

Number	Date	SE	Signs	Lines	Signs/Line	Topic	Page
2009-01e	15.01.2009	Kg	2446	84	44	IMS2020/KickOff	1/3

## **Coping with crises using new strategies for intelligent manufacturing**

### **International research project IMS2020 carries out a survey**

**Brussels / Aachen** – Across the globe, it is essential, especially in crisis periods, to develop new manufacturing strategies and indicate new prospects in the economy as well as in research. As announced at its prelude meeting in mid-January in Brussels, this is the challenge addressed by the European Union supported international research project ‘Intelligent Manufacturing Systems 2020’ (IMS2020). The purpose is the prospective development of intelligent manufacturing systems and strategies for 2020. Supported by the EU to the tune of 2 million euros, the project is backed internationally by 15 institutes and universities and in Germany by the Research Institute for Operations Management (FIR) at RWTH Aachen University.

IMS2020 acts as a platform for international cooperation and promotes exchange between industry, research centres, and universities. The project gathers and supports innovative ideas in production and creates prospects in times of worldwide economic crisis. The European Union, Switzerland, the USA, Korea, and Japan are among the IMS regions involved.

The project is constituted of five main areas which are pulled together and examined by the various IMS partners, among which are the Zurich ETH Zentrum and the University of Tokyo.

Number	Date	SE	Signs	Lines	Signs/Line	Topic	Page
2009-01e	15.01.2009	Kg	2446	84	44	IMS2020/KickOff	2/3

The first main area is devoted to furnishing guidelines for sustainable manufacturing. Among other things, the area deals with the different life cycles of a product, the assessment of technologies utilised, the work processes as well as security in the workplace.

The second area concentrates on energy-efficient manufacturing. This area examines environment-oriented aspects, such as the reduction of raw material usage and energy waste in manufacturing.

Another area looks at the analysis of new technologies which could affect decisively the future development of manufacturing.

The fourth field of work examines and develops standards in terms of their effect on the further development and improvement of new and existing manufacturing procedures.

The fifth area deals with the topic of further education in the manufacturing sector. Here, various further education methods, such as E-Learning, are promoted. Other responsibilities include the organisation of the annual 'IMS Summer School' which provides international participants with specialist knowledge in the different IMS fields of work at various locations.

Interested persons or organisations can support the project, for example, by participating in the IMS2020 survey on the project's website [www.ims2020.net](http://www.ims2020.net). The survey starts on 11th February and ends on 24th March. The aim of the survey is to gather global innovative manufacturing ideas. Taking part makes sense in more than one way because every participant is given access to the IMS2020 research

Number	Date	SE	Signs	Lines	Signs/Line	Topic	Page
2009-01e	15.01.2009	Kg	2446	84	44	IMS2020/KickOff	3/3

results as well as the new ideas connected to this for their own manufacturing efforts.

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### Profile, FIR:

An independent research service provider at the RWTH Aachen University, the Research Institute for Operations Management Inc. (FIR) has more than 50 years of experience in the development and application of methods aimed at enhancing growth and employment.

The FIR is a member of the study group of industrial research organisations 'Arbeitsgemeinschaft industrieller Forschungsvereinigungen' (AiF) and has about 150 member companies and associations with more than 50,000 associated companies.

In the research fields of Service Management, Information Management, and Production Management, about 120 academic staff and assistants combine in a network to design the organisation of the 'enterprise of the future'.