CHROMIC

efficient mineral processing and Hydrometallurgical RecOvery of by-product Metals from low-grade metal containing seCondary raw materials

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CHROMIC in brief

Securing a steady supply of chromium, vanadium, molybdenum and nobium is of strategic importance for the European industry. These metals are fundamental for the competitiveness of the manufacturing sector and the innovatione potential of high-tech sectors. Yet Europe remains highly dependent on import for these metals, leading to an inflexible and insecure supply. At the same time, a wealth of such metals is entrapped in industrial wastes or used in applications where their intrinsic value is not fully utilized.

The CHROMIC project aims to unlock the potential of these resources. By smart combinations of existing methods and new technological innovations, CHROMIC will develop new processes to recover chromium, vanadium, molybdenum and nobium from industrial waste. A range of chemical and physical methods will be developed, tested and validated to extract valuable and critical metals from the initial slags in the most sustainable way: economically, environmentally and socially.

The technology will be developed for two models streams (stainless steel slags and ferrochrome slags) with the potential for replication to other industrial value chains across Europe. The final goal is to create a "circular economy" for these metals, one where all resources are kept at the highest possible level of functionality and value at all times.

The project's expected impact is manifold. By introducing new ways to recover (by-product) metals, the project will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions from metal production as well as the environmental impact of industrial waste; it will benefit the European industry, turning what is now considered waste into products with a market value; it will contribute to reduce Europe's dependence on foreign sources of valuable and critical metals. Throughout the project, CHROMIC partners will work to involve society in the development of these new technologies, in order to pave the way towards implementation.

CHROMIC involves 11 partners from five European countries (Belgium, Germany, Slovakia, France and Italy), with 5 industrial partners (4 SMEs and 1 large company), 5 research institutes and one university. Belgium-based research centre VITO acts as coordinator.

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