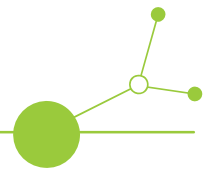


D.2.3.2 Establishment of the transnational network of circular labs for EEE



Version 1
08 2025

Prepared by: CCIS

With contributions from: all partners





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Background

This report provides a comprehensive account of the development and operationalization of the Transnational Network of Regional Circular Labs, an initiative designed to systematically address the growing challenges of Electrical and Electronic Equipment (EEE) waste and the complexities of its value chains. Over the past year, partners have worked intensively to move from conceptual design to practical implementation, ensuring that the network is not only formally established but also operational and equipped to deliver tangible value.

Building on the groundwork of earlier phases, where the initial concept and individual regional Circular Labs were developed (D.2.2.2 and D.2.3.1), this deliverable (D.2.3.2) documents the joint steps taken between September 2024 and August 2025 to consolidate these labs into a cohesive transnational structure. The aim is to ensure that regional efforts do not remain fragmented but instead contribute to a synchronized network, able to share expertise, co-develop solutions, and serve stakeholders across borders. Together, the labs form a rich mosaic of services, solutions, and products, reflecting both the diversity and the complementarity of approaches within the circular economy field.

The report also highlights the governance and sustainability dimensions of the network. As more circular initiatives and hubs emerge across Europe, it is crucial to position the Circular NET-LAB in a way that avoids duplication while building synergies. A particular focus is placed on how the network can synchronize, interact, and co-exist effectively with these other initiatives, creating added value rather than competition.

In doing so, this report not only captures achievements and milestones but also reflects on challenges encountered, lessons learned, and opportunities for improvement. The emphasis lies on documenting concrete progress, such as the establishment of governance structures, the creation of physical and virtual infrastructures, the launch of a shared digital platform, the initiation of collaborations, and the first experiences of joint project development, while also looking ahead to how the network will evolve in the coming years.

The structure of this document follows that of the regional labs report (D.2.3.1), with some adjustments to reflect the transnational dimension. It is divided into the following chapters:

- Information on the Transnational Network
- Physical and Virtual Infrastructures Created
- Solutions Implemented
- Collaboration Agreements
- Staff
- Established Communication Channels
- Activities of the Network
- Review of Milestones and KPIs
- Lessons Learned (September 2024 - August 2025)
- Outlook into the Future (2026+)

Together, these chapters provide a detailed picture of how the Circular NET-LAB has evolved from a promising concept into an operational transnational network, laying the foundation for long-term collaboration, innovation, and impact in advancing the circular economy for electronics and beyond.



A. Information on the transnational network

The Transnational Network of Circular Labs, called Circular NET-LAB, is a network under the CIRCOTRONIC project that fosters collaboration among various stakeholders, such as universities and research organisations, chambers of commerce, clusters and other business support organisations, and regional policy makers, working together to improve the circularity of the electrical and electronic equipment (EEE) sector across Central Europe. This sector, responsible for substantial environmental impact, demands joint efforts to transition towards circular economy practices. The Circular NET-LAB connects regional circular labs, established within CIRCOTRONIC project, creating a unified network that transcends regional boundaries, allowing stakeholders to exchange knowledge, resources, and solutions that address these challenges at scale.

The development of the Circular NET-LAB followed a structured, multi-phase approach aimed at fostering collaboration and expertise among partners. The process began with a capacity-building phase, during which partners enhanced their skills and knowledge through a series of workshops and training sessions. This was followed by an ideation and concept development phase, where regional experiences and best practices were shared to shape the framework for the transnational network. Throughout this collaborative process, partners provided valuable insights into effective tools, services, and governance structures, contributing to the network's foundation. CCIS developed the initial concept based on input from all partners. The concept was then reviewed by the entire consortium, along with the proposed timeline for its implementation. Following this collaborative review, the final concept was prepared, serving as a comprehensive guide and blueprint for establishing the transnational network. During the concept development phase, partners also agreed on a name for the network: Circular NET-LAB, marking an important milestone in the project's progression.

Founding Members

The Circular NET-LAB brings together partner organisations hosting a regional Circular Lab within their organisational structures. These labs, virtual, hybrid, or physical, are dedicated to accelerating sustainability and circularity in their respective regions.

Founding members:

- Circular Lab, hosted by Business Upper Austria – Austria
- Ecodesign Lab, hosted by TUW – Austria
- Virtual Circular Electronics Lab Bavaria, hosted by Bavarian Research Alliance – Germany
- Circular Innovation Hub2, hosted by t2i – Italy
- CircularER Lab, hosted by Emilia-Romagna Region – Italy
- Circle Hub Košice, hosted by TUKE & ASDR – Slovakia
- Association Media Dizajn, hosted by Media Dizajn – Poland
- Tecos Regional Circular Lab, hosted by Tecos – Slovenia
- Circular Lab, hosted by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia – Slovenia

In Austria, the Business Upper Austria hosts the Circular Lab, focusing on supporting regional industries in transitioning to circular practices. The Ecodesign Lab, hosted by the Technical University of Vienna (TUW), contributes academic expertise in sustainable product design and innovation. In Germany, the



Virtual Circular Electronics Lab Bavaria is hosted by the Bavarian Research Alliance, offering a virtual platform for cross-sector collaboration and knowledge sharing in the field of circular electronics.

