



fli^{er}

Trainers' handbook





Document version:	V5
Date of submission:	06/04/2025
Type of document:	O = Other
Dissemination level:	☐ CO (Confidential, only for members of the consortium and Commission Services)
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The guide for Educational Training trainers explains how to use and apply the resources developed in the Flier project: a) the curriculum, and b) the training material of the course (MOOC).

1. Introduction

This project, called “FLIER,” is a cooperation partnership in vocational education and training under the KA220-VET program of Erasmus+. It aims to support the furniture sector in transitioning towards a greener industry by developing a new curriculum for Circular Furniture Designers.

This project is designed for individuals and organizations involved in vocational education and training in the furniture sector. It is relevant for vocational schools, universities, training centers, professionals, and students who are interested in circular furniture design and the sustainable development of the industry. The proposed model is intended to be deeply work-based to provide young learners with the opportunity to apply knowledge in real work situations.

2. The Main Objectives



The main objectives of FLIER project are as follows:

- To develop a new curriculum for Circular Furniture Designers that aligns with the principles of circular economy and sustainable design.
- To enhance vocational education and training in the furniture sector by updating and upgrading the current offerings related to furniture design.
- To foster the sector’s transition towards a greener industry and reduce its carbon and environmental footprint.
- To meet the demand for skills and knowledge in circular furniture design that is highly sought after in the labour market.

3. Expected results



In details, expected results of FLIER project are:

- Development of a new curriculum: We created a curriculum for Circular Furniture Designers, focusing on the principles of circular economy and sustainable design.

- Online training course: We have developed an e-learning platform that offers an open online training course for Circular Furniture Designers. The course will be accessible and interactive
- Pilot course, hackathon, and mobility: We will conduct a pilot course, a hackathon, and a physical mobility program to validate the results and provide hands-on learning experiences for participants.
- Trainers' handbook: We prepared a handbook to support trainers in delivering the curriculum and implementing the training course effectively.
- Dissemination activities: We will organize various dissemination activities, including a website, videos, workshops, and a final event, to share the project results and engage with stakeholders in the furniture sector.

4. Target groups



This project is designed for individuals and organizations involved in vocational education and training in the furniture sector. FLIER target groups are workers, students and learners interested in furniture design and interested in updating their skills and knowledge to properly respond to the upcoming labour market needs of the EU furniture sector.

5. Training Material

5.1. Curriculum

For the FLIER project, was defined a Circular Furniture Designer as a professional who applies principles of sustainability and circularity in the design and production of furniture. They are responsible for facilitating the transition of traditional furniture manufacturing processes towards more sustainable and circular practices.

The following are the skills, knowledge, and competencies (SKC) required for the Circular Furniture Designer, which have emerged from the EU ESCO profile list and the previous Erasmus+ projects SAWYER, Furn360 and WOODCircle. These SKCs were validated by the FLIER partners before fine-tuning the survey.

Link to Curriculum: <https://flierproject.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/FLIER-Joint-Curriculum-Profile.pdf>

The project offers a training course designed for the Circular Designer. This course is targeted at young workers in the woodworking and furniture sector, particularly those aged 18 to 35.

Some general information regarding the training:

Duration: Approximately 25 hours (1 ECVET credit)

Format: Self-directed, online learning

Level: EQF4 on the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)

Skills:

1. Understanding of Circular Economy Principles: Ability to apply the principles of circular economy in the design and production of furniture.
2. Design Skills: Proficiency in designing furniture that minimizes waste and maximizes the use of renewable or recyclable materials.
3. Knowledge of Sustainable Materials: Expertise in identifying and using sustainable or recyclable materials in furniture design.

Knowledge:

1. Furniture Sector Trends: Awareness of current trends and requirements in the furniture sector, particularly in relation to sustainability and circularity.
2. Legislative and Voluntary Instruments: Understanding of the main legislative and voluntary instruments that facilitate the transition to a circular economy.
3. Occupational Health and Safety Risks: Knowledge of the potential health and safety risks associated with the transition to a circular economy in the furniture sector.

