

# ENGINE-HUBs

Creating “Circular” Business by young ENGINEers at the cross-border area of Greece-Bulgaria

## Contents

- About ENGINE-HUBs
- The beneficiaries
- Activities & Objectives
- Final Conference
- 4th Project meeting
- ENGINE-HUBs website & Facebook page
- Establishment of ENGINE-HUBs
- 2-days Seminars
- Seminar
- P2P Meetings
- Press Conference

## • About ENGINE-HUBs

ENGINE-HUBs is a project co-funded by the Interreg Greece-Bulgaria programme. The main aim of the project is to identify business opportunities in the area of circular economy in the Cross – Border area of Greece-Bulgaria and to create a **structure** through which business ideas of potential entrepreneurs will be transformed into businesses.

*The structure will deliver a new business approach to enhance entrepreneurship of young scientists building on three pillars: knowledge, mentoring/coaching and networking.*

The project focuses on the provision of assistance through 4 HUBs to the new entrepreneurs for the implementation of their business plans and not only the development of these plans so that the new enterprises can be operative before project's ending or 2 years after at the latest.

## The beneficiaries

Ninety (90) young entrepreneurs with the better business plans will receive support by the project (ENGINE-Hubs academy) in order to implement their business plans under the strong support of experts and trainers during a training campus for two weeks period. They will receive support in the topics of the Supplies, marketing, sales and financing. It should be noticed that the project focuses mainly in the provision of assistance to the new entrepreneurs for the implementation of the selected business plans and not the development of the plans so that the new enterprises can be operative before project's ending or one year after its completion at the latest.

## Activities & Objectives

The launching and operation of this structure is to be achieved through the establishment and operation of two “one-stop-shop” offices (ENGINE-HUBs) within the professional chambers and two antennas-centers in the business chambers. The HUBs will provide motivation, trainings, counseling, hospitality space and other related support for emerging young entrepreneurs while it will link the new enterprises with the market. Information and motivation campaign towards young engineers in order to participate in the project will be organized. Information on the principles of the circular economy concept and guidelines on how to develop a business plan will be provided to young engineers in order to be prepared and participate in the competition for new “circular business” ideas.



## Final Conference

The closing conference of the "ENGINE-HUBs" project organized by the Technical Chamber of Greece / Department of Central Macedonia, Lead Partner of the Project and took place on 31.10.2023 in the premises of TEE/TKM (Thessaloniki, Greece) with the presence of representatives of the partners of the project, engineers and young entrepreneurs. The aim of the conference was to present the main aspects and the results and benefits of the project in the cross-border area of Greece - Bulgaria.

The conference started with a welcome speech by Mr. G. Tsakoumis, President of TEE/TKM, Mr. D. Natchev, President of the Union of Civil Engineers of Bulgaria and Mr. K. Styliaras, executive of the Association of Greek Industries, while the awarding of the 5 best and most innovative business ideas for the application of the circular economy, which emerged through the programme in the Greek area, followed.

The conference was followed by B2B meetings and a networking event.





## Final Conference

The following awarded business ideas were presented:

- P. Zarkos (ELEKTRONIO HANDCRAFTED VEHICLES – electric bicycles and skates with a low energy footprint)
- Th. Patsakidou (SECOND WAVE – Eco-friendly Swimwear made from recycled materials)
- A. Mavrommatakis (CIRCLE OF FASHION – reuse and recycling of clothes)
- E. Moraiti (FLERI/PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCTS – use of agricultural residues for their transformation into pharmaceutical products).





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## Final Conference

Then followed the speeches of Mr. G. Mouratidis, Project Manager of the project from TEE/TKM, Ms. Ch. Polyzou, executive of the company Lever Development Consultants S.A., Mr. M. Chatzigiannis, executive of the contracting company Idimon Development Consultants, who presented the project, its key results and outputs, as well as the viability of the Engine Hubs created under it respectively.

In the second section of the conference, S. Mylonas, member of the Environment Permanent Committee of TEE/TKM, presented the external environment and how it affects the development of the circular economy, while in the third section, pathways of the circular economy and innovations in Bulgaria were presented by Mr. K. Georgiev, from Schnider Electric Bulgaria and Kalatex Ltd, Mr. R. Tonev, from the Bulgarian Water Association/youth organization. At the end of the conference Mr. G. Kokkas, member of Competitiveness, Entrepreneurship and Innovation Permanent Committee of TEE/TKM, presented the Financial tools to support entrepreneurship in the circular economy sector and the role of Engineers.

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## 4th Project meeting

The 4th meeting was organized by UNION OF CIVIL ENGINEERS IN BULGARIA - UCEB (PB3) and held in the premises of HUB Blagoevgrad, which was created by UCEB, in Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria, on 11th of October 2023. Representatives (Reps) of all Beneficiary Partners (BPs) were present.