Italy contributes through two labs: the Circular Innovation Hub2, hosted by t2i - a regional innovation agency supporting SMEs in the Veneto region - and the CircularER Lab, hosted by the Emilia-Romagna Region, which leads regional policy and implementation strategies for circular economy development. Slovenia is represented by two labs as well. The Tecos Regional Circular Lab, hosted by TECOS, the Slovenian Tool and Die Development Centre, focuses on technological support and industrial solutions, while the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia hosts another Circular Lab and plays a key coordinating role in developing the Circular NET-LAB platform and its governance model.

In Slovakia, the Technical University of Košice (TUKE) participates as a knowledge-based institution, hosting a regional lab that bridges academic research with practical solutions for circular innovation in the EEE sector, with the support of the Regional development agency Košice (ASRD). From Poland, Media Dzajn, based in Szczecin, brings creative industry expertise and a design-focused approach to sustainable electronics and product lifecycle thinking, enriching the network with new perspectives on circular design and user experience.

These organisations collectively form the backbone of the network. They contribute sectoral expertise ranging from industrial innovation and product design to academic research, policy leadership, and creative industry engagement. By pooling these diverse capabilities, the Circular NET-LAB established a foundation for impactful transnational cooperation.

B. Physical and virtual (infra)structures created

The following section presents the main physical and virtual infrastructures that have been established to support the functioning of the Circular NET-LAB. These infrastructures form the backbone of the network, ensuring that partners are equipped with both the tangible resources and the digital tools necessary to collaborate effectively.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) formalizes the relationship between the founding partners of the Circular NET-LAB. Although it is non-binding, it provides a written understanding of the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of the parties. The MOU established a cooperative framework for collaboration and the exchange of know-how and resources. All partners establishing regional labs are signatories of the MOU. As a foundational governance document, it ensures alignment across the network, enabling smooth coordination, shared decision-making, and long-term stability. It serves as a cornerstone of the Circular NET-LAB's infrastructure, providing a common reference point for all partners. The MOU was prepared in autumn 2024 and discussed with all partners and their legal departments. The final version was signed by CCIS and the majority of partners in January and February 2025. Due to some complications, TUKE signed the document in April 2025 as last founding member.



Memorandum of Understanding for the
Collaboration as Transnational Network of
Circular Labs »CIRCULAR NET-LAB«



Founding Meeting

The founding meeting, held in Linz in December 2024, marked another cornerstone in the establishment of the Circular NET-LAB and the development of its physical and virtual infrastructure. All member organizations were present, reflecting a shared commitment to the network's mission and long-term success. During the meeting, the Steering Committee was formally confirmed, comprising one representative from each partner organization. This committee will coordinate network activities, make high-level decisions, and oversee the implementation of the network's objectives. In parallel, a Coordinating Group was established, consisting of representatives from three key partner organizations, each responsible for one of the core operational areas: Network Activities, Communication, and Funding Opportunities. The Coordinating Group will manage the day-to-day operations of the Circular NET-LAB, implement decisions taken during the Membership Meeting, organize events, maintain and develop the digital platform, and ensure effective communication among members. It will also identify and pursue new funding opportunities, foster partnerships with external organizations, and safeguard alignment with the broader goals of the CIRCOTRONIC project. A chairperson was elected for a two-year term to provide continuity in leadership and strategic direction. Additional roles, such as task leaders, may be appointed as necessary to advance specific activities and initiatives within the network.



Governance and decision-making within the Circular NET-LAB are guided by clear procedures to ensure transparency and inclusivity. Routine operational decisions may be taken by individual partners or by the Steering Committee through a simple majority vote, while strategic and policy decisions affecting all partners are made by consensus or, if consensus cannot be reached, by a two-thirds majority vote. The Steering Committee elects a Chair every two years to provide leadership and stability, though its decisions are not legally binding. The Coordinating Group, alongside the Steering Committee, may establish working groups to address specific issues or project areas, drawing on the expertise of network members to deliver targeted activities that advance the network's objectives. To date, a Funding Opportunities Working Group has been established, bringing together representatives from multiple partner organizations to identify funding calls and support the development of concrete project ideas.



Desk at CCIS

The Desk at CCIS constitutes another essential component of the Circular NET-LAB's infrastructure, serving as the operational hub for coordinating network activities. As a founding member and current chair of the network, CCIS plays a central role in ensuring the smooth functioning and strategic direction of the initiative. The Desk manages the network's core internal communication channels, including the SharePoint platform, which provides a secure and accessible space for document sharing, collaboration, and knowledge exchange. It also maintains the official contact database and mailing list, enabling timely dissemination of information, announcements, and opportunities to all members. By centralizing these functions, the Desk ensures that internal communication remains efficient, transparent, and inclusive across the geographically dispersed network. In its coordinating role, the Desk at CCIS supports the implementation of Steering Committee and Coordinating Group decisions, facilitates member engagement, and acts as the primary point of contact for both internal and external stakeholders. Its presence provides continuity in day-to-day operations, reinforcing the network's ability to work collectively towards its objectives while remaining agile in responding to emerging needs and opportunities.

