

Fit4Future SUMMER SCHOOL

The Circular Urban Turn Towards Zero-Waste Cities and Regions

MAY - AUGUST 2026

Online live / self-study

7 - 12 SEPTEMBER

Cottbus, Germany

6
ECTS CREDITS

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 Co-funded by
the European Union

**Zero-Waste | Cities | Regional Transformation |
Social Innovation | Circular Society**

Workshops - Lectures - Empirical work - Hands-on learning



Incoming students IMPORTANT DATES

PRE-REQUISITES

- EUNICE student
- English: B2 level

HOW TO APPLY & ENROL

- Incoming students: contact your International Relations Office (for application and Erasmus+ funding).



The Circular Urban Turn - Towards Zero-Waste Cities and Regions

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Cities are metabolic engines of contemporary societies. They concentrate material flows, energy consumption, waste production, social inequalities and innovation capacity in unprecedented density, and also hold great potential for transformative change. Urban transformation, however, requires a regional, social, and ecological perspective that considers material flows, infrastructures, governance, and community-based innovation.

What would it take to redesign urban systems towards truly circular, zero-waste systems rooted in sufficiency, and commons? What role do everyday practices, bottom-up initiatives, and social innovation play in structural transformation at urban and regional scales?

If you are interested in transformative change, this is your opportunity to learn, collaborate, and co-create ideas for net-zero futures.

OBJECTIVES

- Introduce participants to sustainable urban transformation approaches through transdisciplinary, problem-based, and collaborative learning.
- Distinguish technocratic circular economy strategies from broader societal transformation.
- Explore the relationship between zero-waste policies, sufficiency practices, commons-based initiatives, and regenerative models and the intersection with climate mitigation, biodiversity protection, and social justice.
- Strengthen climate literacy and systems thinking for understanding the causal mechanisms of climate change, connecting circular urban and regional strategies to global climate dynamics.
- Support critical thinking, peer learning, and co-creation.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the summer school, participants will be able to:

- Develop a systemic perspective on cities and regions as socio-ecological and socio-metabolic systems.
- Analyse material and energy flows, identify structural lock-ins, and examine how infrastructures depend on regional and ecological contexts.
- Assess the transformative potential of grassroots and bottom-up initiatives in sustainable transitions.
- Co-create and communicate bottom-up interventions for circular urban transition.

COURSE COORDINATION

BTU, Cottbus - Senftenberg, Germany

Partner Universities

Université Polytechnique Hauts-de-France (France)
Karlstad University (Sweden)
University of Vaasa (Finland)