

Preplasma influence on laser prepulse interaction with flat and 1D-grated targets.

Laser-driven experiments are strongly influenced by non ideal temporal profile of laser pulse. Laser main pulse is preceded by a low intensity prepulse. Prepulse intensity is up to 10^{14} times smaller than main pulse intensity but its duration can reach 2.5 ns [1]. During the prepulse the target is heated up and preplasma appears in front of the target. Preplasma influences optical properties.

In our work we study the preplasma generation and expansion in front of grating and flat targets, and the reflectivity evolution during the prepulse-target interaction. We used radiation-hydrodynamic FLASH code to evaluate numerically the preplasma behavior. We use real temporal laser profile, to make simulation results closer to experiment. We compare the preplasma distribution in front of flat and 1D-grated targets. The preplasma in front of flat target represents a thin dense layer along the target's surface. The preplasma density in front of grating target has nonuniform distribution, and is located between the grating elements and in front of the target. The analysis of preplasma evolution in time shows that grating targets are heated more uniform and more efficient than the flat ones.

Moreover, we analyzed analytically and numerically the radiation absorption in preplasma-target ensemble. We deduced the reflectivity of grating targets using effective refractive index model and Bloch waves approximation. The reflectivity of grating target first decreases with preplasma generation and then increases, when the preplasma density reaches the critical value. The analytical model predictions are confirmed by numerical simulations.

- The results presented in this work were obtained during the stay at Extreme Light Infrastructure (ELI-NP). The authors thank J. F. Ong and O. Tesileanu for useful discussions.

References:

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