and grinding;
- PLX glass: soda-lime-silica glass, the composition by weight of which is the following:

SiO ₂	72%
Al ₂ O ₃	1%
B ₂ O ₃	0%
CaO	9%
MgO	3%
Na ₂ O	14%
K ₂ O	0.5%
BaO	0%

impurities: 0.5%; and

- Borofloat glass: borosilicate glass, the composition by weight of which is the following:

SiO ₂	81%
B ₂ O ₃	13%
Al ₂ O ₃	2%
Na ₂ O	4%.

For each set, approximately at least five 140 mm × 50 mm × 50 mm samples were studied. The nine sets of samples tested were the following:

- LBIS_PLX: PLX glass, LBIS laser cut;
- TLS_PLX: PLX glass, TLS laser cut;
- TLS_Boro: Borofloat glass, TLS laser cut;
- PLX_45: PLX glass, mechanical cut with 45° shaping;
- PLX_C : PLX glass, mechanical cut with rounded joint shaping;
- Boro_45: Borofloat glass, mechanical cut with 45° shaping;

- ETC: PLX glass, ETC cut; and
- ETC_Chamfering : PLX glass, ETC cut + chamfering.

The results are presented in figure 5 and in the tables below.

5 The ordinates of figure 4 show the break probability of the sample according to Weibull statistics.

The abscissae of figure 4 indicate the maximum 4-point bending strength.

10 Table 1 illustrates, for each set, the bending strength of each sample tested in MPa. The second column presents the calculated break probability at this test strength. The number of rows in a column corresponds to the number of samples tested.

15 Table 2 presents the same results as table 1 except that the calculation of the break probability has been replaced by the Weibull statistic relative to the break risk and the bending strength has been replaced by its logarithm. This table corresponds to the values plotted in figure 5.

20 In a building application the substrate will preferably have a 4-point bending strength greater than or equal to 75 MPa, more preferably greater than or equal to 100 MPa and even more preferably greater than or equal to 120 MPa.

25 All the thermally cut glasses were shown to meet this criteria, unlike the mechanically cut glasses.

It was also observed that soda-lime-silica glass can perform as well as a low thermal expansion coefficient glass such as borosilicate glass.

30 Chamfering was found to have a significant effect on ETC cut glass.

Table 1

WO 2012/007335

1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8		9	
LBIS_PLX	LBIS_PLX	TLS_PLX	TLS_PLX	TLS_Boro	TLS_Boro	PLX_45	PLX_45	PLX_C	PLX_C	Boro_45	Boro_45	Boro_C	Boro_C	ETC	ETC	ETC_Chamfering	ETC_Chamfering
99.93	4.17%	126.01	3.85%	92.87	4.55%	56.81	3.33%	64.19	3.33%	52.92	3.57%	55.98	3.33%	112.7	3.85%	93.24	10.00%
104.49	12.50%	129.39	11.54%	95.72	13.64%	60.15	10.00%	69.23	10.00%	60.11	10.71%	57.22	10.00%	118.6	11.54%	136.69	30.00%
106.12	20.83%	141.85	19.23%	98.43	22.73%	62.35	16.67%	69.95	16.67%	61.02	17.86%	58.06	16.67%	139.77	19.23%	159.8	50.00%
108.01	29.17%	143.14	26.92%	105.85	31.82%	63.61	23.33%	70.38	23.33%	72.7	25.00%	60.31	23.33%	143.1	26.92%	180.86	70.00%
109.37	37.50%	158.88	34.62%	116.14	40.91%	66.03	30.00%	72.02	30.00%	72.78	32.14%	61.67	30.00%	143.85	34.62%	208.24	90.00%
114.82	45.83%	166.69	42.31%	125.11	50.00%	66.24	36.67%	73.48	36.67%	73.15	39.29%	63.92	36.67%	159.8	42.31%		
116.64	54.17%	171.31	50.00%	127.45	59.09%	67.11	43.33%	74.19	43.33%	73.39	46.43%	64.18	43.33%	167.25	50.00%		
122.02	62.50%	176.89	57.69%	130.85	68.18%	67.24	50.00%	75.84	50.00%	74.9	53.57%	64.34	50.00%	171.19	57.69%		
143.51	70.83%	180.18	65.38%	136.31	77.27%	68.1	56.67%	77	56.67%	75.93	60.71%	65.26	56.67%	183.23	65.38%		
155.99	79.17%	192.26	73.08%	151.97	86.36%	68.6	63.33%	77.68	63.33%	77.1	67.86%	65.46	63.33%	184.3	73.08%		
163.19	87.50%	216.2	80.77%	192.71	95.45%	70.18	70.00%	78.06	70.00%	77.34	75.00%	65.65	70.00%	186.02	80.77%		
167.81	95.83%	221.44	88.46%			71	76.67%	78.27	76.67%	77.67	82.14%	66.02	76.67%	191.03	88.46%		
		236.84	96.15%			71.16	83.33%	79.28	83.33%	77.83	89.29%	66.37	83.33%	211.9	96.15%		
						71.24	90.00%	79.87	90.00%	79.26	96.43%	67.37	90.00%				
						72.23	96.67%	80.31	96.67%			67.38	96.67%				