Competences:

1. Forecasting and Scenario Planning: Ability to forecast future sector scenarios and understand the potential impact of circular economy principles on the furniture sector.
2. Stakeholder Engagement: Competence in engaging with various stakeholders, including legislators, regulators, and vocational education and training providers, to facilitate the transition to a circular economy.

3. Implementation of Circular Economy Initiatives: Ability to implement successful circular economy initiatives in the furniture sector.

Based on the findings from the research phase, and the validated SKCs, ATU created the Curriculum Profile to be validated through a Fine-tuning survey and an international workshop. Based on these findings, partners proposed the following lessons.

6. How to use training material

Access to e-learning platform: <https://course.flierproject.ambitcluster.org/>

Platform has 4 main sections:

1. registration,
2. learning units (covering all the training materials),
3. forum and
4. user profile (with certificates, micro-credentials).

Training materials are designed to provide a comprehensive learning experience across four different learning units. Each unit contains three lessons, providing a structured and engaging approach to your training. The learning units are prepared with recorded PPT presentations, which allow the listener or user flexibility in viewing, replay, pauses and notes, accessibility, consistency of content and include interactive elements for greater engagement. In each lesson the user can find:

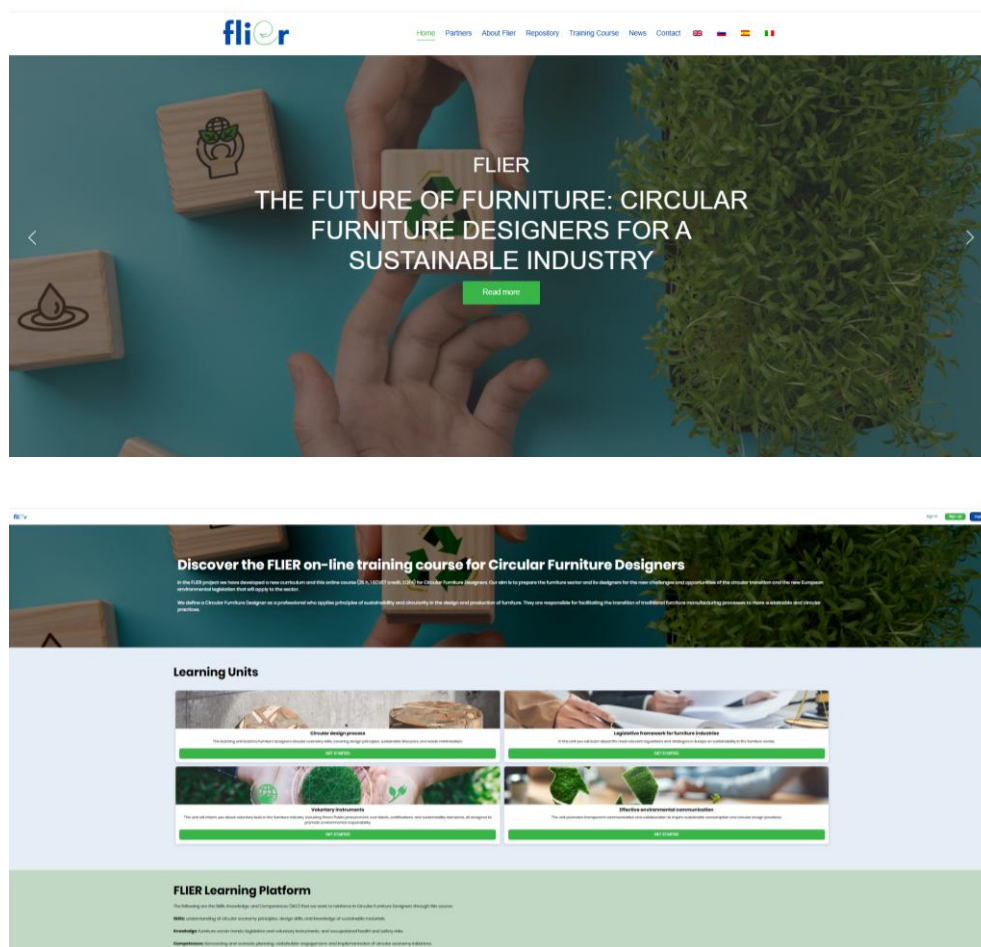
- **a case study**, which presents an in-depth analysis of a real-world situation, helping students apply theoretical knowledge, develop critical thinking, and improve research and communication skills.
- **best practices**: in education, these increase teaching effectiveness, improve student engagement and learning outcomes, and create a supportive environment.
- **recorded interviews**: they provide a real-world insight, enhancing learning through diverse perspectives, and serving as valuable resources for research and analysis.
- **learning resources**: they offer users a variety of material and perspectives, which improves their understanding and engagement with the subject.

