

RESERVIST Project Launched: Towards a Rapid Manufacturing Response to Spikes in Medical Products and Services Demand

Grâce-Hollogne, December 4, 2020 – CENTEXBEL, the Belgian technology centre for textiles and plastics, is coordinator of RESERVIST, a Horizon 2020 project starting today. CENTEXBEL, together with the other European partners, aims to repurpose manufacturing lines to respond to crisis needs.

Today, the HORIZON 2020 project RESERVIST starts. The 17 European partners, representative of both the industry and research sector, began planning their activities to achieve an ambitious goal. They aim to establish a network of 'reservist cells' to activate surge manufacturing when standard production lines cannot respond to the demand for medical products.

The need for structures alike became apparent earlier this year when the health systems faced considerable challenges in provisioning medical supplies, e.g. personal protective equipment, ventilators etc., making it difficult to provide healthcare to millions of EU citizens, in turn. In response to this reality, RESERVIST aims to create a network that provides continuous manufacturing and service in the healthcare supply chain during emergencies. To achieve that, industry and research partners will work together to build cross-sectoral networks and tap into the worldwide maker community.

"RESERVIST is a great opportunity to improve the resilience of production lines, enabling the industry to respond to fluctuations in market demand in case of an emergency or other trigger events", said Guy Buyle, Manager EU Research at CENTEXBEL, the coordinator of RESERVIST.

RESERVIST main legacy will be a network of partners able to repurpose production lines to provide personal protection, respiratory and medical disinfection equipment to the health system. Easier said than done, however. Partners will establish the backbone network and set up a coordination system to ensure efficient logistics and aligned manufacturing since the onset of the emergency. Meanwhile, partners will develop new materials and tweak production facilities, including rapid testing and certification capacities for the resulting products. The network backbone will be eventually embedded into the partners' structure, remaining idle until it is necessary to activate it.



To reach its ambitious goal, RESERVIST relies on each partner's expertise: CENTEXBEL brings in its knowledge on the development and testing of face masks. For this, CENTEXBEL will collaborate especially with the Belgian companies involved in the consortium: Deltrian Protective Equipment, Sioen Industries and Desimone.

The RESERVIST consortium includes four large enterprises and seven SMEs, in addition to four research centres and two innovation networks. The intersectoral nature of the project also emerges from the several disciplines of the partners' expertise, that range from healthcare, textiles, manufacturing and engineering to digitalisation, design, certification, software platforms and modelling.

About RESERVIST

The RESERVIST project is co-funded by the Horizon 2020 programme of the European Union under grant agreement n°101016041. It will last 24 months and started on December 1, 2020. RESERVIST has a consortium of 17 partners from 7 EU countries and is coordinated by Centexbel, the Belgian research centre for textiles and plastics.

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