



The Four Motors for Europe at the 2019 World Manufacturing Forum “Regional visions and practices responding to global manufacturing challenges”

During Lombardy’s presidency of the Four Motors for Europe, the regions of Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes, Baden-Württemberg, Lombardy and Catalonia jointly participated in the World Manufacturing Forum, which took place in Cernobbio, Lombardy from 25th to 27th of September gathering the major players of the manufacturing industry from all five continents. During the side event that the Four Motors for Europe organised on the 25th of September 2019 within the framework of the World Manufacturing Forum, the authorities of Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes, Baden-Württemberg, Lombardy and Catalonia discussed about the role that regions can play in designing the future of manufacturing and identified the keys to face the challenges of the industry of the future.

A stronger and more concrete cooperation on manufacturing and industry 4.0

The Four Motors for Europe are regions with a strong vocation for the manufacturing sector and they stand out in Europe for their capacity of innovation and entrepreneurship. Together, the Four Motors for Europe believe that mutual learning and exchange with the most innovative territories in the world are fundamental in order to face the challenges of the industry of the future.

In line with the latest strategic orientations for the European Industry, as outlined in the *Industry 2030 high level industrial roundtable report “A vision for the European Industry until 2030”*, the Four Motors for Europe share the importance of fostering new economic models based on technology-led transformations, environmental sustainability and with a comprehensive social impact.

The Four Motors for Europe are also convinced that a multilevel governance approach along with the development of interregional innovative ecosystems will allow a deeper collaboration between the public and the private sector, serving as a truly driving force for the implementation of projects with a strategic added value.

Thus, the four Regions agreed to promote and strengthen a joint participation in European and international networks with the possibility to develop common positions under the Four Motors for Europe flag.

The Four Motors for Europe firmly believe that platforms of interregional collaboration are a strategic tool for the regions to jointly react to the global transformations of the manufacturing sector and to commonly identify effective responses to our territories' emerging needs.

In this respect, the World Manufacturing Forum provides visibility for the Four Motors for Europe and gives them an opportunity to benchmark with other leading manufacturing regions worldwide.

The Four Motors for Europe indeed believe in the importance of the manufacturing industry as a sector capable of generating growth and jobs. The four partner regions are convinced that, together, they can affect the transformations of the manufacturing sector in a way that can bring benefits to local communities in terms of quality of services, sustainability and quality of life. In this perspective, the Four Motors for Europe act as an example of a European network that enhances and encourages effective models of cooperation between enterprises, academia, associations and the public sector.

The Four Motors for Europe are also conscious that the growth of their respective manufacturers relies on their capacity to create alliances and work together generating innovation.

For this reason, the four Regions agreed to encourage and foster exchange and joint initiatives between relevant actors in their respective territories, and to promote closer connections between regional associations and business federations, which can spread industrial culture and have a positive impact on multiple sectors.

Besides the four Regions will encourage the emergence of European value chain in strategic sector in order to face the international competition.

Furthermore, in the framework of the ongoing industrial transformation and the uptake of new technologies and innovation models, it is crucial to promote investments in appropriate training and education, as well as in the upskilling and reskilling of the existing workforce, in order to foster the competitiveness of the manufacturing sector.

In this context, the forthcoming EU Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027 should provide a sufficient budget for concrete instruments and strategic opportunities for manufacturing competitiveness, while putting a strong emphasis on

leveraging private investments, in order to join resources and capabilities and fully exploit the potential of existing and emerging value chains in manufacturing in the concerned regions.

The Four Motors for Europe will explore the development of interregional collaboration within the EU Funding Period 2021-2027 and the support of synergic projects - financed both under EU direct management programmes and regional operational programmes, as well as other national or regional instruments – with the objective of facilitating the digital transformation of start-ups, and SMEs, helping them to become part of an innovation ecosystem with broad networking opportunities.

At the 2019 World Manufacturing Forum, the Four Motors for Europe focused on three sectorial topics connected to the industry of the future that represent a shared priority of the four regions and that are also consistent with the pillars of the work program of the Lombardy's presidency of the Four Motors for Europe.