The Agenda was divided in two Sessions:

Session 1 – Presentations of Partners Progress until now

Session 2 – Project Status overview and Discussion per WP, Activities & Time plan



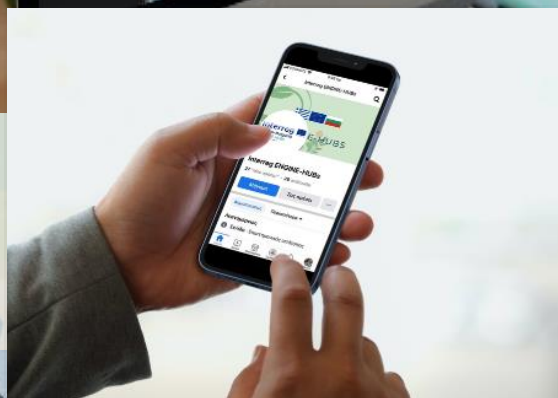
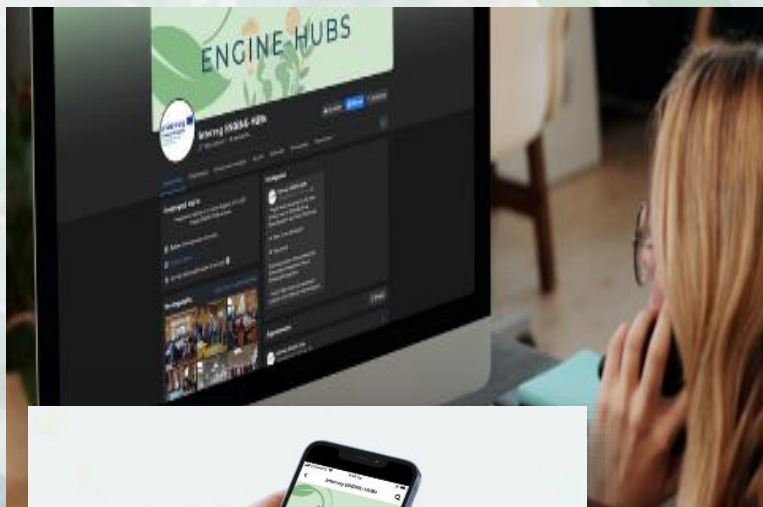


*Don't forget to follow us!*

## ENGINE-HUBs Website & Facebook page

Project's official website is fully operating and can be found [here](#).

As long as it concerns the development of the Facebook page, you can find the page under the name: “Interreg ENGINE HUBs” or... you can just click [here!](#)



## ENGINE-HUBs Leaflet

A leaflet was developed with a view to inform the general public, and all interested parties, about the project's activities, the background, the main target group and the objectives of the project, as well as information for the partnerships that the project consists of.

## ENGINE-HUBs Poster

ENGINE-HUBs poster has been developed in order to promote the project to all potential interested parties and to provide the appropriate information to intrigue the public to look up the project, its activities and its goals.





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## Establishment of ENGINE-HUBs

The ENGINE-HUB of Project Beneficiary 4 - CCI-GD was established in Gotse Delchev, Bulgaria.

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## 2-days Seminars

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Gotse Delchev hosted the first 2days seminar on the "ENGINE HUB" project at the beginning of September.

Attendees had the opportunity to receive information on two main topics: "The model of the circular economy - new opportunities for sustainable circular development" and "Preparation of a business plan".

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## Seminar: Know-how of existing technologies and good practices in areas of the circular economy related to the realization of business ideas

Lecturer: Prof. Dr. Marina Stefanova - Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"

On 30rd of October UCEB organized the Seminar in premises of ENGINE-HUB Blagoevgrad. The Seminar focused on Introduction to Know-how for existing technologies in areas of the circular economy for the implementation of business ideas, case studies of circular business models, sectoral approach to development and evaluation of business ideas, group work.

In the 2nd part of the Seminar, a lively discussion took place between the participants, the lecturer and the mentors. The exact approaches in the applicable sectors of the circular economy and the approach to shaping business ideas were fixed.



## P2P Meetings

P2P meetings in order to support entrepreneurs to implement their business plans were organized by CCI-GD in Gotse Delchev, Bulgaria.





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## Press Conference

On 13th of November 2023, the beneficiary Union of Civil Engineers in Bulgaria (UCEB) organised a press conference in the premises of Bulgarian Telegraph Agency, Blagoevgrad.

The press conference was broadcast directly on the national regional television for south-western Bulgaria - Blagoevgrad and was also broadcast on the national television BNT2 and the Radio Blagoevgrad.

Eng, Dimitar Natchev presented the project's goals, objectives and achievements in detail. All the journalists' questions were answered. Particular interest was shown in which sectors of industry in the Blagoevgrad region are applicable the principles of the circular economy. Questions were asked also about the functioning of ENGINE\_HUB Blagoevgrad in the future.

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# Interreg Greece-Bulgaria ENGINE-HUBs

European Regional Development Fund



*The contents of this newsletter are sole responsibility of the ENGINE-HUBs partnership and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union, the participating countries the Managing Authority, and the Joint Secretariat*

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