

Article / MANUFUTURE Platform

MANUFUTURE Platform 1st HLG Meeting outcomes

The first meeting of the HLG of the MANUFUTURE Platform was held in Brussels on February 28, 2005. The structure of the platform was approved and the necessary actions for the finalisation of the SRA were planned.

The first meeting of the High LEVEL Group of the MANUFUTURE PLATFORM was held in Brussels on last February 28th and around 50 key-stakeholders representing Industry, Research Centres and Academia participated.

The meeting had the following objectives:

- 1) to inform the members of the National MANUFUTURE initiatives which were launched in the first months of 2005
- 2) to approve the structure of the Platform and appoint the management persons
- 3) to plan the necessary actions in order to finalise the Strategic Research Agenda (SRA)

The National/Regional MANUFUTURE Initiatives

A significant number of National initiatives have been launched following the MANUFUTURE 2005 conference in Enschede (NL). Those initiatives reflect the high interest of the different Member States or Associated States (i.e. Switzerland) in the R&D Framework Programme and MANUFUTURE activities. Equally, they can be considered the concrete pillars of the European MANUFUTURE Platform among the European network of Industry/Research Centres/Academia in the different countries.

The Italian MANUFUTURE Platform was presented by Prof. Franco Jovane (CNRS-ITIA), who underlined that this high relevant initiative has been promoted by the Italian Ministry of Research, is based on a public-private partnership and has access to national government's medium-long terms funds (industrial research) and medium-long terms funds (basic research).

The Spanish MANUFUTURE Platform was presented by Rikardo Bueno (FATRONIK). The Platform was launched in Madrid on Feb. 20 with the full support of the Ministry of Education and Research and the Ministry of Industry in Spain.

As for the new member states, the first MANUFUTURE initiative was launched in Poland and was presented by Prof. Eduard Chlebus. This initiative will coordinate the different research efforts made in Poland with respect to manufacturing.

Moreover, the Portuguese, Swiss and German MANUFUTURE Platforms were presented (respectively by Carlos Costa, Claudio Boer and Prof. Heinrich Flegel) and their added value with respect to the European MANUFUTURE Platform and its objectives was underlined.

MANUFUTURE Platform: its role and structure.

The main role of the MANUFUTURE platform (http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/industrial_technologies/manufuture/home_en.htm) is to govern research, technological development and innovation (RTDI) efforts aimed at the transformation of the European manufacturing industry at two levels:

- A policy level aimed at continuous development of the MANUFUTURE vision and promotion of the Lisbon objectives; and
- An operational level employing a technological approach exploiting all possible synergies arising from the converging nature of science and technologies.

The next steps in the MANUFUTURE process will be the setting up of the operational structures of the platform and the publication of the Strategic Research Agenda (SRA) and the Implementation Plans (IP).

High Level Group (HLG) for ManuFuture

The HLG is the Governing Body of the **ManuFuture Platform**. It should help in setting-up the strategy to maintain European leadership in manufacturing through the development of a Strategic Research Agenda, (SRA) and in identifying the main barriers and technological needs of the sector. Based in particular on the analysis of the conference findings, it should:

- Revise and maintain a convergent long term vision for the manufacturing sector in Europe ([‘MANUFUTURE: a Vision for 2020’](#) document), taking into account the Strategic Visions of the individual European Technology Platforms;
- Provide recommendations to change the often negative image associated with manufacturing,
- Recommend priorities for better investments in research and knowledge generation in the sectors, including the identification of key technologies (or approaches);
- Recommend actions for better coordination of research efforts and avoidance of fragmentation, for an increased effectiveness of public and private investment in R&D, considering in particular the potential of Art. 171 (joint undertakings),
- Recommend roadmap(s) to remove obstacles to the deployment of new manufacturing approaches for sustainable growth, including an analysis of transition strategies,
- Clarify necessary inputs of research actions for such EU policies as innovation and education, and produce a report on a “Strategic Agenda for research in manufacturing in Europe in 2015-2020”, to be publicly presented in October 2005.
- Identify the major aspects of the different Implementation Plans in order to support the SRA: to be established at the same time both at national level of the various countries and for each European Technology Platform represented.

Recommendations could cover targeted research initiatives, including the development of Joint Technology Initiatives, as appropriate, to stimulate radical technological and organisational transformation of the sector.