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Circular NET-LAB

The CIRCOTRONIC project is funded by the Interreg Central Europe programme

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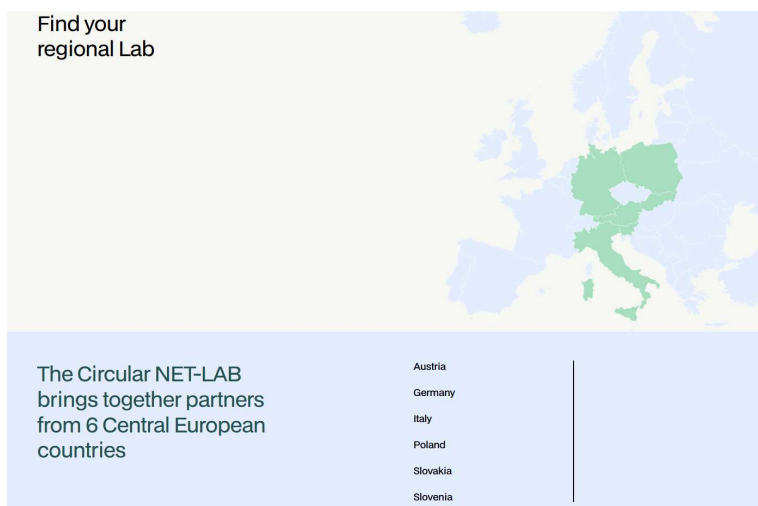
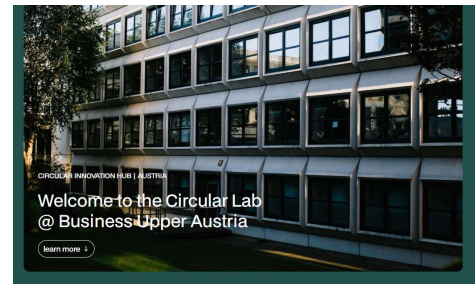
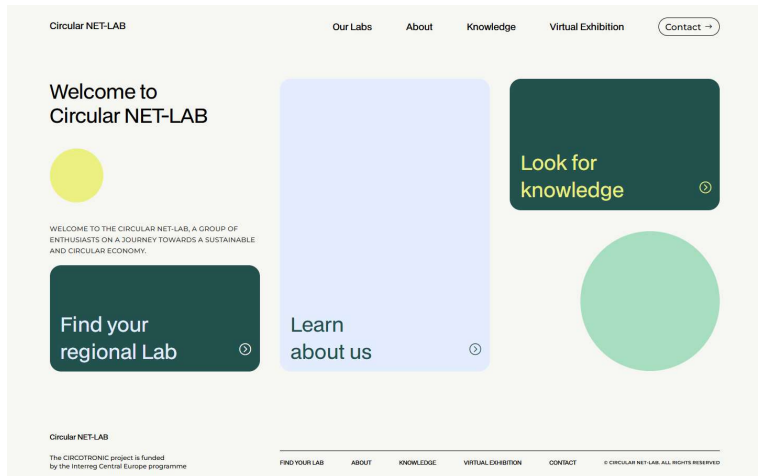
A contact form has been set up on the online platform and is managed by CCIS.

Virtual Infrastructure: Circular NET-LAB Platform

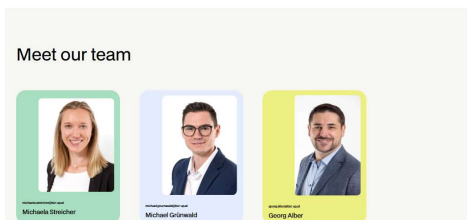
The Circular NET-LAB's online platform, accessible at circularnetlab.gzs.si, forms a vital part of the network's virtual infrastructure. It serves as the central hub for communication, collaboration, and engagement, connecting regional labs, members, and external stakeholders in a single digital space. The platform enables users to locate and connect with regional labs, access curated knowledge resources, and stay informed about the network's activities and opportunities. It also serves as a key channel for implementing strategic decisions, promoting events, and supporting information flow across the network. By consolidating these functions, the platform ensures transparency, facilitates collaboration, and strengthens the network's capacity to operate effectively at both regional and transnational levels. The virtual exhibition "Where is EEE" is linked to the platform, providing an interactive and visual element that complements its broader role as a knowledge-sharing and coordination hub. Taken together, the platform serves as an accessible, dynamic hub, bridging the physical labs and organizational structure with a virtual space that encourages discovery, learning,



collaboration, and outreach. As a component of the network's infrastructure, it underpins the Circular NET-LAB's mission by supporting engagement, dissemination, and community-building in the digital realm.



The lab facilities are mainly available to SMEs but can also be used by mid-caps or larger companies, as learning from one another and learning from larger companies is a method of the lab. The lab is supervised by staff with experience in electrical and electronic engineering, mechatronics, circular economy, and business model development.



The online platform is hosted, managed, and administered by CCIS. The design and layout were contributed by MD, while all partners provided content and input for the development of the platform.

Workplan 2025

The Workplan 2025 represents the operational roadmap for the Circular NET-LAB, detailing the key activities, responsibilities, and timelines that guide the network's development and collaboration. It was drafted jointly by all partners following a structured brainstorming session in September 2024 and finalized in early 2025, ensuring that each member lab's expertise and priorities were incorporated.

The workplan integrated both physical and virtual infrastructure, leveraging the CCIS coordination desk and the digital platform to facilitate internal communication, collaboration, and visibility. Core activities included:

- Organizing member workshops, such as the Linz session on project idea generation and the Munich meeting for reviewing 2025 objectives and planning 2026 activities.



- Developing content and knowledge for the digital platform, ensuring that each member lab contributes to network visibility and resource sharing.
- Implementing project development workshops, targeting funding opportunities under instruments such as the Interregional Innovation Investment (I3) program and Horizon Europe.
- Promoting ongoing collaboration, including know-how exchange and joint support of clients
- Actively engaging with other networks and complementary initiatives to explore synergies, foster cross-referral of hubs and labs, and identify opportunities for joint projects or visibility.
- Acquiring new member organizations and strengthening the network's presence in the circular economy community, ensuring a broader base for collaboration and knowledge exchange.

