



Innovation Ecosystems for Circular Economy Entrepreneurs

The shift from traditional linear models of consumption to more **sustainable practices** offer untold opportunities for both new and existing businesses in Europe and globally. The potential challenges and benefits associated with the move towards a **circular economy** have put the emphasis on **innovation** as a key driver for sustainable economic development. In the field of **education**, innovation is generally recognised as critical to the continuous improvement of the sector, but it is not yet systematically part of the policy development process. The situation is similar for **VET** systems and services, which need to develop a culture of innovation and creativity to be able to meet the needs of emerging trends like the circular economy.

Get to know the project!

Therefore, the **ECO-CENT** project was created with the main aim of responding through the provision of **targeted training** to the needs of the business community to adopt socially, economically, and environmentally sustainable models, and of VET providers to support the shift to circular economy. ECO-CENT will also help form **local synergies** between VET professionals and business representatives through the establishment of **multistakeholder forums** in each country within the scope of the project to develop **innovation ecosystems** which will facilitate both parties' contribution to the **green transition** of Europe.

The ECO-CENT is co-funded by the EU under the **Erasmus+ Programme** and is represented by the following organisations:



The team behind ECO-CENT:

An international consortium will be responsible for the implementation of the project:

- [Municipality of Lousada](#) – **Portugal**
(Project Coordinator)
- [Spectrum Research Centre](#) – **Ireland**
- [Skills Elevation FHB](#) – **Germany**
- [CARDET](#) - **Cyprus**
- [The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia](#) – **Slovenia**
- [Bulgarian-Romanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry](#) – **Bulgaria**
- [University of the Aegean](#) – **Greece**

The project will achieve the following **main results**:

- Elaboration of **training resources** for five widely acknowledged **circular economy business strategies** to be used by companies.
- Creation of a **framework** to facilitate ‘**skunkworks**’ by teams of educators and business owners working together to find innovative progression pathways.
- Development of a custom-made **in-service training programme**.
- Establishment of a **Massive Open Online Courses** (MOOC) platform.
- Elaboration of a **Policy Paper** to present the ECO-CENT model as an example of best practice in supporting Europe’s sustainable transition.

First meeting of the partners



The ECO-CENT **Kick-off Meeting** was initiated via ZOOM on 10th March 2022. Representatives of all project partners took part in the event, during which a general overview of the ECO-CENT was provided, and all aspects and expected results of the implementation were

discussed in detail. The partners will get together again for the **first physical meeting** of the Consortium in Ireland in the second quarter of 2022. Further, the ECO-CENT **logo** and **visual identity** were elaborated, as well as a **Quality Assurance Plan**, a **Promotion Plan**, and the first **Risk Analysis Report**. We also launched the ECO-CENT [website](#) and [Facebook page](#), where you could find all the important news and information regarding the project!