

Industry of the future in Wallonia

Belgium: strong industrial country - industry excellence

Belgium is a leading industrial player with a strong heritage and early adoption of advanced manufacturing, consistently excelling in innovation, competitiveness, and digital transformation. Belgian companies hold a competitive edge in **additive manufacturing, AI, AR/VR, data processing and processing**, as well as **smart solutions and robotics**.

With its rich industrial history, the region of Wallonia remains a hub for cutting-edge industries, continually reinventing itself through collaboration between education, research centres, and industry.

Framework of this 2-days event

Belgium / Wallonia have implemented several **strategic initiatives** to address the numerous challenges (such as transforming production tools, decarbonisation, digitalisation, adapting production techniques, utilising sustainable materials). These 2 days will focus on the 3 following strategies:

1. DIGITAL WALLONIA

Wallonia's digital strategy, **Digital Wallonia**, serves as a platform offering services, assistance to both public and private stakeholders and supports numerous **strategic projects**.

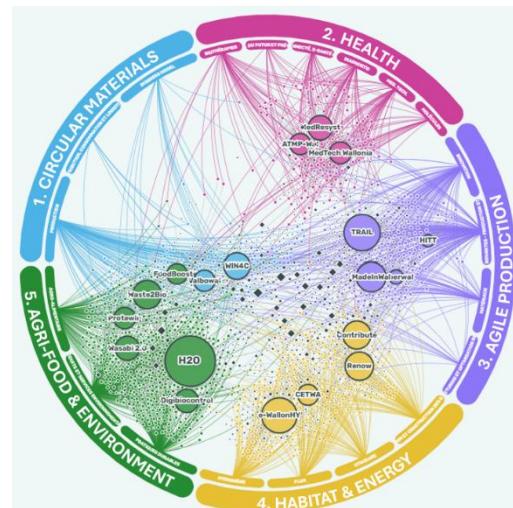
Industry of the Future by Digital Wallonia

"**Industry of the Future**" is one of the **strategic projects** driven by Digital Wallonia. It aims to accelerate the digital transformation of Wallonia's manufacturing sector, enhancing competitiveness and fostering local job creation. By integrating advanced technologies—such as robotics, automation, AI, IoT, and AR/VR—companies innovate to strengthen their market position.

2. SMART SPECIALISATION STRATEGY - S3

To boost its global competitiveness, Wallonia launched its **Smart Specialisation Strategy (S3)** in 2021. Centered around **5 Strategic Innovation Domains (SIDs)**, this S3 aims to foster innovation, strengthen key industrial sectors, promote sustainable economic development, encourage **research-industry collaboration**, and support both **digital and green transitions**.

This partnering event will focus on **3 Strategic Innovation Initiatives (Win4C, MadeinWal, HITT)**, at the crossroads of 2 of the 5 **SID: Agile Production** (digital technologies and innovative solutions for advanced production and design methods) and **Circular Materials** (advancing the circular use of materials to reduce resource consumption, strengthen regional autonomy, and unlock new market opportunities).



1. WIN4C (Walloon Initiative for Circular Materials) - Program leader: CRM Group

Win4C aims to establish Wallonia as a Circular Materials Valley at the heart of Europe by driving innovation in material recycling and reuse (resource management, recycling of plastics, polymers and metals, circular use of minerals, eco-design, sorting technologies, and material traceability). It brings together stakeholders across the entire value chain, from raw material extraction to specialised recycling industries, promoting collaborative platforms that drive sustainable production. The program seeks to boost resource management innovation and encourage the re-localisation of manufacturing, repair, and recycling activities.

2. MADEINWAL (Advanced Products & Manufacturing in Wallonia) – Program leader: SIRRIS

MADEINWAL aims to unite as many innovation initiatives as possible across the entire manufacturing value chain to **revitalise Wallonia's industrial sector**. Its main focus areas include raising awareness of innovation, strengthening R&D efforts, fostering collaboration between research and businesses, supporting digital and circular transformations, coordinating with other initiatives, and developing workforce skills. Designed as a cross-sector program, MadeInWal aims to **reshore production, enhance existing industrial activities, and drive technological advancements**.

3. HITT (Human Interaction Technology Transfer) – Program leader: UCLouvain

HITT aims to accelerate the adoption of **immersive and interactive technologies**—such as AR/VR/XR and mixed reality—in the industrial sectors (**manufacturing, automotive, aerospace, construction, healthcare, and logistics**). The initiative primarily targets **XR technology providers, service companies, and industrial players looking to integrate advanced digital solutions**.

3. MADE DIFFERENT

Made Different, is an industry-driven program and method, designed to strengthen Belgium's manufacturing sector and accelerate its transition to Industry 5.0. With a flexible, bottom-up approach, it focuses on supporting digital transformation through awareness-raising events and tailored, long-term guidance for companies looking to modernise their production processes

Factory of the Future: **award** celebrating companies that have successfully transformed their operations over the last 2 years. The price recognises businesses that have embraced the Factory of the Future model, which is built on **seven key pillars** of technological and social innovation: **world-class manufacturing technologies, end-to-end engineering, digital factory, human-centred production, optimised production networks, eco-production, and smart production systems**.

As part of the **Industry of the Future** program by **Digital Wallonia**, the **Made Different Digital Wallonia** methodology annually recognises **Factories of the Future (FoF)** for their successful transformation.

Key Partners of the event:

Mecatech Innovation Cluster, the Cluster in Mechanical Engineering and Material Technology
CRM Group, the Centre for Research in Metallurgy

Sirris, the Collective research and innovation centre for the industry

Digital Wallonia, the comprehensive digital strategy in Wallonia

EDIH Walhub: Wallonias' EDIH, (European digital innovation hub) for industry and production technology

Universities: UCLouvain, ULiège and UMons



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