**EIT trains 40 000 young women in ‘STEM’ ACROSS 33 COUNTRIES in record timing**

*25 April 2024 – Budapest, Hungary –* **The** [**Girls Go Circular**](https://eit-girlsgocircular.eu/) **project of the** [**European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)**](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Calimian%5CAppData%5CLocal%5CMicrosoft%5CWindows%5CINetCache%5CContent.Outlook%5C4A1N0KZX%5Ceit.europa.eu) **has reached its ambitious target of training 40 000 girls in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) three years ahead of schedule. Working together with partners, schools and teachers across 33 countries, the EIT Community is delivering a unique course that equips young women with critical digital and leadership skills**

Inspiring the next generation of leaders and entrepreneurs, the programme was launched in 2020 by the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), part of the EU’s research and innovation programme Horizon Europe. The objective of the project – now achieved – was to train 40 000 girls by 2027. The programme will continue to offer educational and innovation support services to more young innovators (aged 14-19 ) across Europe.

**Iliana Ivanova, European Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth**, said: “*The Girls Go Circular project was launched with a clear mission: to show young girls and women that Europe’s innovation landscape is incomplete without their ideas, their passion and their visions. Funded under Horizon Europe, our research and innovation programme, the European Institute of Innovation and Technology and its community have a key role to play in closing the gender gap in research and innovation. I look forward to seeing these girls and young women shape the future of Europe.”*

**Nektarios Tavernarakis, Chair of the EIT Governing Board**, said*: “The EIT is a champion of women-led innovation and entrepreneurship - pioneering, supporting, and celebrating initiatives that build a more inclusive innovation landscape. We are extremely proud of the Girls Go Circular programme who have reached their target of training 40 000 young girls across 33 countries in record timing. The programme initially started out in only a handful of countries mostly in Eastern and Southern Europe, but thanks to our agility and the demand, it has expanded to all EU Member States and beyond showing the EIT’s power to harness its partners as Europe’s largest innovation network”.*

The [Circular Learning Space](https://eit-girlsgocircular.eu/about/) – Girls Go Circular’s educational platform accessible for schools and individuals – offers students challenge-based learning on a diverse range of topics like e-waste, climate change, health, semiconductors, or robotics. All resources are available in 22 European languages. In the last three years, the programme has been implemented in over 1 000 schools across all EU Member States and also in Armenia, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, and Ukraine, a testament to its widespread appeal.

**Closing the Gender Gap**

According to the [Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI) 2022](https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/desi), women represent only 19% of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) specialists and one-third of STEM graduates. By encouraging young women to explore traditionally male-dominated careers, Girls Go Circular contributes significantly to the positive change of Europe's innovation landscape.

Girls Go Circular programme is part of the EIT Community efforts to close gender gaps and empower women in European entrepreneurship and innovation. The EIT Community focuses on gender mainstreaming, and is home to a several specialised women entrepreneurship and leadership programmes . These include:

* [Supernovas](https://www.eitfood.eu/projects/supernovas), offering support to women at all levels of business creation, from those trying to start a business to women who want to be venture investors to those seeking to improve their leadership skills.
* [Empowering Women in Agrifood](https://www.eitfood.eu/projects/ewa-empowering-women-in-agrifood-2022) is a project that promotes female entrepreneurship in the agrifood sector and boosts the amount of women in leadership positions.
* [Women Entrepreneurship Bootcamp](https://eithealth.eu/programmes/women-entrepreneurship-bootcamp/) a programme for new health sector businesses led by women, offering business and product trainings, mentoring, and networking.
* [Strada](https://stradawomen.eu/) is a leadership development programme for women who want to become leaders in the manufacturing sector
* [The European Prize for Women Innovators](https://eit.europa.eu/news-events/news/european-prize-women-innovators-celebrating-womens-outstanding-contributions) (in association with the European Innovation Council) is a prestigious award celebrating and promoting trailblazing women. Most recently, The EIT was awarded the EU Agencies Network (EUAN) [Diversity & Inclusion Award](https://eit.europa.eu/news-events/news/eit-wins-2023-eu-agencies-network-diversity-inclusion-award) for its work in powering outstanding women innovators and entrepreneurs through the EIT Women Leadership Award.

[**Read more in our Gender Equality Factsheet**](https://eit.europa.eu/library/eit-gender-equality-factsheet)

**Women and Girls in STEM Forum**

Every year, Girls Go Circular – in collaboration with the European Commission and the EIT – organises the [Women and Girls in STEM Forum](https://eit-girlsgocircular.eu/women-and-girls-in-stem-forum/). The fourth edition will take place in October 2024 in Budapest, Hungary. This annual event has become a platform for leading voices of students, teachers, and policymakers – attracting thousands of participants – to identify key actions to bridge the gender gap in STEM and ICT and empower girls to pursue their career goals in science and technology

This year’s Forum dives into the world of Artificial Intelligence for their [Student Challenge 2024](https://eit-girlsgocircular.eu/wgsf24-student-challenge/) to explore its potential to solve real-life societal challenges ethically and creatively. Through interactive mentoring sessions, participants and alumnae have access to leading experts of the field in a valuable exchange aimed to boost confidence by connecting girls and young women with tangible career options.

**EIT Community Education**

[Girls Go Circular](https://eit-girlsgocircular.eu/) is an EIT Community initiative coordinated by EIT RawMaterials. The EIT Community Education portfolio consists of dynamic education programmes targeting learners of all ages. Through a “Learner Lifecycle” approach, the EIT Community offers cross-cutting opportunities and fosters peer-learning among students, scholars, professionals, and partners working and studying in Europe. An innovative learner can begin their journey as an inventive teenager in the Girls Go Circular programme or a visionary Deep Tech Talent pioneer or an eager learner accessing new skills through the EIT Campus. Find out more [here](https://eit.europa.eu/community-activities/eit-education#:~:text=The%20EIT%20Community%20is%20driven,working%20and%20studying%20in%20Europe.).

**EIT - MAKING INNOVATION HAPPEN!**

WHAT IS THE EUROPEAN INSTITUTE OF INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY (EIT)?

The EIT strengthens Europe’s ability to innovate by powering solutions to pressing global challenges and by nurturing entrepreneurial talent to create sustainable growth and skilled jobs in Europe. The EIT is an EU body and an integral part of Horizon Europe, the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation.

The Institute supports dynamic pan-European partnerships, EIT Knowledge and Innovation Communities, among leading companies, research labs and universities. Together with their leading partners, the EIT Community offers a wide range of innovation and entrepreneurship activities across Europe: entrepreneurial education courses, business creation and acceleration services and innovation driven research projects.

**EIT FACTS & FIGURES**

* **Europe’s largest innovation network**: 2 400+ partners from top business, research and education organisations across Europe in 50+ innovation hubs across Europe
* **Making innovation happen**: our ecosystem has powered more than 7 800 start-ups and scale-ups, who have gone on to create more than 2 110 new products and services and raise more than EUR 7.3 billion in external capital. More than 5 700 students have graduated from EIT labelled master and doctoral programmes and over 100 000 have participated in EIT Community entrepreneurial trainings.