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Table 2

1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8		9	
LBIS_PLX	LBIS_PLX	TLS_PLX	TLS_PLX	TLS_Boro	TLS_Boro	PLX_45	PLX_45	PLX_C	PLX_C	Boro_45	Boro_45	Boro_C	Boro_C	ETC	ETC	ETC_Chamfering	ETC_Chamfering
4.60	-3.16	4.84	-3.24	4.53	-3.07	4.04	-3.38	4.16	-3.38	3.97	-3.31	4.02	-3.38	4.72	-3.24	4.54	-2.25
4.65	-2.01	4.86	-2.10	4.56	-1.92	4.10	-2.25	4.24	-2.25	4.10	-2.18	4.05	-2.25	4.78	-2.10	4.94	-1.03
4.66	-1.45	4.95	-1.54	4.59	-1.36	4.13	-1.70	4.25	-1.70	4.11	-1.63	4.06	-1.70	4.94	-1.54	5.07	-0.37
4.68	-1.06	4.96	-1.16	4.66	-0.96	4.15	-1.33	4.25	-1.33	4.29	-1.25	4.10	-1.33	4.96	-1.16	5.20	0.19
4.69	-0.76	5.07	-0.86	4.75	-0.64	4.19	-1.03	4.28	-1.03	4.29	-0.95	4.12	-1.03	4.97	-0.86	5.34	0.83
4.74	-0.49	5.12	-0.60	4.83	-0.37	4.19	-0.78	4.30	-0.78	4.29	-0.70	4.16	-0.78	5.07	-0.60		
4.76	-0.25	5.14	-0.37	4.85	-0.11	4.21	-0.57	4.31	-0.57	4.30	-0.47	4.16	-0.57	5.12	-0.37		
4.80	-0.02	5.18	-0.15	4.87	0.14	4.21	-0.37	4.33	-0.37	4.32	-0.26	4.16	-0.37	5.14	-0.15		
4.97	0.21	5.19	0.06	4.91	0.39	4.22	-0.18	4.34	-0.18	4.33	-0.07	4.18	-0.18	5.21	0.06		
5.05	0.45	5.26	0.27	5.02	0.69	4.23	0.00	4.35	0.00	4.35	0.13	4.18	0.00	5.22	0.27		
5.09	0.73	5.38	0.50	5.26	1.13	4.25	0.19	4.36	0.19	4.35	0.33	4.18	0.19	5.23	0.50		
5.12	1.16	5.40	0.77			4.26	0.38	4.36	0.38	4.35	0.54	4.19	0.38	5.25	0.77		
		5.47	1.18			4.26	0.58	4.37	0.58	4.35	0.80	4.20	0.58	5.36	1.18		
						4.27	0.83	4.38	0.83	4.37	1.20	4.21	0.83				
						4.28	1.22	4.39	1.22			4.21	1.22				

It also proved to be possible to use thin toughened glass .

