



Factsheet on Circular Economy and Youth Entrepreneurship Across Europe

The European region has recently witnessed a significant shift towards sustainable development, particularly in the circular economy and youth entrepreneurship. Countries like Portugal, Greece, Romania, Belgium, and Germany are pioneering this transition, bringing unique initiatives and policies to the forefront. This comprehensive factsheet aims to provide a concise overview of the efforts and progress made by these nations in integrating circular economy principles into their economies and fostering a new generation of environmentally conscious entrepreneurs.

The factsheet encapsulates the key aspects of youth engagement, policy initiatives, and strategic advancements towards sustainable practices across these five countries.

Portugal

- **Growing Interest in Circular Economy:** Emphasis on transitioning from linear to circular models, especially among young entrepreneurs.
- **Key Initiatives:** Repair Café Lisboa, NextLap Accelerator, Repository of Materials.
- **Youth Engagement:** Strong focus on sustainable practices and circular economy in entrepreneurial ventures.

Romania

- **Demographic Trends:** Romania's population is declining and aging, with national policies focusing on supporting and empowering the 14-35 age group as a crucial future resource.
- **Environmental Strategies:** Commitment to the EU Green Deal and "Fit for 55" measures, National Strategy for Sustainable Development.
- **Circular Economy Outlook:** Low awareness but growing interest in second-hand and refurbished goods, support for circular economy projects, and various innovative initiatives and programs.

Germany

- **Circular Economy Tradition:** Since 1996 with the Kreislaufwirtschaftsgesetz, focusing on reducing waste and reintroducing materials into production.
- **Youth Entrepreneurship Promotion:** Federal initiatives to encourage entrepreneurship in education, the "GO!" start-up initiative, and the De: Hubs initiative for digital start-ups.
- **Youth Strategy:** Federal Government's Jugendstrategie, targeting 12 to 27-year-olds, emphasizing cross-sectoral youth involvement in policy-making and support for sustainable development.

Greece

- **Youth Policy:** Targeting 15 to 35-year-olds, with a comprehensive approach covering various aspects like employment, social inclusion, and environment.
- **Strategic Initiatives:** "Strategic Plan for Vocational Education and Training, Lifelong Learning and Youth" and National Action Plan on Circular Economy.
- **Circular Economy Development:** Circular Transition Business Plan for sustainable practices and economic models.

Belgium

- **Diverse Youth Policy:** Different age definitions across communities, with a federal structure supporting distinct regional strategies.
- **Circular Economy Progress:** High waste recycling rates, ambitious targets for waste reduction and circular practices in regions.
- **Entrepreneurial Support:** Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan and initiatives to foster entrepreneurship in various educational settings.



Common Themes Across Countries:

Focus on Youth:

Each country has specific strategies to engage young people in entrepreneurship and circular economy practices.



Circular Economy Initiatives:

All countries are making significant efforts to transition from linear to circular models, with various programs, initiatives, and support systems.



Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

Alignment with SDGs, particularly in waste management, resource efficiency, and sustainable economic practices.



This consolidated factsheet provides a snapshot of the state of circular economy and youth entrepreneurship in Portugal, Greece, Romania, Belgium, and Germany.

For a more in-depth understanding, please refer to the respective chapters in the

"Toolkit for Youth and Circular Entrepreneurship" document.