Which PP?	What?	When?	Who is responsible?
CCIS	Acquisition of a new member	2025	Grit/Urška
CCIS	Initiating a new project	2025	Grit/Urška
CCIS	Partnering with other initiatives	2025	Grit/Urška
PP2 - RER	Partnering with other initiatives	2025	Federica/Guido
BayFOR- PP3	Partnering with the Bavarian Chips Alliance at Bayern innovativ on Sustainable Electronics Working Group	March 2025- This is done- a report was published on Green Electronics and linked on our Circular Lab Bavaria.	Nivedita/ Susanne
BAYFOR- PP3	Holding a Workshop for SMEs on EU Funding	By November 2025	Nivedita/ Susanne/ Natalia

The workplan serves as a living document, continuously guiding the network's actions while allowing flexibility to respond to new opportunities. It also provided the foundation for the Funding Opportunities Working Group, which used the plan to identify, prioritize, and develop potential project ideas in a structured and collaborative way.

C. Solutions implemented

The Circular NET-LAB itself is not designed to provide direct support to companies or stakeholders. Instead, its primary role is to act as a transnational backbone, strengthening the capacity of the regional Circular Labs and fostering mutual exchange. Each lab works directly with companies, SMEs, mid-caps, and other actors to drive the circular transformation in the EEE sector and beyond, while the network ensures that lessons learned are shared and synergies are created.

To date, the member labs have successfully tested a total of 15 practical tools with SMEs and mid-caps. These tools cover a wide spectrum of circular economy applications, from product design and material recovery to business model innovation and stakeholder engagement. Building on these experiences, the labs are now in the process of transforming the tested tools into solutions that can be applied more systematically and at larger scale.



A selection of this knowledge is already presented on the Circular NET-LAB website, including highlights from the virtual exhibition “Where is EEE?”, which raises awareness of the hidden presence of electrical and electronic equipment in everyday objects and value chains. Together, these resources make the network’s expertise accessible to a broader audience and illustrate the potential of circular approaches in practice.

Going forward, the network will continue to update and expand this knowledge base, ensuring that tested tools remain relevant, adaptable, and reflective of new developments in the field. Through ongoing exchange, the Circular NET-LAB will also provide the framework for further updates, integration of new tools, and joint reflection on their use across different regional and sectoral contexts.

D. Collaboration agreements

Expanding the Circular NET-LAB’s reach through partnerships and new members is a key component of the network’s growth strategy. A notable development in this area is the establishment of a collaboration with the B2GreenHub. The process began when CCIS contacted the coordinating body of the B2GreenHub to explore potential synergies. An initial online meeting was held to discuss opportunities for collaboration, including cross-referral of hubs, labs, and networks, joint marketing of services, and coordinated engagement with clients. These discussions provided a framework for a structured partnership. In June 2025, a physical meeting in Ljubljana formalized the collaboration, and Circular NET-LAB members were informed and approved the agreement. While the B2GreenHub currently has only a LinkedIn presence and no dedicated online platform, plans are in place to hold a joint meeting once their platform is launched (expected in September 2025) to define concrete collaborative activities.



This collaboration illustrates the network’s proactive approach to building alliances with complementary initiatives, strengthening connections with external networks, and creating opportunities for attracting new member organizations. By fostering such partnerships, Circular NET-LAB enhances its capacity to share knowledge, coordinate services, and broaden its impact within the circular economy ecosystem.

E. Staff

The effective functioning of the Circular NET-LAB relies on the active engagement and expertise of its staff and elected representatives. Central to the network’s governance are the Steering Committee and the Coordinating Group, whose members are entrusted with guiding strategic decisions, overseeing day-



to-day operations, and ensuring the implementation of the network's objectives. Below are presented the members of the Steering Committee and the Coordinating Group

Elected Representatives

- Steering Committee

Grit Ackermann - CCIS

Apollonia Tiziana De Nittis - RER

Natalia Garcia Mozo - BayFOR

František Janke - TUKE

Michaela Streicher - Biz-up

Marco Galanti - T2I

Magdalena Malachowska - MD

Alen Draganović - TECOS

Rainer Pamminger - TUW

Henrieta Kiralvargova - ASRD

- Coordinating Group

Network Activities: Grit Ackermann - CCIS

Communication: Magdalena Malachowska - MD

Funding Opportunities: Natalia Garcia Mozo - BayFOR

Chairperson: Grit Ackermann - CCIS

The above presented team of staff and elected representatives are all regularly employed within their respective host organizations. These individuals bring long-term experience in circular economy practices and are trained within the project to manage the regional labs, coordinate network initiatives, and provide support to a diverse range of stakeholder groups.

A Funding Opportunities Working Group has been established within the Circular NET-LAB, with representatives from several partner organisations. Its purpose is to strengthen the network's capacity to identify and pursue relevant funding opportunities at regional, national, and European levels. The group provides a structured space to scan upcoming calls, exchange knowledge, and co-create project ideas, ensuring that promising concepts from the labs can be further developed into high-quality proposals.

- Funding Opportunities Working Group

BayFOR

CCIS

Biz-up

TUKE

T2I

BayFOR coordinates the group.



F. Established communication channels

The Circular NET-LAB's communication system is fully established and operates along two main dimensions: internal communication, which ensures smooth coordination and collaboration among network partners, and external communication, which promotes the network and its member labs to a wider audience.