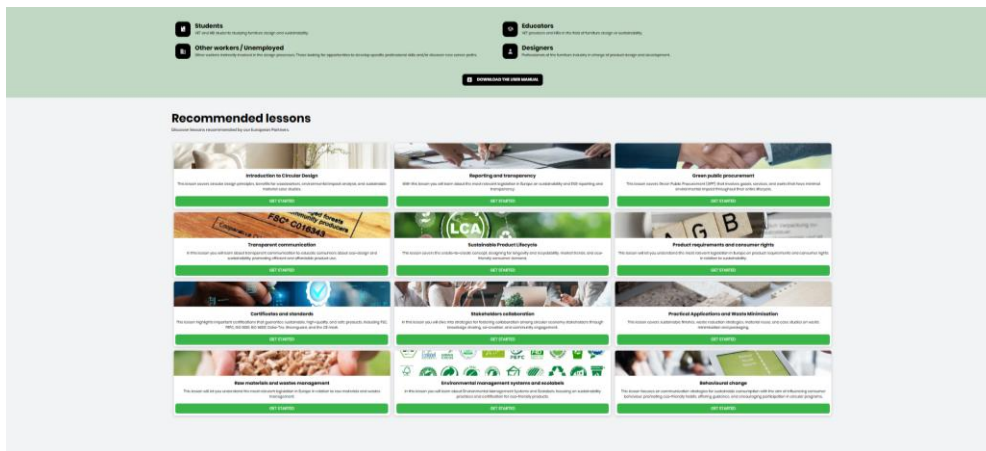
At the end of each lesson a **self-assessment tool is provided**: students evaluate their own understanding and performance, reflecting on what they learned and identifying areas for improvement. Students/users must complete a **multiple-choice self-assessment** in order to obtain a completion **certificate and digital badge**. A minimum **result of 75%** is required to pass the Learning Unit.

The user can also download a script in pdf. format for each learning unit, which contains the content of the individual learning unit. Presentations are available to the users.

Also, the platform includes a comprehensive User Manual to assist trainers in navigating its features and functionalities effectively.

The Flier platform

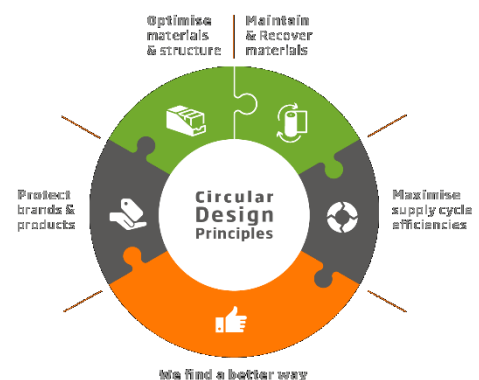




Our learning units are as follows:

6.1. Learning unit 1: Circular Design Process

This comprehensive learning unit is designed to equip furniture designers with essential skills for circular economy practices. It covers principles of circular design, emphasizing the creation of reusable, refurbish able, or recyclable products to extend their lifecycle and reduce environmental impact. Participants will explore sustainable product lifecycles and learn to design furniture that remains functional and valuable over time. The unit includes practical applications for waste reduction, teaching designers to minimize waste from material selection to production and disposal. Students will be introduced to environmentally friendly materials, such as biodegradable, recycled, or renewable resources. They will also stay updated on market trends, consumer preferences, and industry shifts towards sustainability. Additionally, the unit addresses innovative packaging solutions that reduce environmental impact while maintaining product integrity. By the end of the course, participants will understand sustainable furniture design, enabling them to create aesthetically pleasing and environmentally friendly products. Learning unit 1 contains 3 lessons.



