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Circular Economy for SMEs (CESME) 4 year project – Europe

CEC Expert

September 7, 2016

Funding

The Circular Economy for SMEs ([CESME](#)) project is a Europe-wide initiative created by the Business Development Centre in Denmark. It was established to help small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) to future-proof their business in a green and more

sustainable way.

- **Timeline: 4 years.** The project will see 10 partners from six European countries join to share experiences, identify best practice and create a step-by-step guide to help SMEs with the transition to a circular economy.
- **Budget: €1.73 million.** It will be co-funded by the Interreg Europe Programme, an organisation created to help regional governments across Europe to develop and deliver better policy.
- **Phase 1:** aims to provide policymakers with knowledge of the benefits of the circular economy and highlight how support packages could be best used to help small businesses adopt more circular business models. This will uncover ways that local and regional authorities can improve policy instruments and design support packages to help SMEs.
- **Phase 2:** will work with SMEs themselves to put in place the lessons learned through the initial work.

A study carried out by the Waste & Resources Action Programme (WRAP) estimated last year that expansion of the circular economy in Europe could create three million extra jobs and reduce unemployment by 520,000 across member states by 2030.

Breaking down barriers for SMEs

The Welsh Government is the UK's representative among the 10 project

partners, which come from Denmark, Italy, Finland, Bulgaria, the UK and Greece.

Wales hosted the first partner event in May, which saw all ten partners gather in Cardiff and hear from a number of circular economy experts including the Ecodesign Centre Wales and WRAP Cymru.

Delegates visited local SME and furniture producer Orangebox in Hengoed, which undertook a pilot project in 2014 to design an office chair that is 98 per cent recyclable and easy to repair through easy disassembly. The company believes that the chair has the potential to generate sales of £5 million per annum and £2.5 million of added value for Orangebox's supply chain.

Commenting on Wales's part in the project, Environment Secretary Lesley Griffiths said: "Wales has a strengthening global reputation for green growth and we recognise the opportunities the circular economy will bring. Sharing valuable expertise will help us break down barriers for SMEs and bring this vision into reality."

More information on the Circular Economy for SMEs project can be found on the [Interreg Europe website](#).

Source: [Resource](#)

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He is the Founder of [Wizeimpact](#) and Co-Fo

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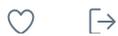


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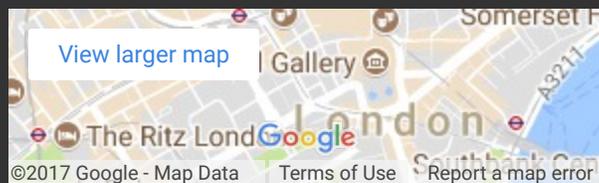
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The Circular Economy Club (CEC) is the international network of circular economy professionals and organisations.

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