

IM-FUTURE will provide a joint study program between Higher Education and Vocational Education and Training that will capitalise companies with prepared youth, providing enterprises innovation, expertise and added value.

The Consortium

Project Coordinator



Buckinghamshire New University (UK)

Project Partners

The British Furniture Manufacturers (UK)



University of Murcia (Spain)



The Technical Research Centre of Furniture and Wood of the Region of Murcia (Spain)



University of Camerino (Italy)



Consorzio del Mobile SPA (Italy)



Warsaw University of Life Sciences (Poland)



IM-FUTURE

Development of a joint study program between Higher Education and Vocational Education and training: International Master's Degree for the FURniTURE sector



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Project Summary

The field of Higher Education has been recognised as one of the key drivers within the EU2020 Strategy to overcome the socioeconomic crisis, to boost growth and jobs and to foster equity and inclusion. Moreover, one of the key priorities for HE is the reinforcement of the "Knowledge Triangle", through the support of innovation, entrepreneurship and university-business cooperation. This specifically applies to those traditional sectors, such as the furniture and woodworking sectors, where changes in education and training are required to equip the future workforce with the new skills for the new demands generated by the changing patterns of furniture consumption (e.g.: ageing population/assisted living). Nevertheless, the European furniture sector is a key driver of sustainable growth with a significant contribution to Europe's overall economic health, competitiveness, creativity, innovation, employment and export: One quarter of the world's furniture is produced in the EU. In 2012, more than 900,000 EU workers were employed in approximately 126,000 firms, and production amounted to more than €84 Billion (1).



However, these figures are 13% lower than in 2007, while the Asian market has increased its production to 230% during the same period (2). Staff qualifications along with the ageing workforce and the inability to attract young workers (3) remain one of the crucial points in these industries. To boost the recruitment of highly prepared staff requires initiatives addressing training to make the sector attractive and capable of transforming both the academic knowledge and high-level basic and transversal competences required to be useful and applicable. For these reasons, this Strategic Partnership proposes the creation of a flexible learning pathway in line with the needs of learners and companies in the furniture, woodworking and related sectors.

It will provide a joint study program between Higher Education and Vocational Education and Training that will CAPITALISE COMPANIES WITH PREPARED YOUTH, providing enterprises innovation, expertise and added value. IM-FUTURE arises from a Strategic Partnership composed of seven entities from regions that are highly influenced by the furniture and woodworking industry: Four universities, two technical research and Training centres and one furniture industry representatives. With the aim to DEVELOP AN INTERNATIONAL MASTER DEGREE FOR THE FURNITURE SECTOR, which will offer an adapted curriculum to equip the young generation with the specific, basic and transversal competences currently required in the furniture, woodworking and related industries. This international Master Degree will provide students with opportunities to gain additional skills by studying and training abroad.



This initiative will comprise of the following activities:- Surveys, comparative analysis and evidence-gathering, studies of real life cases in order to have a real idea of the needs of skills and competences in the European furniture and Woodworking industry.- Development of a joint curriculum with the integration of different learning modes (distance, face to face, etc) and innovative approaches.- The creation of learning and training materials together with methods, pedagogical approaches and tools.- Capacity buildings and networking activities. As a final result of these activities this Strategic Partnership will develop a Study Report on current skills needs on the European Furniture and Woodworking industry, a Joint Curriculum together with a learning content and an e-Learning platform that will be freely and widely distributed. 4 Multiplier Events are planned at the end of the project. IM-FUTURE will trigger modernisation and reinforce education aligned to the needs and opportunities offered by traditional industries. It will provide, assess, and look for the recognition of basic skills needed in the furniture and wood working sector. IM-FUTURE will also address transversal skills, such as entrepreneurship, foreign languages and digital competences.

HE students and staff, and everyone involved in the development of this initiative will have the chance of increasing their sense of initiative and entrepreneurship, their competences in foreign languages and, of course, increasing their skills and capabilities for employability in a industrial sector which is the main key driver in many European regions.



Project Details

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Action Type: Strategic Partnerships for higher education.

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