6.1.1. Lesson 1: Introduction to Circular Design

The first lesson examines the circular design process, highlighting key principles and steps. It explores the benefits for woodworkers and furniture makers and includes an environmental impact analysis of materials. Learners will also study tools and methods for analysis, along with case studies on sustainable material use in woodworking and furniture making.

Outcomes

- Understand and articulate the key principles and steps of the circular design process.
- Understanding an environmental impact analysis of materials used in woodworking and furniture making.

6.1.2. Lesson 2: Sustainable Product Lifecycle

This lesson examines the sustainable product lifecycle, focusing on the cradle-to-cradle concept. It covers designing for longevity and recyclability, with industry examples. Learners will also explore current market trends in sustainable design, consumer demand for eco-friendly products, and strategies to stay updated and incorporate these trends into their designs.

Outcomes:

- Explain the cradle-to-cradle concept and its application in designing sustainable products.
- Identify and integrate current market trends in sustainable and circular design into their own work.

6.1.3. Lesson 3: Practical Applications and Waste Minimization

Lesson examines practical applications and waste minimization in furniture design. It covers selecting and applying sustainable finishes, strategies for reducing waste, and reusing materials. Learners will explore case studies on waste minimization and innovative packaging solutions that align with circular economy principles, enhancing product lifecycle and recyclability.

Outcomes:

- Select and apply environmentally friendly finishes to woodworking and furniture products.
- Develop and implement strategies for waste minimization and sustainable packaging design.

6.2. Learning unit 2: Legislative Framework

In this unit, learners will explore European legislation shaped by the European Green Deal and the Circular Economy Action Plan, which drive Europe's transition to a sustainable economy. Key regulations include the Eco-design Regulation for Sustainable Products, ensuring products are durable, reusable, repairable, and recyclable to minimize environmental impact throughout their lifecycle. The unit also covers Directives on raw materials and waste management, promoting the use of secondary raw materials and improving resource efficiency. Additionally, learners will delve into ESG requirements, including the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD), which mandates detailed environmental and social impact reports from large companies to enhance transparency and accountability. Learning unit 2 contains 3 lessons.



6.2.1. Lesson 1: Reporting and transparency

Lesson will explain the main regulations related to reporting and transparency on ESG, namely: Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD), Taxonomy Regulation, and Green Claims Directive. These regulations cover aspects such as the obligations of companies to disclose information on ESG, the classification of activities as environmentally sustainable and how to avoid greenwashing practices.

Outcomes:

- Know the main regulations on sustainability and ESG reporting and transparency.
- Understand the impact of these regulations (Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive - CSRD-, Taxonomy Regulation, and Green Claims Directive) on your organization.

6.2.2. Lesson 2: Product requirements and consumer rights

This lesson will explain the main regulations on products requirements and customer rights to information and repair, namely: Eco-design for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR), Right-to-repair (or R2R) Directive, and Empowering consumers for the green transition - Directive. These regulations cover aspects such as eco-design product requirements (performance and information requirements), obligations to guarantee products repair and consumer rights in product choice.

Outcomes:

- Know the basic regulation on product requirements and consumer rights in relation to sustainability.
- Understand the impact of these regulations: Eco-design for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR), Right-to-repair (or R2R) Directive, and Empowering consumers for the green transition – Directive) in your organization.

6.2.3. Lesson 3: Raw materials and wastes management

Lesson explains the main regulations on the use of raw materials and waste management, namely: the Deforestation free products Regulation (EUDR), the Chemicals Strategy, the Packaging and packaging waste - Regulation, and the Waste Framework Directive - Revision. These regulations cover aspects such as the origin and traceability of wood, the use of chemicals, packaging requirements and waste management.

Outcomes:

- Know the basic regulation on Raw materials and waste management.
- Understand the impact of these regulations on your organization: the Deforestation free products Regulation (EUDR), the Chemicals Strategy, the Packaging and Packaging Waste - Regulation, and the Waste Framework Directive – Revision.