It was thus possible to identify glasses that would both lend themselves well to being cut from a motherboard
5 and that would support a functional system that would cause the central part of the glazing to become very hot in a building application.

The arrangement of the glazing furthermore enables the glass substrate to retain its edge strength
10 properties, which are related to the ability of the substrate to withstand a large temperature difference between its center and its edges.

Another subject of the invention is a process for manufacturing a glazing unit 1.

15 The process comprises steps consisting in:

- depositing all the films of the functional system 12 having electrically controllable optical and/or energy-related properties on a motherboard and cutting the substrate 10 from the motherboard;
- 20 - laminating the substrate 10 to the counter-substrate 14; and
- securing the counter-substrate 14 to the third glazing sheet 18.

Furthermore, the substrate 10 is a glass sheet that
25 has been chosen and arranged such:

- the substrate 10 is located between the counter-substrate 14 and the third glazing sheet 18;
- the substrate 10 is set back relative to the counter-substrate over the entire circumference of the substrate;
- 30 and
- the substrate 10 is set back relative to the third glazing sheet 18 over the entire circumference of the substrate 10.

The substrate 10 is cut for example using a thermal
35 cutting method, for example a laser cutting method.

The process furthermore comprises a step consisting in thermally or even chemically tempering or thermally toughening the counter-substrate 14 using the well-known

air-tempering or air-toughening process before lamination to the substrate 10.

Furthermore, the third glazing sheet 18 is for example tempered or toughened before it is secured to the
5 counter-substrate 14.

According to another feature of the process, the glazing is moved, without touching the substrate 10, with a gripping or handling element, so as to further reduce the risk of damaging the substrate 10. An additional step,
10 during the manufacturing process, may consist in protecting the edges of the glass after the cutting step, advantageously before any other step, using a polymer, lacquer or any other material (applied by extrusion, spraying, etc.) . This protective element may be removed or
15 left in place when the glass is fitted into a double glazing unit.

The glazing unit 1 obtained by the process has all the features described above.

CLAIMS

1. A glazing unit comprising:

- 5 - a first glazing sheet forming a substrate on which at least one film of an electrochemical system is formed, said system having optical and/or energy-related properties that are electrically controllable;
- a second glazing sheet forming a counter-substrate; and
- 10 - a third glazing sheet;

wherein :

the substrate has characteristics that allow it to be obtained by being cut from a motherboard on which at least one film of the electrochemical system is formed;

- 15 the substrate is located between the counter-substrate and the third glazing sheet;

the substrate is set back relative to the counter-substrate over the entire circumference of the substrate; and

- 20 wherein the substrate is set back relative to the third glazing sheet over the entire circumference of the substrate .

2. The glazing unit as claimed in claim 1, wherein the
- 25 substrate is set back relative to the counter-substrate and/or the third glazing sheet over the entire circumference of the substrate by at least 1 mm, preferably at least 2 mm, more preferably at least 5 mm and even more preferably at least 10 mm.

30

3. The glazing unit as claimed in either of claims 1 and 2, wherein the substrate is made of glass that has not been thermally tempered, preferably that has not been chemically tempered and more preferably that has not been
- 35 toughened.

4. The glazing unit as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, wherein the substrate is obtained by thermal cutting of the motherboard.

5 5. The glazing unit as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, wherein the substrate is able to withstand a temperature difference between a point on the substrate and a point on the edge of the substrate of at least 50°C and preferably of at least 100°C.

10

6. The glazing unit as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, wherein the substrate has a 4-point bending strength greater than or equal to 75 MPa, preferably greater than or equal to 100 MPa and more
15 preferably greater than or equal to 120 MPa.

