SEISMEC

Press Release

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Supporting European Industry Success Maximization through Empowerment Centred development

Piloting the shift to human-centric industry

Our understanding of the broader concepts of employment, productivity and efficiency in an industrial setting has been radically reshaped by recent technological breakthroughs –Artificial Intelligence (AI), the Internet of Things (IoT), cloud computing and intensive data analytics, to name a few–, which have steadily permeated through every single operational layer at the workplace. The growing importance of digitalisation, combined with the ramifications of the Covid-19 pandemic have, in turn, made it apparent that it is time to rethink the demand for flexibilization, collaboration and the desire for fulfilment in the context of workers' expectations.

Companies are now also faced with the challenge of creating and nurturing motivation within an ever-changing technological playground, which is not an easy task: one-third of organisations have reported strong internal resistance to new technologies in the workplace, which can mainly be traced back to the lack of influence employees and trade unions have on both their adoption and use and the perceived inequalities (e.g. between age groups, gender, educational background…) it seems to inadvertently highlight.

This is exactly where the SEISMEC project –Supporting European Industry Success Maximization through Empowerment Centred development— comes into play. This new initiative has been funded by the Europe Commission under its Horizon Europe programme, and officially kicked off its 4-year run in January 2024.

Ultimately, SEISMEC aims to demonstrate the concept of human-centricity across a wide array of industry sectors, scales and sociotechnical contexts in the EU. Through 17 pilots spanning 14 key industrial ecosystems embedded in the European Single Market, SEISMEC will demonstrate how human-centric solutions can effectively empower workers in the co-design and co-development of new technologies, thus facilitating the journey towards a skills-driven and creativity-infused industrial landscape; one that is built around high-quality, sustainable jobs, and prioritises overall worker security and satisfaction. SEISMEC advocates for a multidimensional transformation that hinges on fair and trustworthy technology, ethical incentives, capacity building and democratisation as key enablers to fundamentally change the way workers see themselves and are seen within their organisations.

This paradigm shift, –fittingly labelled the SEISMEC "shift"– intends to usher in a brand new Industry 5.0 framework that is aligned with European values and strikes the right balance between disruptive technology and human-centricity: a so-called Reciprocal Human-Technology Intelligence- that combines human-in-the-loop with user modelling and preference learning, and leverages explainable AI to boost industrial automation and productivity without compromising workers' creativity, collaboration, autonomy, privacy, safety and fulfilment.

With an international consortium of 29 beneficiaries and 2 associated partners from 16 countries (Netherlands, Germany, Ireland, Greece, Spain, Romania, Belgium, Lithuania, France, Austria, Poland, Croatia, Serbia, Italy, Slovenia and Turkey), SEISMEC seamlessly links together key players in the industrial and academic landscape; an expert mix of universities and research centres, SMEs and large enterprises.

By placing empowerment and human-centrism in the spotlight, SEISMEC promises to deliver impactful results to maximise industrial success and foster inclusiveness in the context of Industry 5.0.