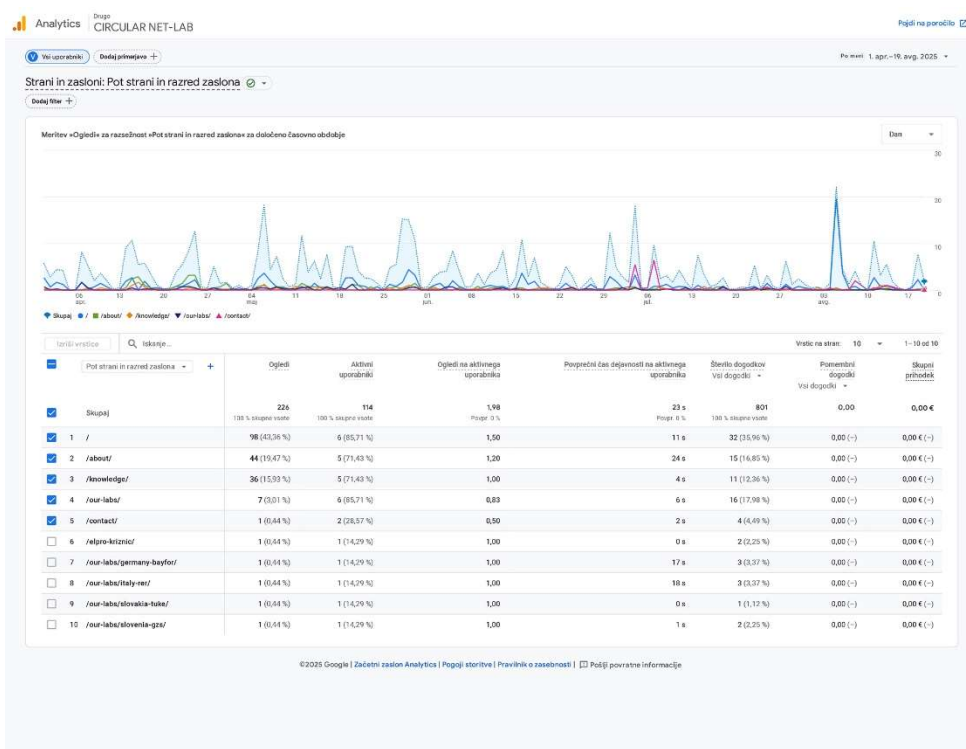
Internal Communication

Internal communication plays a central role in keeping partners aligned, fostering a shared identity, and supporting the practical implementation of the network's goals. The Circular NET-LAB partners maintain regular email exchanges to coordinate activities and share timely information. A shared digital workspace provides continuous access to documents, timelines, working materials, and updates. Online and in-person meetings are held at regular intervals, creating opportunities for discussion, co-creation, and reflection, and ensuring that all partners remain engaged in the network's ongoing development.

External Communication and Visibility

External communication positions the Circular NET-LAB as a visible and relevant actor in the circular economy landscape while promoting the regional labs and their services to external stakeholders. The dedicated digital platform serves as the network's main public communication hub, presenting the Circular NET-LAB's mission and activities while offering individual visibility to each member lab. The network's LinkedIn page enhances its professional presence, enabling the dissemination of updates, events, and publications to a broad audience. A coordinated hashtag strategy built around #CircularNETLAB unifies social media communication across partner accounts and reinforces the network's identity in the digital space.

Together, these tools create a robust, resource-efficient communication system that keeps the Circular NET-LAB visible, credible, and well-connected across its internal community and external audiences.





The Circular NET-LAB platform recorded 114 unique visitors and 226 total visits by the end of August 2025. This represents a strong interim result, indicating growing visibility and engagement with the platform in its early months of operation.

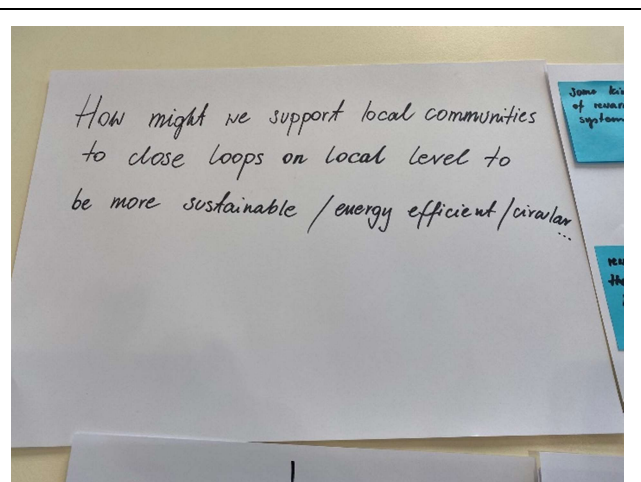
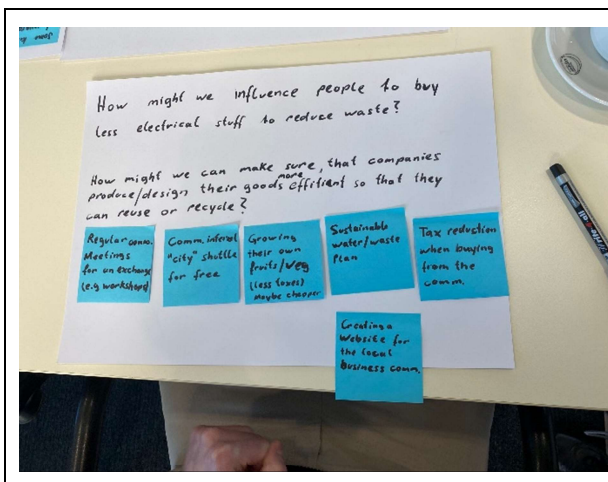
G.Activities of network (from Jan 2025 till Aug 2025)

