



# NEWSLETTER 2

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## KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- The Ljubljana training course demonstrated that the future of furniture lies not in consuming more, but in rethinking, reusing, and redesigning — a message that resonates far beyond the workshop walls.
- The meeting in Tirana showcased progress on capacity-building tools, the e-learning platform, and dissemination strategies, while reinforcing transparency through reporting and evaluation. It marked a pivotal moment of shared vision and commitment to empowering youth and vocational education providers.



### 01.

VET PROVIDERS  
TRAINING COURSE IN  
JUBLJANA  
22-26 SEPTEMBER 2025

### 02.

INTERIM MEETING IN  
TIRANA  
23 - 24 OCTOBER 2025

# LJUBLJANA HOSTS TRAINING ON SUSTAINABLE FURNITURE FUTURES

Ljubljana, September 2025.

For five days this autumn, the Slovenian capital became a hub of innovation in sustainable furniture production. The SUSFUR project hosted its VET providers training course, drawing educators from across the Western Balkans to explore how reclaimed wood, modern technologies, and circular economy principles can reshape the industry.

The program, organized by the University of Ljubljana's Department of Wood Science and Technology, blended expert lectures, study visits, and hands-on workshops. Professors introduced participants to cutting-edge topics ranging from the service life of wooden furniture and eco-friendly surface treatments to robotic automation in manufacturing and designing furniture from reused materials.

A highlight was the laboratory tour, where visitors saw advanced testing facilities and outdoor durability experiments. "It was eye-opening to see how science and sustainability meet in practice," one participant remarked.

Beyond the classroom, the group visited the Ljubljana Reuse Centre, a community initiative that refurbishes donated items, and M SORA company in Žiri, a pioneer in circular production. At M SORA, participants observed solar-powered operations and admired windows and doors crafted entirely from reclaimed timber—proof that sustainability and performance can go hand in hand.

The course culminated in a practical workshop, where participants transformed discarded wood into new prototypes. Among the creations were a tea table made from timber stored for decades at the Port of Koper, seedling stands crafted from decayed beech, and a CNC-designed bottle holder. The collaborative atmosphere sparked creativity, showing that even low-value materials can be reborn as functional, high-quality products.

Organizers emphasized that the training was not just about skills, but about building bridges between education and industry. Evaluations confirmed strong knowledge gains and enthusiasm for integrating sustainability into vocational curricula.

Looking ahead, the SUSFUR network plans to embed these methods into teaching programs, share best practices across the region, and expand partnerships with companies committed to circular design.



# INTERIM MEETING IN TIRANA 23 – 24 OCTOBER 2025

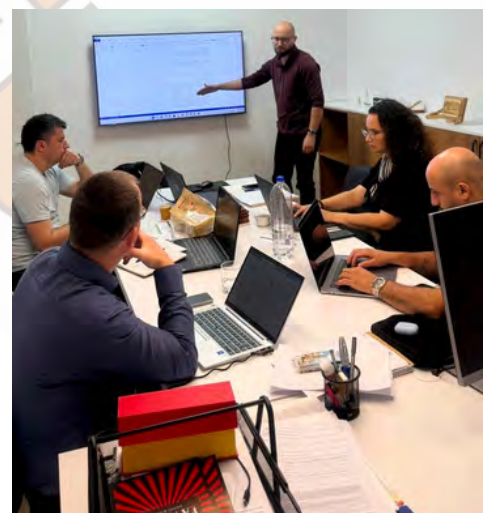
The SUSFUR Interim Meeting took place in Tirana on 23–24 October 2025, hosted by the ESI Office, bringing together all project partners for a crucial mid-term reflection and planning session. The meeting served as a platform to review the progress achieved during the first year of implementation, strengthen collaboration among partners, and set clear directions for the upcoming phases.

Partners presented their contributions across the different Work Packages (WPs), covering project management and coordination, research and training programmes for VET providers, dissemination and visibility efforts, and the development of innovative tools such as the Capacity Building Framework Toolkit and the E-learning platform with a dedicated YouTube channel. These presentations highlighted both achievements and challenges, fostering constructive dialogue and shared learning.

Reporting and evaluation were central to the discussions, with attention given to technical and financial documentation, EU Portal submissions, and the First Quality Report, which assessed compliance and performance. The emphasis on transparency and accountability ensured that all partners were aligned with project requirements and expectations.

Beyond technical aspects, the meeting reinforced the importance of dissemination and visibility, underlining the need to communicate project results effectively to diverse audiences and stakeholders. The collaborative spirit was evident throughout, with partners exchanging experiences, clarifying responsibilities, and reaffirming their commitment to the project's objectives.

The host organization, ESI, ensured smooth facilitation, covering logistics, documentation, and participant engagement. The interim meeting was not only a checkpoint but also a moment of collective visioning, strengthening bonds among partners and laying the groundwork for impactful capacity-building and dissemination activities in the months ahead.





## PROJECT CONSORTIUM



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University of Ljubljana, Biotechnical Faculty is a member of the University of Ljubljana. Within the framework of this project, most of the activities will be carried out by the Department of Wood Science and engineering which is the leading research organisation working in the field of wood engineering in Slovenia, with a tradition of almost 70 years. The department currently employs 50 people. The Department of Wood Science and Engineering is thus the largest research organisation in the field of wood science and engineering in Slovenia. It is one of the top 5 most reputable organisations for the study of wood science and engineering in Europe. The Department of Wood Science and Engineering studies wood from a material perspective.

ECREC purpose is to promote entrepreneurship and innovation for green growth through researching, training, and consultancy. Within the organization are gathered experts with more than 30 years' experience in the field of energy, environment, circular economy. ECREC is acknowledged organization at local, national and international level and wishful partner for cooperation in the field of sustainable local and regional development which promotes and develops traditional values through a modern approach and contributes to strengthening the capacities of local communities. ECREC has a huge network of local partners in the wood industry.

Wood Industry Cluster of Albania -Tirana (WICA) is a non-profit NGO founded in March 2019, whose primary goal is improving companies' competitiveness, thus understanding world trends and changes in the global market, as well as adjusting the participants' own production to such trends and changes. Very important partners that supported the creation of WICA were the Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure, Ministry of Finance and Economy, Albanian Investment Development Agency and Forest Sciences Faculty, Agriculture University of Albania. We are in continuous collaboration with these institutions. There are 20 companies that adhere to WICA.

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Merceza L.t.d., headquartered in Srebrenik (Northeast Bosnia region), has successfully operated since 1996, and is one of the leading Bosnian-Herzegovinian furniture company. Based on the concept of "Everything in one place", it offers over 250,000 domestic and foreign manufacturers, according to the quality of different price ranges, offers a wide selection and shopping for everything needed for home and family, making Merceza one of the most desirable furniture companies ins Bosnia and Herzegovina. At the beginning of 2000, Merceza launched its own design programme for furniture design and production and marketed its brands: Merceza furniture and solid wood products.

New Horizon (NH) is a non-governmental organization founded in 1999, in Ulcinj (Montenegro). The mission of the organization is to increase the participation of the citizens in local processes and broader, contributing in that way to developing the democracy and promoting good governance, through the realization of educational and integration programs.

NH works on several areas: Youth Non-formal Education; Good Governance, Inter-Ethnic Dialogue and Civil Society Strengthening. New Horizon NGO is accredited by Ministry of Regional-Investment Development and Cooperation with Non-Governmental Organizations as the Resource Centre for CSOs for the south region of Montenegro.

*"Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them."*