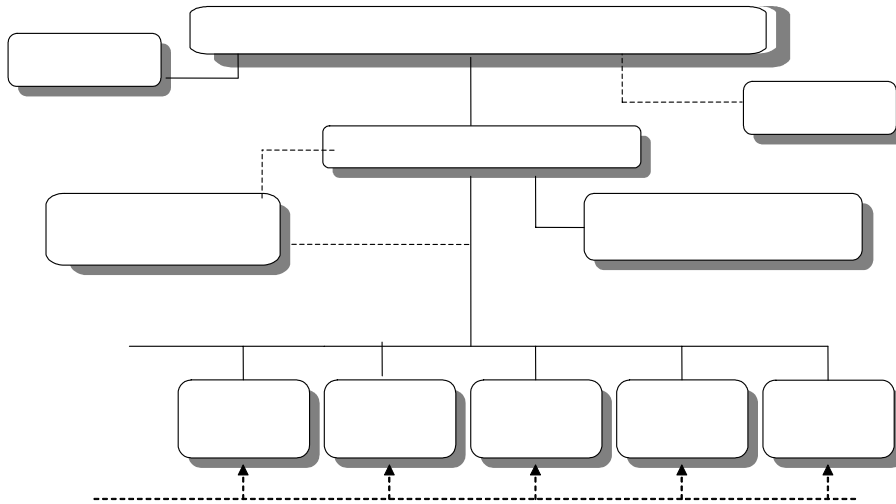
The MANUFUTURE Platform structure

The governance of the Manu*FUTURE* platform will be ensured through the following structure:

- ✓ The HLG with its chairperson and two Vice-Presidents will preside over the plenary sessions and guide the workings of the platform. Prof. Heinrich Flegel has been elected as Chairman and Prof. Franco Jovane and Carlos Costa as Vice-Presidents.
- ✓ The Support Group (SG), chaired by one of the two Vice-Presidents (Prof. Franco Jovane), will coordinate all the work in the platform, provide the secretarial support and will be composed by selected members of contributing organisations. Those members should have internationally recognized knowledge and experience in Manufacturing and should be able to commit resources for the definition of the Strategic Research Agenda (SRA) and the Implementation Plan (IP). The members of the Support Group are also members of the High Level Group.
- ✓ The Industrial Advisory Group (IAG) will oversee the strategic part of the SRA and Implementation plan and ensure its dissemination to industrial Stakeholders. The members of the Industrial Advisory Group will be appointed by the High Level Group and/or by the Mirror Group.
- ✓ The Mirror Group (MG) is composed of at least one representative from each of the 25 member States and each of the Associated States to Research and Development Framework Programmes (i.e. Switzerland, Norway, Israel, etc.). The members will be appointed by each Permanent Representation at the European Union. The Mirror Group will ensure the harmonisation of Manufacturing Research activities in Member States with those of the MANUFUTURE Platform according to the Open Method of Coordination¹ (OMC). For this reason a maximum of three observers from three different member States or Associated States to the R&D Framework Programmes will be appointed to attend the High Level Group meetings.
- ✓ The Working Groups (WGs) will be defined by the High Level Group and/or the Support Group. The objective of the Working Groups is to contribute to specific parts of the SRA and IP and comment on the draft SRA and IP prepared by the Support Group. Participations in the Working group meetings should be open to anyone who wants to contribute.

The HLG will select areas of technology of particular interest for the SRA, or give a mandate to the Support Group for that, and create Working Groups in order to ensure adequate support for the definition of the SRA.

1 Cf. http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/era/3pct/crest_en.html



Finalisation of the Strategic Research Agenda: definition of the Groups.

5 Working Groups (WGs) and 3 Horizontal Groups (HGs) for the finalisation of the Strategic Research Agenda (SRA) have been established and at least one leader for each has been appointed. The WGs will tackle technological topics, while the HGs have a horizontal aspect and are more related with the need to give more evidence in the SRA to those non-technological issues.

In the following table, the topic and the leader of each Working Group have been set out recorded.

Working Groups and Horizontal Group for the finalisation of the MANUFUTURE SRA

<i>Title</i>	<i>Leader</i>	<i>E-mail</i>
WG1: <i>Technologies beyond the existing borders</i>	Prof. Engelbert Westkamper (Fraunhofer Gesellschaft)	westkaemper@ipa.fhg.de
WG2: <i>Innovating Production</i>	Prof. Engelbert Westkamper (Fraunhofer Gesellschaft)	westkaemper@ipa.fhg.de
WG3: <i>Manufacturing Engineering</i>	Prof. Franco Jovane (CNR-ITIA)	f.jovane@itia.cnr.it
WG4: <i>New business models</i>	Prof. David Williams (Loughborough University)	D.J.Williams@lboro.ac.uk
WG5: <i>Transformation of research infrastructure and education</i>	Rikardo Bueno (FATRONIK) José Ramon Garcia	rbueno@fatronik.com jr.garcia@tecnalia.info

	(TECNALIA)	
HG6: <i>Snapshot of manufacturing in Europe</i>	Dietmar Goericke (VDMA)	dietmar.goericke@vdma.org
HG7: <i>The role of SMEs</i>	René Grotheedde (CECIMO)	secr-gen@cecimo.be
HG8: <i>Alignment with ETPs and with national/regional initiatives</i>	Daniel Richet (CETIM)	daniel.richet@cetim.fr

The Group teams will be created during the month of March and they will be open to all who want to participate.

The first contributions from the Groups are expected before the end of April 2005.

The first draft of the SRA will be presented to the HLG members in the next meeting scheduled on June 17th, 2004. A revised version of the SRA will be presented to the first Industrial Advisory Group and Mirror Group meetings scheduled in July 2007.