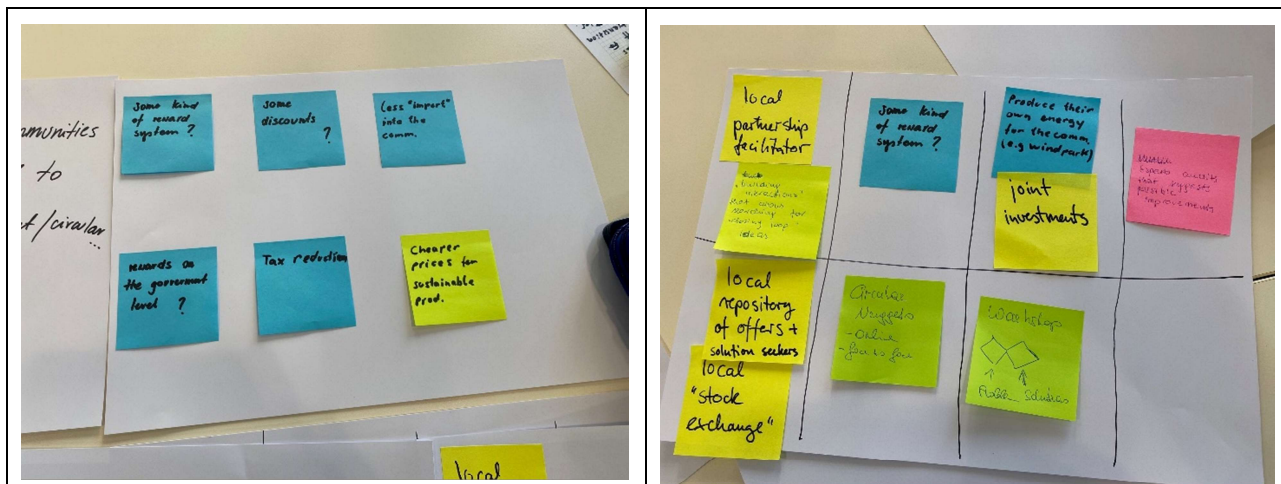
The Circular NET-LAB's activities in 2024-2025 have focused on strengthening collaboration among members, developing joint initiatives, and promoting the network's visibility.

At the founding meeting in Linz in December 2024, members participated not only in the formal establishment of the network but also in a working session to prepare the 2025 work programme. This session concentrated on strategies for promoting the network and generating content for the online platform. In addition, a highly successful workshop on project idea generation encouraged members to explore potential collaborative initiatives.



The workshop produced a wide range of promising concepts, not only in the Circular EEE sector but also in related fields such as critical materials, skills development, sustainable regional development, and energy transition.





This breadth of topics reflected both the diverse expertise within the network and its potential to address interconnected sustainability challenges. Importantly, the Linz workshops also helped build trust among members, laying the groundwork for a collaborative culture and strengthening the network's operational readiness.

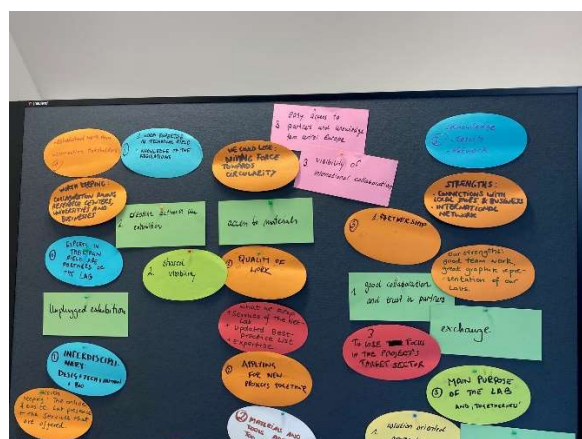
The next major gathering took place in Munich in July 2025. This membership meeting included a review of the 2025 workplan and discussions on priorities for 2026.



Two targeted project development workshops were held: one for a potential application under the Interregional Innovation Investment (I3) instrument, and another under the Horizon Europe programme



focusing on critical materials. These sessions deepened technical exchanges between members and provided practical experience in shaping transnational project proposals. A key highlight of the Munich meeting was the vision workshop, which invited members to think boldly about the network's future. The workshop began by identifying the network's strengths and clarifying what should be preserved, elements of value, culture, and practice that members did not want to see lost. In the second step, participants mapped unsolved challenges in the sector and considered broader sustainability questions beyond EEE that the network could help address. The final stage focused on envisioning the Circular NET-LAB in 2028, exploring possible areas of action, new services, and strategic roles in the European circular economy landscape.



This forward-looking process not only defined an aspirational trajectory but also strengthened members' sense of shared purpose and commitment to long-term impact.

Throughout the year, members actively contributed to raising awareness of the network and enriching the platform with relevant content. A central strand of collaboration has been the exchange of know-how and the joint serving of two SMEs within the CIRCOTRONIC project, a practical exercise that has strengthened cooperation and demonstrated the network's potential for coordinated service delivery. Member labs also regularly inform each other about relevant events, funding opportunities, and other developments, reinforcing the culture of mutual support and knowledge sharing that underpins the Circular NET-LAB.