7. The glazing unit as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, wherein the counter-substrate and/or the third glazing sheet are made of toughened or tempered
20 glass.

8. The glazing unit as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, wherein the counter-substrate is intended to be placed on the outside relative to the
25 substrate, that is to say on the side on which sunlight is incident .

9. The glazing unit as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, wherein the electrochemical system is
30 formed from a multilayer of films comprising successively, from the substrate, a first electrode coating, a first electrochemically active film, an electrolyte film, a second electrochemically active film and a second electrode coating.

35

10. The glazing unit as claimed in anyone of the preceding claims, which is a multiple glazing unit, the

third glazing sheet being spaced from the substrate and separated from the substrate by a layer of gas or vacuum.

11. The glazing unit as claimed in claim 10, wherein the
5 substrate is surrounded by said layer of gas or vacuum, preferably over the entire circumference and the entire thickness of the substrate.

12. The glazing unit as claimed in any one of the
10 preceding claims, comprising a joint surrounding the substrate and in contact with the substrate over at least part of the circumference of the substrate, preferably in contact with the substrate over the entire circumference of the substrate.

13. The glazing unit as claimed in any one of the
15 preceding claims, wherein the substrate is made of soda-lime-silica glass.

14. The glazing unit as claimed in any one of the
20 preceding claims, wherein all the films of the electrochemical system are formed on the substrate.

15. The glazing unit as claimed in any one of claims 1 to
25 13, comprising a fourth glazing sheet forming a second substrate on which some of the films of the electrochemical system are formed, the second substrate being set back relative to the counter-substrate and to the third glazing sheet.

16. The glazing unit as claimed in any one of the
30 preceding claims, comprising a lamination interlayer, the substrate being laminated to the counter-substrate via the lamination interlayer.

17. A process for manufacturing a glazing unit comprising
35 steps consisting in:

- depositing at least one film of an electrochemical system, said system having optical and/or energy-related properties that are electrically controllable, onto a first glazing sheet that forms a motherboard and cutting from the motherboard a substrate provided with at least one film of the electrochemical system;
 - securing the substrate obtained by cutting to a second glazing sheet that forms a counter-substrate; and
 - securing the counter-substrate to a third glazing substrate,
- wherein the substrate is a glass sheet chosen and arranged so that:
- the substrate is located between the counter-substrate and the third glazing sheet;
 - the substrate is set back relative to the counter-substrate over the entire circumference of the substrate; and
 - the substrate is set back relative to the third glazing sheet over the entire circumference of the substrate.
18. The manufacturing process as claimed in claim 17, wherein the substrate is made of glass that has not been thermally tempered, preferably that has not been chemically tempered and more preferably that has not be toughened.
19. The manufacturing process as claimed in either of claims 17 and 18, wherein the counter-substrate and/or the third glazing sheet is made of glass, the process comprising a step of tempering or toughening the counter-substrate and/or the third glazing sheet.
20. The manufacturing process as claimed in any one of claims 17 to 19, wherein the cutting of the substrate from the motherboard is carried out using a thermal cutting method, for example laser cutting.

21. The manufacturing process as claimed in any one of claims 17 to 20, in which the glazing unit is moved without the substrate being placed in contact with a gripping or handling element.

5

22. The manufacturing process as claimed in any one of claims 17 to 21, wherein the at least one film deposited on the motherboard comprises at least one electrode coating, in which process all the films of the electrochemical system are preferably deposited on the motherboard, and wherein the substrate obtained by cutting is preferably laminated to the counter-substrate.

10

23. A process for manufacturing a plurality of glazing units, each glazing unit being obtained by a process as claimed in any one of claims 17 to 22, the substrate of each of the various glazing units being obtained by cutting them from the same motherboard.

