

Press release

INSPIRE project Kick-off-meeting – Brussels, Belgium, 10-11 October 2016

Efficient and sustainable production of high value-added goods is of crucial importance for the European manufacturers to stay in business in today's fierce competitive environment. Given the more demanding consumers along with the shortened life cycles of product offerings, it is of grave importance for the value chain of companies to provide high quality products, reduce time to market while minimizing production costs. In order to bring back manufacturing of high value-added goods to Europe and reverse the delocalization trend, new business models must be developed, based on more effective and sustainable supply chains, that would help companies be more flexible and responsive to ever changing demands, volatility, market conditions and value chain configurations. Mass customization is key to meeting the diverse consumer needs in the "discrete manufacturing world" and process intensification is reported to be an enabler of flexibility and cost optimisation throughout the value chain.

In this context the INSPIRE project was launched as from 1st September 2016 for 24 months.

The INSPIRE project, funded by the EU in the frame of Horizon 2020 TOPIC SPIRE-06-2016 Grant Agreement number 723748, aims at increasing the competitiveness of European manufacturing which depends on producing differentiated and high added value products in an efficient and sustainable manner, with reduced production costs, increased product quality, minimised time to market and optimized strategies towards resource efficiency.

The main focus of this project is the development of innovative business models creating flexible networks through the use of intensified processing that would promote more local production in Europe within the 5 years after the end of this study. The project takes an interesting and valuable approach by bringing together the (downstream) manufacturing ("Factory of the Future") community with the (upstream) process industry (SPIRE) community, as well as regional industrial clusters (parks) to study required changes of business models in Europe, due to a.o. 1) further integration of these industries in the value chain leading to more flexible and demand driven business operation and 2) increased trends towards resource sharing and optimization across multiple process industries (e.g. through industrial symbiosis within regional contexts such as industrial parks). Special attention will also be given to how this approach would be responding to the needs of SMEs as partners in value chains. Expected outcome of this project would be the description of the current European landscape and link between intensified processing and flexibility, development of innovative business models for different sectors in general, and providing a guideline to measure the performance of such novel models under different scenarios.

Coordinated by PNO Innovation NV, INSPIRE is comprised of 4 recognised and experienced organisations. The kick-off meeting of INSPIRE was held at PNO Innovation premises Brussels on 10-11 October 2016. All partners discussed the content, tasks to be done during the next six months and administrative and financial issues .



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