Fostering exchanges on emerging technologies: the case of artificial intelligence

Industry of the future can be defined as the adoption in the manufacturing sector of new technologies and new management practices in order to increase the performance, to face competition, to answer the needs of the market and respond to societal challenges. Artificial intelligence is part of these new technologies that are going to bring about a revolution in the industrial production.

The Four Motors for Europe intend to create the necessary conditions to increase and qualify the exchange of knowledge and competences that can stimulate technological transfer for small and medium-sized enterprises in the field of artificial intelligence. The Four Motors for Europe give high priority to developing interregional sectorial projects that could find real enabling factors in digital technologies and take up the new paradigms of industry 4.0.

The governments of the four regions are committed to accompany and govern the transformation of the paths and modalities with which value is generated for the territory, starting with the use of digital data and innovative technologies, such as artificial intelligence and blockchain.

Basic research in artificial intelligence on top level is crucial in order to promote the digital transformation of the European economy and society and to educate highly qualified young academics. In order to rapidly gain competitiveness compared to the United States and to China and to attract and retain young talents to Europe, the

process of dynamic networking between the European top basic research institutions has to be speeded up. The Four Motors of Europe explicitly support this process.

In this respect and in order to learn from each other, the four regions are interested in the exchange of experience and successful practices and tools developed in their regions in the field of artificial intelligence as driver for integrated regional investments also in the European funding period post 2020.

The transformation of traditional industries, the example of the automotive sector

The regions of the Four Motors for Europe are equally affected by the transformation of the traditional industries. The automotive sector represents an interesting example. All four regions have a notable, albeit differently shaped, automotive and supplier industry. For several years now, the electromobility clusters of the four regions have been working together in a working group headed by e-mobil BW.

The Four Motors for Europe firmly believe that the synergy between the public sector, enterprises and research is essential for innovation and to face global competition in the mobility sector.

In all four regions there is a significant automotive industry, as well as excellent components hubs that present their own specific characteristics but are also complementary to each other. The four regions have worked for a long time to exchange their experiences on the transformation of the automotive sector and they agreed that the main challenges of the transformation process lie in decarbonisation and digitisation. In all these areas, research and development, investments in infrastructure, custom-made funding – in particular for pilot projects – and the design of the necessary legal framework play important roles. Involving the civil society is a central aspect as well.

In this context, and due to the complexity of future mobility, the interaction between politics and industry is particularly important and it is necessary to continue to discuss and learn together on the European scale, focusing on the strategic value chains of the automotive sector. In this sense, the regions play a key role as coordinators of the ecosystems of innovation, as regulating authorities and as investors.

The Four Motors for Europe firmly believe that, in order not to lose competitiveness at the international level, Europe must maintain a strong automotive industrial base

and strengthen its ability to offer technology and competences, as well as to produce components.

In this perspective, the four regions believe that regional action plans for the automotive sector play a strategic role in order to consolidate the regions' industrial leadership in the world with great industrial projects that focus on e-mobility, reduction of CO2 emissions, implementation of circular models of production and re-use of materials.

Boosting digitalisation of SMEs through interregional cooperation

Digitalization is relevant along the whole value chain, from R&D to production and customer relations: digital technologies represent one of the key enabling factors in the whole manufacturing system and are essential to the development of the new paradigms of Industry 4.0.

In continuous collaboration with respective actors, such as clusters and industrial associations in their territories – and coherently with what the European Commission in its Digitalising European Industry Initiative hopes for – the Four Motors for Europe aim to facilitate the development of interregional projects and ideas such as a cross-regional network among their Digital Innovation Hubs. This cross-regional network will be essential in order to share strategies and best practices in the digital field, in terms of their application and of the involvement of businesses, focusing mainly on small and medium-sized enterprises.

Furthermore, the Four Motors for Europe will foster the development of pilot projects to raise awareness and to enable digital technologies of real interest and applicability for the enterprises of their respective territories and to promote inter-regional digital production chains based on common value chains that can benefit from digitalisation.