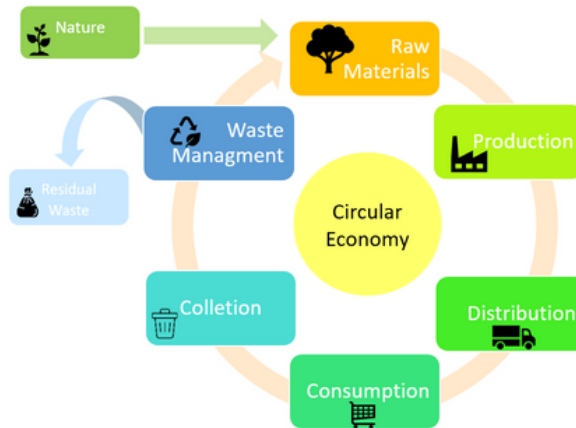


CIRCULAR STEM

BOOSTING CIRCULAR ECONOMY COMPETENCES FOR STEM TEACHERS



Five teachers from AEFrazão, Portugal, discuss Circular Economy in Belgrade

“Circular STEM”, project promoted within the scope of KA1 Erasmus+, raises awareness of the need to save natural resources and reduce waste, promoting activities in a STEM methodology.

Circular Economy

What? Why?

Humanity used in five months what it takes the Earth twelve months to regenerate. Portugal has already started the 2025 resources after the 2024 ones ended in May (observador.pt).

We face a serious problem! This is a drama that we have known about for many years and that has not been fought with enough will and energy. Some researchers say it is already too late, others argue that there is still hope.



Developing the Project

At AEFrazão we decided to contribute to the resolution by embracing an Erasmus+ project (KA1) that discusses ways to combat the overuse of natural resources while reducing waste. The project is named **“Circular STEM”** and aims to gather and work on information about the Circular Economy in order to design activities for students from a multidisciplinary perspective (STEM).

AEFrazão is the project's Coordinating School, with partners from Spain, Italy, Serbia, Latvia and Germany.

Between April 9th and 11th, the second transnational meeting (TM2) took place in the city of Belgrade, Serbia. Five teachers from the group involved in the project were invited to discuss six areas related to the Circular Economy with fifteen other partner colleagues.



Circular Economy concept

The concept of Circular Economy breaks with the current economic model designed in a straight line: extract – produce – discard. In this circular concept, waste, discarded and surplus is used to produce new raw materials or new products with market value. Sounds like a double-win solution, doesn't it?

The economy wins (lower production costs) and the environment wins (less exploitation of resources, less waste to manage)! However, this concept has encountered several barriers, having to win each victory by hand.

The task for portuguese team

The work prepared and presented by Portugal at this meeting focused precisely on the barriers raised to Circular Economy, but also on the presentation of some successful projects already implemented around the world.

We ended the presentation with a suggestion and work for students, which can easily be implemented in schools as an model, and can be presented in each Community to serve as an example and driver of the transformation we want to promote. It involves *making soap from used cooking oil*.

The team watched and discussed the work presented by the partners and collaborated in the design of the project's next tasks.



Strolling in Belgrade

In free time, we take the opportunity to discover Belgrade, having found a modern, bustling, rapidly expanding city, rich in History and cultural heritage, bathed by the Sava and Danube rivers and embellished by countless parks and gardens, calm and well cared for.

We can assess this mobility as an excellent moment for reflection, sharing and action on the problem. Each topic will now be worked on with students so that it can be improved and made accessible to schools and other interested parties.

We consider participation in international projects, namely Erasmus+ projects, as an added value for the Group, allowing quality and comprehensive learning, aimed at both teachers (professional training and skills development) and students (essentially social and emotional impact, but also in the development of autonomy and learning).

