

WHY TEACH CIRCULAR ECONOMY IN SCHOOLS

THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY CHALLENGE FOR STEM TEACHERS

Why is it important?

In recent years, environmental issues have generated growing global concern. Ecosystem degradation, pollution and climate change are clear signs that the current economic model - based on excessive consumption and waste - is no longer sustainable. The circular economy has emerged as a vital alternative, promoting the reuse of resources, waste reduction and sustainability. Integrating the teaching of the circular economy into schools is a fundamental way of preparing future generations for environmental and social challenges.

The circular economy is a model of production and consumption that aims to optimize the use of resources. Promoting sharing, renting, reusing, repairing, renovating and recycling extends the life cycle of products, reducing the need to extract new materials and the generation of waste.

This model not only promotes environmental sustainability but also fosters innovation and efficiency in production and consumption processes



Schools play a central role in shaping responsible citizens aware of their actions. Including the circular economy in the school curriculum can have a significant impact on environmental education, helping students to understand how their daily choices affect the environment. Teaching circular economy from an early age allows future generations to adopt more responsible and sustainable behaviours, making conscious decisions in their consumption and use of resources.

Education for sustainability should be transversal to various disciplines. The circular economy can be addressed in subjects such as Science, Mathematics, Geography or even Art, in order to integrate the concept into the different contexts of students' daily lives.



Benefits of Teaching Circular Economy in Schools

1. Forming a Sustainable Mentality

By learning about the circular economy, students develop a sustainable mindset, understanding the importance of preserving the environment and natural resources. This type of training can promote a change in behaviour, leading young people to adopt more ecological and responsible practices in their daily lives.

2. Developing skills for the future

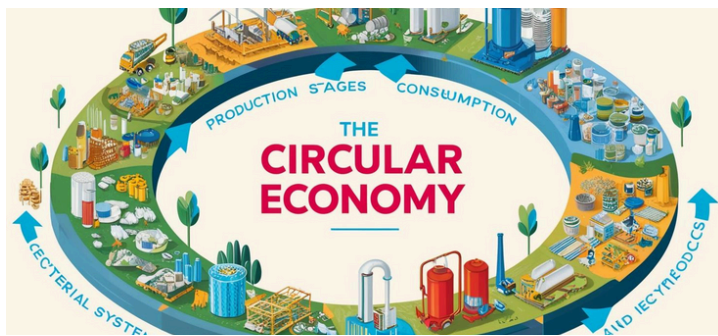
The circular economy is not just an environmental issue, but also an opportunity to train students for the economic and social challenges of the future. The job market increasingly values sustainability, and knowledge of the circular economy can be a competitive advantage. In addition, students develop important skills such as creativity, critical thinking, problem-solving and collaboration, all of which are essential in today's context.

3. Encouraging Innovation

The circular model encourages innovation by challenging students to find creative solutions to environmental problems. Practical projects involving the creation of circular prototypes or the analysis of recycling processes can stimulate students' curiosity about science and technology, as well as engage them in innovative and sustainable processes.

4. Promoting Active Citizenship

Teaching about the circular economy can also encourage active citizenship. Students become more aware of their responsibilities, not only towards the environment, but also towards society. Community projects, recycling campaigns or swap fairs are ways of involving them in circular economy practices that benefit the community.



Challenges in Implementing the Circular Economy in Schools

Despite the benefits, the implementation of the circular economy in the school curriculum faces some challenges. Lack of resources, the need for ongoing training for teachers and resistance to changes in teaching methods can make it difficult to adopt this theme. However, there are strategies to overcome these obstacles.

1. Educator training

Teacher training is essential to ensure effective teaching of the circular economy. Training programs and workshops can help educators gain a deep understanding of the concept and its implications so that they can convey it to their students in a clear and inspiring way.

2. Development of educational materials

Creating specific teaching materials for the circular economy is also a key strategy. Materials that engage students in a practical and interactive way are crucial to ensuring that the topic is approached in an engaging and accessible way.

3. Partnerships with Companies and Organizations

Establishing partnerships with companies and organizations that already apply circular practices can enrich teaching. Study visits, internships or workshops held in collaboration with these entities allow students to see theory in practice and learn from concrete examples.