6.3. Learning unit 3: Voluntary Instruments

In this learning unit, students will explore voluntary instruments, which are non-mandatory guidelines, standards, and certifications that companies can adopt to promote best practices beyond regulatory requirements. These instruments encourage businesses to exceed compliance, fostering excellence and sustainability. Students will delve into various eco-labels, certifications, and sustainability standards in the furniture sector. Voluntary instruments promote eco-friendly practices, such as waste reduction and the use of sustainable



materials. By adopting these standards, companies demonstrate their commitment to sustainability and social responsibility, reducing their environmental footprint and enhancing brand reputation and consumer trust. These certifications and labels provide consumers with reliable information, enabling informed choices about products. By choosing products with recognized eco-labels and certifications, consumers support companies that prioritize sustainability and contribute to a more sustainable future. Learning unit 3 contains 3 lessons.

6.3.1. Lesson 1: Green Public Procurement

This lesson introduces Green Public Procurement (GPP) is a process where public authorities purchase goods, services, and works with reduced environmental impacts throughout their lifecycle. This approach promotes sustainability by considering environmental factors alongside price and performance, aiming to minimize the ecological footprint of public sector activities.

Users will learn what GPP is and where it is defined and explore the underlying principles and objectives of this sustainable public procurement approach.

Also, will delve into the GPP criteria and requirements and understand the standards and criteria that need to be met to ensure environmentally responsible public procurement practices.

By the end of this unit, users will be well-equipped to implement GPP practices, contributing to a more sustainable and environmentally responsible.

Outcomes:

- Understanding GPP Principles: Students will grasp the core principles of GPP, including its environmental, economic, and social benefits.
- Practical Application: Students will learn how to implement GPP strategies in real-world scenarios, enhancing sustainability in public procurement processes.

6.3.2. Lesson 2: Certificates and standards

Users will delve into a topic that is fundamental to ensuring quality, safety and sustainability in industries: standards and certifications. Standards and certifications are the tools and backbone of modern industry, providing a framework for consistency, reliability and trust.

In today's globalized world, standards and certifications are more important than ever. They enable international trade, promote sustainable practices and protect consumers. Whether it's ISO standards for quality management, FSC certification for sustainable forestry or the EU Ecolabel for environmental excellence, these tools play a key role in shaping our world.

Through this lecture, users will explore the different types of standards and certifications and their impact on industries and consumers. By the end of the learning unit, users will have a comprehensive understanding of why standards and certifications are essential, how they are developed and maintained and how they contribute to a safer, more sustainable and trustworthy world.

Outcomes:

- Comprehensive Understanding: Students will acquire an in-depth knowledge of various certifications and standards, including their purposes, key features, and the industries they affect.
- Practical Application: Students will learn how to implement these certifications and standards in real-world scenarios to ensure sustainability, quality, and safety in products and services.

6.3.3. Lesson 3: Environmental management Systems (EMS) and Ecolabels

This lesson covers Environmental Management Systems (EMS) and Ecolabels, essential tools for enhancing environmental performance and communicating sustainability efforts. EMS are structured frameworks for managing and mitigating environmental impacts, involving systematic identification, monitoring, and improvement. Implementing an EMS ensures continuous environmental improvement and compliance with regulations. Key components include defining responsibilities, minimizing impacts, recording performance, and conducting audits. Ecolabels certify products and services meeting specific environmental standards, helping consumers choose environmentally friendly options. Types of ecolabels include Type I (Third-Party Certified), Type II (Self-Declared), and Type III (Environmental Product Declarations), each offering different levels of assurance.

Outcomes:

- Understanding EMS and Ecolabels: Students will gain an understanding of the principles and advantages of Environmental Management Systems (EMS) and various ecolabels, as well as their role in promoting sustainability.
- Application of Standards: Students will learn how to implement EMS frameworks such as ISO 14001 and effectively use ecolabels to certify and market eco-friendly products.

6.4. Lesson unit 4: Effective Environmental Communication

Learning Unit 4 is dedicated to enhancing transparent communication, education, stakeholder collaboration, and behavioral change to promote sustainable consumption and circular design practices. This unit



**ENVIRONMENTAL
COMMUNICATION**

emphasizes the importance of clear and open communication to ensure that all stakeholders are informed and engaged in sustainability efforts. By fostering education, learners will gain the knowledge and skills necessary to understand and implement sustainable practices effectively.