H. Review of Milestones and KPIs

The table below summarizes the KPIs and milestones outlined in the concept for the transnational network to be implemented by the end of the CIRCOTRONIC project in February 2026. This interim review provides an overview of progress to date, helping to monitor achievements and ensure the network continues to advance according to plan.

KPI	Milestone	Status (Aug 2025)
Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)		
MoU drafted and shared with partners by December 2024 10 partner organisations sign the MoU by February 2025 One round of partner feedback and revisions completed	Preparation and drafting of the MoU by CCIS, reviewed by all partners Signing by all organisations hosting or collaborating in regional Circular Labs Coordination led by CCIS Target date: February 2025	Completed by December 2024. The Memorandum of Understanding was prepared by CCIS and reviewed by all partners. Two full rounds of feedback and revisions were carried out to ensure clarity, alignment, and mutual agreement. All ten partner organisations hosting or collaborating in regional Circular Labs signed the MoU, with the final signing completed by April 2025. The process was coordinated and facilitated by CCIS, ensuring timely completion and engagement from all partners.
Founding Meeting		
Minimum of 75% partner attendance at the founding meeting Steering Committee established with representation from all participating regions Founding meeting minutes approved within 4 weeks	Agenda and materials prepared and shared in advance by CCIS Nomination of Steering Committee members by all partners Meeting hosted by Biz-up and coordinated by CCIS Minutes documented and circulated to all partners Target date: December 2025	All documents were completed and distributed prior to the meeting by CCIS, ensuring participants were well-informed and able to engage effectively The Steering Committee was formally established with representation from all participating regions, fulfilling the governance requirements of the network. 100% attendance exceeded



		the target, reflecting strong engagement and commitment from the network's members. The meeting was hosted by Biz-up in Linz / AT and efficiently managed by CCIS, allowing for smooth discussions and decision-making Minutes were approved on time, ensuring clarity, accountability, and readiness for follow-up actions.
Establishment of a Coordination Desk at CCIS		
Coordination role defined and communicated to all partners Contact form and desk responsibilities published on the network's platform Regular internal update or coordination email circulated starting from January 2025	Setting up a dedicated coordination desk at CCIS to support the operational management of the Circular NET-LAB. Responsibilities include internal coordination, partner support, communication oversight, and serving as a first contact point for external stakeholders. Target date: January 2025	The desk was successfully established in January 2025, providing a central point for operational management of the Circular NET-LAB. Responsibilities were clearly defined, covering internal coordination, partner support, communication oversight, and acting as the first contact for external stakeholders. The role and responsibilities of the CCIS coordination desk were clearly communicated and acknowledged by all network partners. Regular emails to lab members. Contact form on the website is managed by CCIS.
Development and Launch of the Web Platform		
Platform online with core sections (about, members, news, contact) by launch date Minimum of one contribution from each partner lab (text or visual) 200 unique visitors to the platform within the first six months	Collection of content (texts, visuals) by all partners, coordinated by CCIS and MD Technical development and design implementation by CCIS Public launch of the platform Target date: May 2025	All partners successfully contributed texts and visuals, with CCIS and MD coordinating the process to ensure a consistent and engaging presentation. Technical development and design were completed by CCIS, resulting in a user-friendly and visually appealing platform.



LinkedIn page created and promoted alongside the launch		The public launch took place in May 2025. While the team had initially aimed for an earlier launch, technical implementation took longer than expected due to necessary adjustments to ensure optimal functionality and design quality. The platform went live featuring all essential sections: About, Our Labs, Knowledge, and Contact. Every partner lab provided at least one piece of content, ensuring diverse representation and a rich starting base for the platform. Within the first three months after launch, the platform recorded 114 unique visitors, putting the network on a good track to meet the target of 200 visitors by November 2025 (six months after launch). A new LinkedIn page for the Circular NET-LAB was created as planned. However, after review, it was decided to consolidate communication efforts into the already well-established CIRCOTRONIC LinkedIn group, which currently counts more than 150 members. This approach avoids duplication, leverages an existing engaged audience, and ensures coherent communication by integrating both network and lab activities into a single channel.
Development of the Workplan 2025		
Draft workplan circulated to all partners by November 2024	Preparation of a joint workplan outlining key activities,	The workplan was developed after a joint brainstorming



All partner contributions submitted and integrated Final version endorsed by end of January 2025	responsibilities, and timelines for the Circular NET-LAB in 2025. Drafting coordinated by CCIS, with input and agreement from all partners. Target date: January 2025	session and coordinated by CCIS, with inputs from all partners. The draft was circulated ahead of schedule in September 2024, well before the planned November date All partner submitted contributions, were integrated, though the process took longer than anticipated, however final version finished by end of January 2025, on schedule.
Partnering with Other Initiatives		
At least two new collaborations or partnerships initiated by February 2026 Participation in one joint event, campaign, or knowledge-sharing activity Mention of the Circular NET-LAB in at least one external platform or communication channel New partners featured on the Circular NET-LAB website and LinkedIn page	Active outreach to connect with complementary initiatives and networks working in the field of circular economy, electronics, or sustainability. The aim is to foster exchange, explore synergies, and create opportunities for joint actions or mutual visibility. All partners contribute to identifying relevant initiatives; coordination led by CCIS. Target date: February 2026	On track; collaboration with B2GreenHub initiated in June 2025, with further potential partnerships under discussion On track; meetings and joint planning sessions with B2GreenHub completed, with a follow-up workshop planned for late 2025 On track; Circular NET-LAB will be introduced via B2GreenHub's communication channels Partial; new partner will be highlighted on the Circular NET-LAB website once the B2GreenHub is online with a web presence
Establishment of a Working Group on Funding Opportunities		
Working group established with representatives from at least five partner organisations At least one funding call identified and discussed by end of 2025 At least three potential project ideas developed by February 2026	Formation of a dedicated working group within the Circular NET-LAB to identify and explore relevant funding opportunities Group members and coordinator nominated by all partners Two workshops on project proposal development implemented Target date: October 2025	A dedicated working group was established within the Circular NET-LAB to identify and explore relevant funding opportunities, with members nominated by partner organisations and coordination led by CCIS. Three workshops on project proposal development were implemented as part of the 2024/2025 network activities.