15

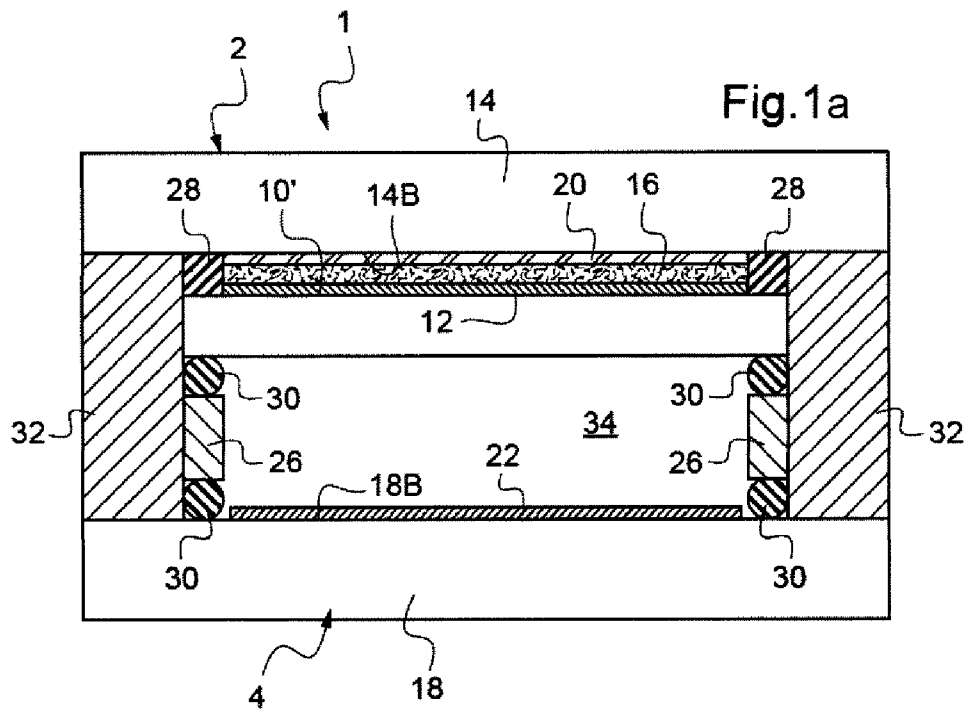
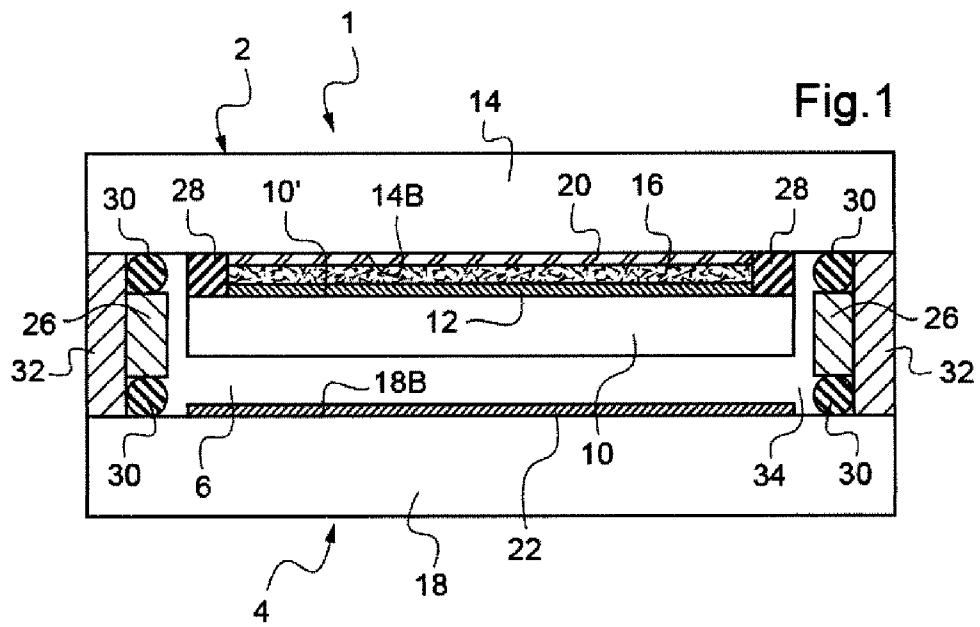
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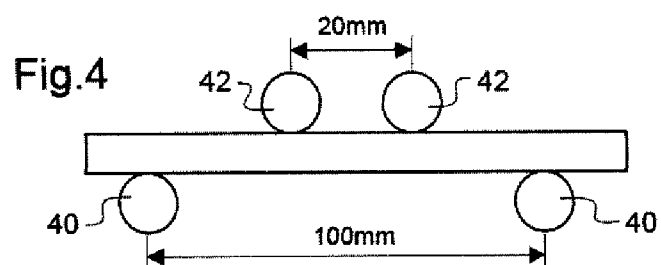
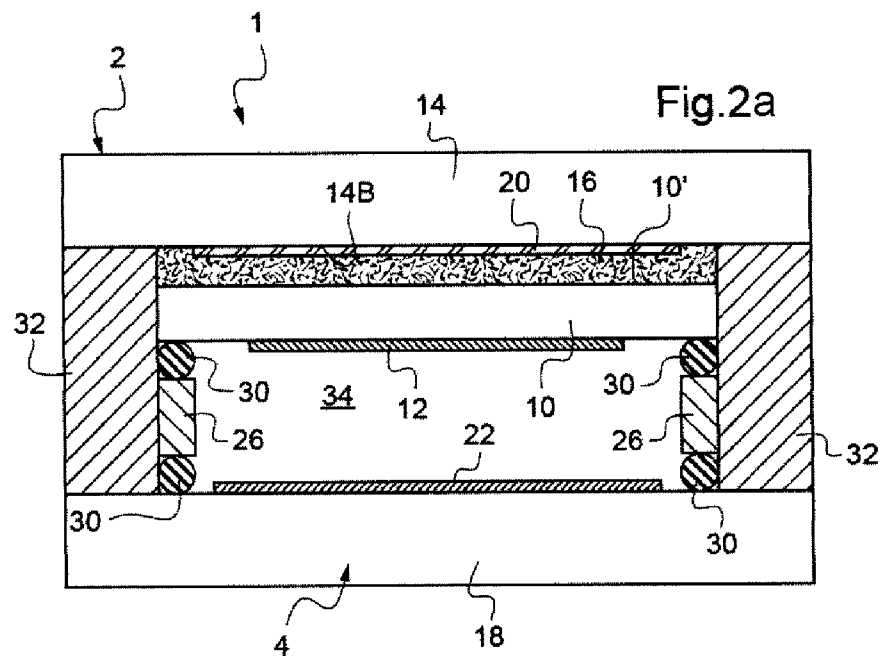
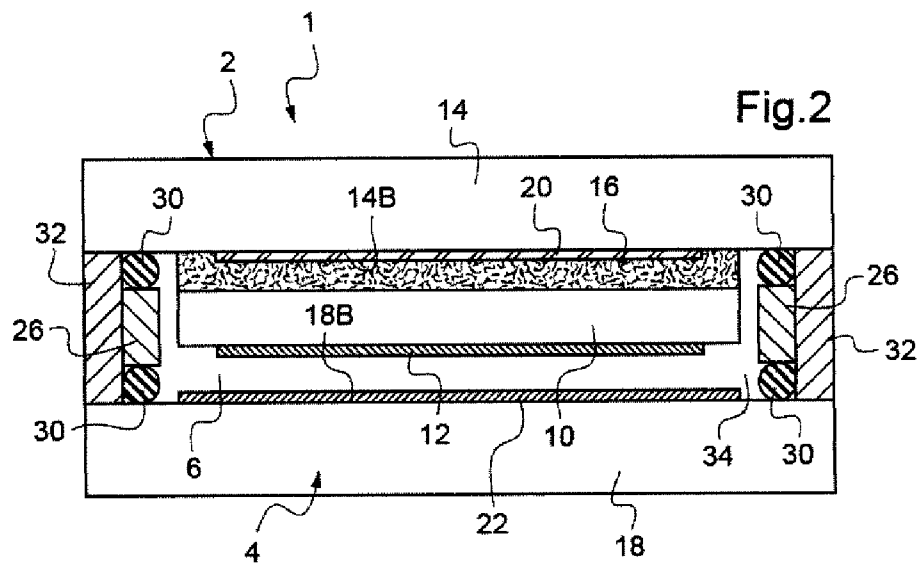
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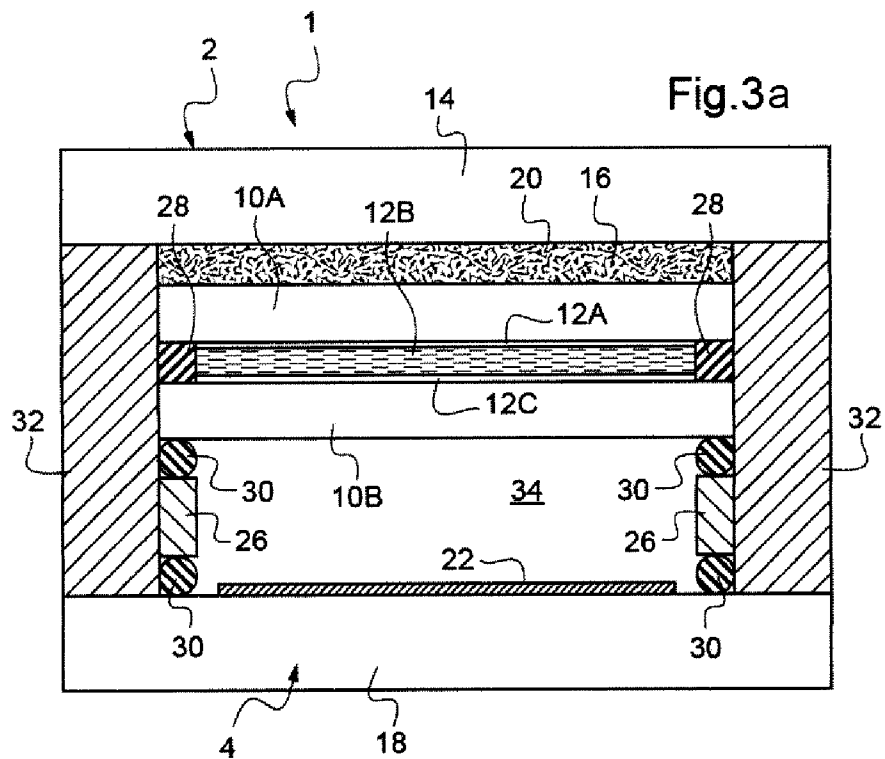