Stakeholder collaboration is a key component of this unit, as it encourages the involvement of various parties, including businesses, government agencies, non-profit organizations, and the community. By integrating these elements, learners will be equipped to engage effectively with

diverse audiences and inspire a shift towards more environmentally responsible behaviors and practices. Learning unit 4 contains 3 lessons.

6.4.1. Lesson 1: Transparent Communication

Transparent communication goes beyond marketing aimed at encouraging a purchase. It should focus on educating the public about eco-design principles and the importance of sustainability. It encompasses all the information, ideas, data, and advice conveyed with the goal of not only selling, but also enhancing the use of a product, making it more efficient, affordable and less impactful for the consumer.

Outcomes:

- Communicate the environmental performance and trade-offs of circular products and services with clarity.
- Develop compelling narratives and multimedia content that engage stakeholders and drive interest in sustainable choices.

6.4.2. Lesson 2: Stakeholders Collaboration

This lesson focuses on developing strategies to foster collaboration and dialogue among key stakeholders in the circular economy. It covers how to identify and engage key players such as designers, manufacturers, consumers, waste management by the adoption of facilitating workshops and platforms for knowledge sharing and problem-solving. The lesson also emphasizes the importance of co-creation and collaboration between industries and communities.

Outcomes:

- Facilitate collaboration among different stakeholders to promote sustainable practices.
- Raise awareness and provide training for involved actors to ensure continuous knowledge transfer

6.4.3. Lesson 3: Behavioral Change

This lesson is about creating communication strategies that inspire behavioral change towards sustainable consumption and circular practices by understanding consumer behavior and barriers to sustainable choices, developing messages that promote sustainable consumption habits, providing guidance on product use, maintenance, and end-of-life management, and encouraging consumer participation in circular programs (e.g., recycling, take-back schemes).

Outcomes:

- Design communication strategies that drive consumer behaviors towards circularity and sustainability.
- Enhance an incentive-based system to drive the shift towards sustainable choices.

In general, this comprehensive on-line course will empower you to create furniture that's not only stylish but also sustainable. Join us and become a leader in eco-conscious design!

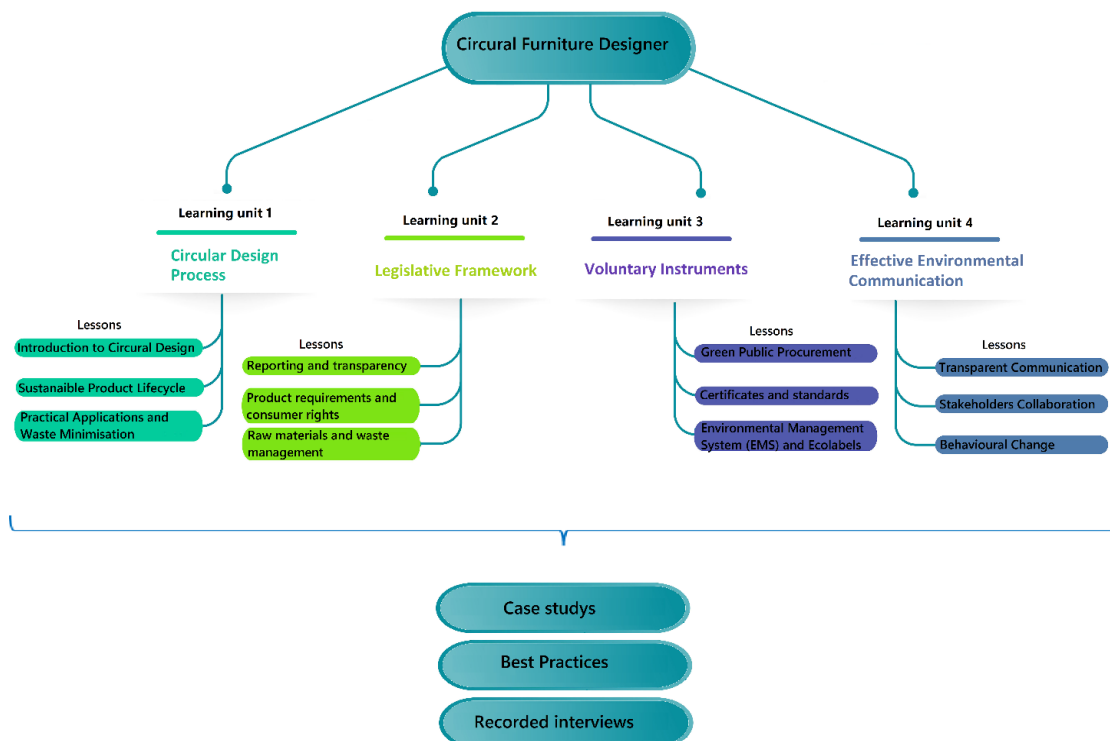


Figure 1: Course description.