		Working group established with representatives from five partner organisations (BayFOR, CCIS, Biz-up, TUKE, T2I) Calls under the I3 Instrument and Horizon Europe (critical materials focus) were reviewed in detail during the Munich member meeting in July 2025 On track; numerous ideas were generated during the initial workshop, with two developed further during the Munich meeting. Additional activities to refine and advance further project ideas are planned in smaller, focused sessions.
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I. Lessons learned (from 09/2024 to 02/2026)

The establishment and first year of activities of the Circular NET-LAB have provided valuable insights into building and operating a transnational network for circular economy innovation. Several key lessons and reflections have emerged:

1. Foundational documents and governance structures matter.

The Memorandum of Understanding and the confirmation of the Steering Committee and Coordinating Group have proven essential in creating a shared understanding of roles, responsibilities, and decision-making processes. Even though the MOU is non-binding, it has provided a stable framework for cooperation.

Reflection: The MOU preparation and finalisation took longer than expected, largely due to coordination with multiple legal departments. The process nonetheless allowed for thorough discussion and mutual understanding, which strengthened the final outcome.

2. Physical meetings are critical for trust and momentum.

The founding meeting in Linz and the membership meeting in Munich were catalysts for relationship-building, creativity, and commitment. Workshops on project ideas, work planning, and long-term visioning not only generated tangible outputs but also strengthened members' sense of ownership.

Reflection: These meetings worked exceptionally well for generating energy and commitment. Building in more follow-up after workshops helps maintain the strong momentum generated during the sessions and translate ideas into concrete actions more quickly.

3. Strategic foresight strengthens collective identity.



The vision workshop in Munich showed the value of structured reflection on strengths, challenges, and long-term scenarios. Defining what is worth preserving and imagining the network in 2028 helped align members on a shared purpose and strategic direction.

Reflection: The workshop confirmed that taking dedicated time for forward-looking discussions not only shapes a shared vision but also deepens members' sense of belonging and commitment, making it an important practice.

4. Practical cooperation builds capacity and confidence.

Jointly serving SMEs within the CIRCOTRONIC project provided a real-world test of cross-border service delivery. This was one of the smoother aspects of the year, showing the network's readiness to collaborate on operational tasks.

Reflection: Early practical collaboration proved to be an effective way to build confidence and working relationships, suggesting that similar joint projects should be integrated into the network's activities.

5. Communication infrastructure is as important as physical infrastructure.

The digital platform, desk at CCIS, mailing list, and LinkedIn presence have ensured continuous connection and visibility.

Reflection: Setting up the platform was efficient and timely, but mobilising all members to contribute content regularly remains a challenge and requires ongoing encouragement.

6. Partnerships expand reach and open new opportunities.

The collaboration agreement with the B2GreenHub shows the value of proactive outreach.

The initial discussions progressed very smoothly, laying a solid foundation for future joint activities. As the B2GreenHub develops its online platform, both networks will have the opportunity to align timelines and capacities to plan concrete collaborative initiatives.

7. Diversity of expertise is a strength, but needs focus.

Workshops have revealed that the network's expertise extends far beyond the Circular EEE sector, encompassing critical materials, skills development, sustainable regional development, and energy transition.

Reflection: While this diversity is a strength, focusing on a few priority themes each year could help channel resources more effectively.

J. Outlook into the future (2026+)

Building on the foundations laid in 2024 and 2025, the Circular NET-LAB is poised to expand its impact both regionally and transnationally. The network will continue to strengthen collaboration among member labs, exchange know-how, and jointly support SMEs in implementing circular economy practices. Future priorities include expanding the membership base, deepening partnerships with complementary networks, and actively pursuing funding opportunities to develop innovative projects. Looking ahead, the network will prepare a work programme for 2026, building on lessons learned and identifying new activities to advance the network's objectives. In addition, another focused project development workshop is planned to further refine promising project ideas, engage members in concrete collaborative initiatives, and explore potential funding opportunities. The virtual infrastructure will continue to serve as a central hub for knowledge



exchange, visibility, and stakeholder engagement. Strategic foresight exercises, such as the 2025 vision workshop, will guide long-term planning, helping members anticipate sectoral challenges and explore opportunities beyond electronic and electrical equipment, including critical materials, energy, skill development, and sustainable regional development. By 2028, the Circular NET-LAB envisions a robust, transnational network recognized for its collaborative approach, practical impact, and capacity to respond to emerging circular economy challenges. The continued dedication of member organizations, supported by the Steering Committee, Coordinating Group, and working groups, will ensure that the network evolves dynamically while remaining aligned with its mission and values.