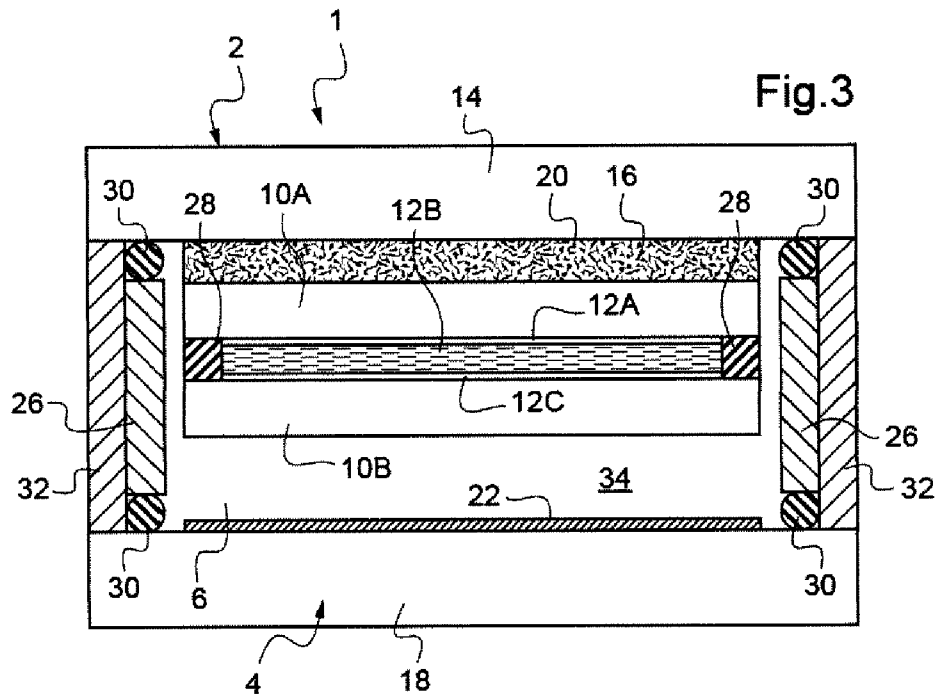
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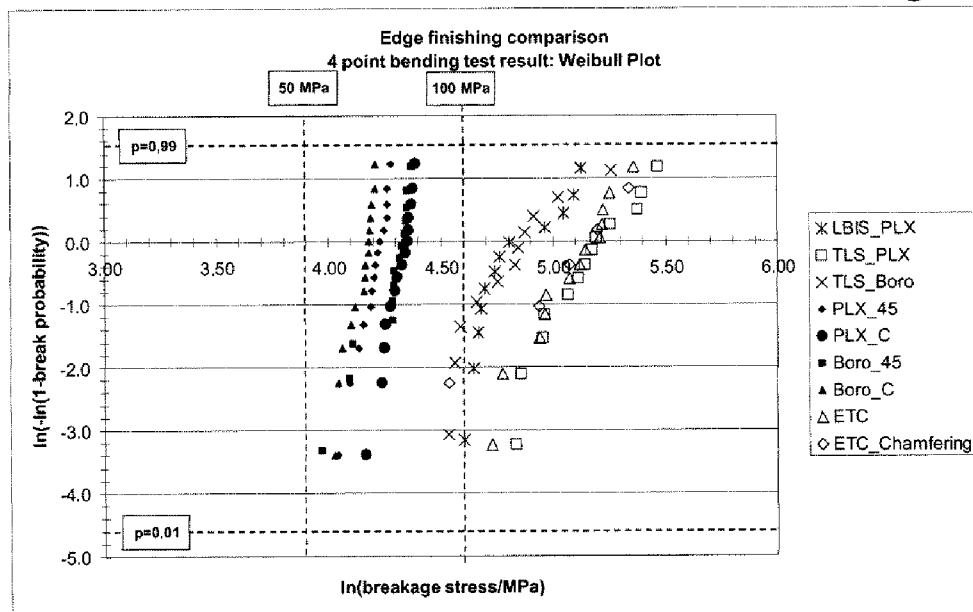


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Fig. 5



INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No

PCT/EP2011/061408

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
 INV. B32B17/10 C03C27/12 G02F1/15
 ADD. B60J3/04 E06B3/67

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

B32B E04F B64C B60J G02F

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

EPO-Internal

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	EP 0 575 207 AI (SAINT GOBAIN VITRAGE [FR]) 22 December 1993 (1993-12-22) page 7, line 1 - line 30; figures 3-5 -----	1-3, 5, 6, 9, 10, 12-14, 16
X	EP 0 408 427 AI (SAINT GOBAIN VITRAGE [FR]) 16 January 1991 (1991-01-16) page 4, column 5, line 53 - page 5, column 7, line 23; claims 1-7; figures 1, 2 -----	1-3, 5, 9, 12-14
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