	Curriculum Curriculum is focus on all those complementary design aspects needed for designing circular furniture products from different perspectives: Circular Design and related future legislation, voluntary instruments and environmental communication. Content: The curriculum outlines the structured plan of what will be taught during the training. It includes the objectives, topics, lessons, and assessments designed to ensure comprehensive coverage of the subject matter. Usage: As a trainer, you should familiarize yourself with the curriculum to understand the sequence and scope of the content. This will help you prepare your lessons, align your teaching methods with the objectives, and ensure that all necessary topics are covered.
	MOOC The implementation of e-learning platform and the incorporation of the developed training materials are essential steps for the partnership to provide this online course for Circular Furniture Designers and make it freely available to all interested learners throughout the EU. Content: The MOOC is an online course that complements the curriculum. It includes recorded slides presentation, good practices, case studies, assignments, tests, ...and additional resources that learners can access at their own pace. Usage: You should explore the MOOC to understand its structure and content. This will enable you to guide learners on how to use the MOOC effectively, integrate its resources into your teaching, and provide support for any questions or challenges they might face.

6.5. How to learn

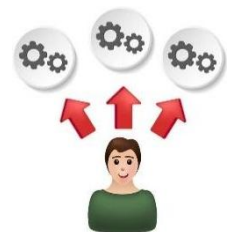
6.5.1. Motivation and Vision

Become a fully competent Circular Furniture Designer. To prepare the furniture sector for the new challenges and opportunities posed by the circular transition and the new legislation that will apply to the sector.



6.5.2. Competences

Acquire the skills, knowledge and competences necessary to apply the principles of sustainability and circularity in the design and production of furniture and communicate achievements effectively.



6.5.3. Methods

Individual work: To users the online platform is available all the time, allowing them to use it whenever they want and whenever they have time.

6.5.4. How to facilitate an on-line course

- The course will be accessible from project website under registration
- Register: (<https://course.flierproject.ambitcluster.org/>)
- Choose your preferred course language (English, Italian, Slovenian, or Spanish) and explore the various Learning Units (LU).
- Delve deeper to gain skills and knowledge through the lessons provided.
- Learn from recorded presentations, best practices, case studies, interviews, and additional reading materials and resources.
- Complete the assignments proposed in each lesson!
- Get the certificate for each LU test that you successfully pass and get an EQF4 final certificate valid 1 ECVET credit (25 hours).
- Self-evaluation - evaluate your level of knowledge for each LU acquired in this course through different multiple-choice tests.



We would like to provide you with an overview of two key resources that will be an integral part of our training program: the curriculum and the MOOC (Massive Open Online Course). By

understanding the curriculum and MOOCs, you will be better equipped to deliver a cohesive and engaging learning experience.

7. Desk research

The wood-furniture sector in Europe is undergoing a "Green and Digital" Twin Transition. This shift is driven by the pressing environmental and climate crises, as well as the advancement of new technologies, tools, and methodologies that are accessible and applicable to SMEs in the industry.

This transition is more revolutionary than evolutionary, significantly impacting areas such as design, product manufacturing, business processes, work organization, and market relations. The sector is expected to experience unprecedented speed and radical changes.

7.1. New challenges bring new opportunities

The business community, educational institutions related to VET and HE sectors, the research community, and institutional stakeholders all recognize that this transition is crucial for the wood-furniture sector to stay competitive while maintaining its legacy of creativity and expertise. Policy Makers at both European and national levels are increasingly adopting tools to support innovation (such as funds for Industry 4.0 development, eco-sustainable materials and processes, and the Circular Economy) and the sustainability of the production system. However, these efforts, along with business investments in product and process innovation and research contributions to develop sustainable solutions for large-scale production, lose their effectiveness without a dedicated training chain for new workers and employees in the sector making upskilling and re-skilling a key challenge for the whole sector.

