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Dear reader,

The WE.Circular project partners wish you a peaceful and relaxing Christmas holiday with your loved ones, and a successful and Happy New Year!

Thanks for signing up to receive the WE.Circular Newsletter. We're delighted to give you a quick update on our progress towards helping more women increase their capacity and skills towards digital and circular transition of their businesses, and to support policy makers to better understand the problems and solutions to be found in supporting women entrepreneurs.

Enjoy reading!

WE.Circular team

In the spotlight:

WE.Circular Partnership Launches Innovation Contest for Women Entrepreneurs!

The WE.Circular partnership is excited to announce the launch of its Innovation Contest, an initiative under the WE.Circular project. This contest aims to empower women entrepreneurs across 12 Danube Region countries by supporting innovative circular business ideas and models. By fostering collaboration and accelerating the transition to a sustainable circular economy, the contest offers a platform for impactful change.

Key Objectives:

- Encourage the transformation of businesses from linear to circular models.
- Provide expert guidance to implement circular practices.
- Enhance visibility and networking opportunities for women-led businesses.
- Promote environmental sustainability through waste reduction and resource protection.

Join us in driving innovation and sustainability across the Danube Region!

More details about the Contest could be found: [LINK](#)

Latest news and events:

WE.Circular honored with Danube Strategy Flagship title!

On July 8, 2024, the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Labour and Tourism of Baden-Württemberg and IHK Ulm, Germany, hosted a prestigious event as part of the International Danube Festival in Ulm. During the ceremony, State Secretary Dr. Rapp, together with Croatian State Secretary Andreja Metelko-Zgombić, Priority Area 8 coordinators Carmen Hawkins and Nirvana Kapitian Butković, and Cristina Cuk from the Danube Strategy Point, presented awards to three "flagship projects" of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region.

We are honored that WE.Circular was among the awarded projects! Representing the project consortium, Project Manager Ralitsa Zhekova accepted the Certificate on behalf of the partnership during the formal ceremony.

This recognition highlights the collective effort and dedication of all project partners in advancing sustainable solutions across the Danube Region.

The results from the joint study on women entrepreneurs digital and circular skills needs and gaps are already available!

The WE.Circular project has conducted a comprehensive **Transnational Skills Gaps and Needs Analysis**, offering a detailed understanding of the current state and specific requirements of women entrepreneurs across 12 countries in the Danube region. This analysis provides valuable insights into the challenges they face during the transition to circular and digital business models.

In addition, an extensive **review of policies and legislative frameworks** highlights the support mechanisms available for women entrepreneurs in their journey toward adopting circular economy practices. The findings reveal a pressing need for

tailored resources, enhanced collaboration, and efforts to overcome cultural and social barriers. They also underscore the importance of fostering networking opportunities, mentoring programs, and flexibility in policy implementation, alongside focused training initiatives to build the necessary skills.

These findings emphasize the importance of a concerted effort from policymakers, governments, and stakeholders to create a more supportive and inclusive environment for women entrepreneurs, enabling them to lead the way in sustainable innovation.

The full text of the national reports and the both transnational analysis could be found in the [Library section](#).

On September 10–11, 2024, the vibrant city of Belgrade hosted the **3rd Transnational Learning Event and 2nd Transnational Stakeholders Group Meeting**, organized by the Association of Business Women in Serbia. This impactful gathering brought together over 40 project partners, strategic partners, and stakeholders from across the Danube Region.

The event showcased innovative practices, discussed key challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in their digital and circular transitions, and outlined actionable solutions to foster growth and sustainability. Attendees also explored methodologies for upcoming initiatives, including the **Training Programme and Innovation Contest**, designed to empower women entrepreneurs across the region.

The learning process continued on November 25-26, 2024, when BWCON successfully hosted the **4th Transnational Learning Event, Thematic Task Group Meeting and Dissemination Event in Stuttgart, Germany**. The Transnational Learning session brought together WE.Circular partners, experts, and stakeholders to exchange insights and explore Austrian and German best practices in supporting women-led digital and circular businesses. During the first meeting of the Thematic Task Group, participants outlined training topics, assigned responsibilities, and set a timeline for the program, set to launch in 2025.

At the HighTech Summit, the 2nd Dissemination Event featured a Circular Economy Workshop, highlighting gamification, industrial sustainability through data sharing, and cradle-to-cradle design. The knowledge gained will shape future WE.Circular activities.

National Stakeholders Meetings were organized in parallel in the countries involved in WE.Circular project. More than 70 stakeholders were updated with achievements of the project and contributed to finalizing the analysis and policy review.

Calendar

Our next event will be hosted by the Foreign Trade Chamber of Bosnia and Herzegovina at the March, 26th-27th 2025 where we will have the chance to increase our knowledge about Bosnian and Hungarian good practices.

The last Transnational Learning Event will be organized May, 13th – 14th, 2025 in Maribor, Slovenia and will be hosted by Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Štajerska.

Next issue of the Newsletter will be dedicated to the finalists from the Innovation Contest!

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