Can the wood-furniture sector be as appealing to young Europeans as sectors like food, fashion, and automotive? Digitalization and sustainable development linked to the circular economy can indeed drive interest among young Europeans, who are digital natives with strong environmental awareness.

Adequate and innovative training that leverages new technologies addresses a dual market demand: it prepares young people to face innovation and attracts talented individuals who can bring their skills and passion to the wood-furniture sector.

7.2. Trends and possible scenarios for the wood-furniture sector

These trends and scenarios indicate a dynamic and evolving wood-furniture sector, with significant opportunities for innovation and growth.

Here are some current trends and future scenarios for the wood-furniture sector.

7.2.3. Current Trends

- **Sustainable Furniture:** There is a growing demand for eco-friendly furniture, with a focus on using reclaimed wood and sustainable materials
- **Online Sales:** The shift towards online retail continues, driven by the convenience and accessibility it offers, especially to younger generations
- **Smart Furniture:** Integration of technology in furniture, such as wireless charging stations and built-in speakers, is becoming more popular
- **Customization:** Consumers are increasingly seeking personalized furniture that fits their specific needs and preferences
- **Minimalist and Vintage Designs:** Trends are leaning towards minimalist designs and vintage or thrifted furniture pieces
- **New Business Models** centring i.e. on the EPR (Extended Producer Responsibility) as an environmental policy approach that holds manufacturers accountable for the entire lifecycle of their products, particularly after consumer use.

7.2.4. Future Scenarios

- **Market Growth:** The global wooden furniture market is expected to grow significantly, reaching USD 726.5 billion by 2032, with a CAGR of 5.8% from 2024 to 2032 by also exploring new international markets
- **Technological Advancements:** Continued advancements in technology will drive innovation in design and manufacturing processes, making furniture more functional and sustainable

- **Regulatory Changes:** Increased regulations, such as the EU Timber Regulation, will push for more sustainable and legally sourced materials
- **Consumer Preferences:** There will be a stronger emphasis on multifunctional furniture that caters to the tech-savvy and environmentally conscious consumer.

7.3. Advantages

Knowledge about problems and challenges that furniture companies will face in their transition toward a more Circular Economy, especially in the product design process and the better exploit the CE Circular Economy upcoming opportunities.

8. Conclusion

The "FLIER Trainers' Handbook" serves as a comprehensive guide for trainers involved in the FLIER project, which aims to support the furniture sector's transition towards a greener industry through vocational education and training. The handbook outlines the project's objectives, expected results, target groups, and training materials, providing a structured approach to delivering the curriculum for Circular Furniture Designers.

The FLIER project is designed to develop a new curriculum that aligns with the principles of circular economy and sustainable design, enhancing vocational education and training in the furniture sector. The project aims to foster the sector's transition towards a greener industry, reduce its environmental footprint, and meet the demand for skills in circular furniture design.

The training materials include a curriculum and an online course (MOOC) with recorded presentations, case studies, best practices, interviews, and self-assessment tools. The course is structured into four learning units: Circular Design Process, Legislative Framework, Voluntary Instruments, and Effective Environmental Communication. Each unit contains lessons that cover specific topics related to circular furniture design and sustainability.

The handbook emphasizes the importance of using the training materials effectively, providing trainers with the necessary resources to deliver a comprehensive learning experience. It also highlights the significance of desk research, which indicates that the wood-furniture sector is undergoing a "Green and Digital" Twin Transition, driven by environmental crises and technological advancements. This transition presents new challenges and opportunities, emphasizing the need for innovative training to prepare young workers for the future.

In conclusion, the FLIER project aims to equip the furniture sector with the skills and knowledge needed for a sustainable future. By developing a comprehensive curriculum and training materials, the project supports the transition to a circular economy and addresses the industry's evolving needs. The handbook provides trainers with the tools and guidance necessary to deliver effective training and foster the sector's growth towards sustainability.

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Co-funded by
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