

GREET CE Thematic Conference @ MEGRA 2025

“Climate resilient, sustainable and circular construction – innovations, synergies, and generating value chains for smart growth and a competitive construction industry in Central Europe”

March 27, 2025 | 14:00 CET

MEGRA International Construction Fair, Gornja Radgona, Slovenia

Organizers:

GZS – Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia (ZIGIM)

With contributions from: KSSENA – Regional Energy Agency, EcoCocon, Veplas, Gees Recycling, Nekster, Celiquim, Kaminota, Mondo Impex, MAJER Group (PL), MORS Directorate for Logistics, and others.

The Eco-Construction Conference featured discussions on innovative approaches to sustainable construction in Central Europe, with a focus on enhancing collaboration among SMEs and innovation partners:

Meet the GREET-CE project,
which aims to connect small and medium innovative enterprises
with resources to access European development funding!



"All at the same time, we're working on being more resilient, pursuing a greener future and strengthening European competitiveness,"

(articulated Alenka Bea Logar Pučnik (Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia - ZIGIM) in a welcoming statement that alluded to the current state of affairs.)

The Eco-Construction Pitch Deck thematic event, organized under the umbrella of the **GREET CE project**, served as a **strategic gathering point for SMEs, public authorities, innovation platforms, and R&D actors** from across Central Europe. The focus: fostering **climate-resilient, low-carbon, and circular construction** value chains through **cross-border cooperation and investment readiness**.

Led by **CCIS – Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia**, and powered by the **Slovenian Eco-Construction Pilot** under GREET CE, the conference offered a unique opportunity to explore

new project pipelines, build transnational partnerships, and align with **EU funding instruments**, particularly the **Interregional Innovation Investments (I3)** mechanism.

The GREET CE Vision

Alenka Bea Logar Pučnik (CCIS) and **Marko Govek (KSSENA)** introduced the strategic mission of GREET CE: boosting the **innovation capacity of SMEs** in less developed regions through the creation of **thematic pilot ecosystems** – including **eco-construction, digital sustainable energy, regenerative farming**, and **renewable gases**.

Govek emphasized the importance of **structured support for business cases** based on concrete value chains, driven by over 300 SMEs and 40+ innovation intermediaries from **Slovenia, Croatia, Hungary, Slovakia, Romania, Poland, Portugal, and beyond**. GREET CE aims to **scale innovation**, improve regional cohesion, and connect ecosystems with EU investment mechanisms, especially the I3 instrument and Horizon Europe.

Innovative Companies Presenting Scalable Solutions

The conference featured a curated showcase of **cutting-edge companies and technologies**:

- **Veplas Group (Slovenia)**: A regional leader in high-performance composites with experience in medical, aerospace, and defense sectors. Their **DEREMCO project** exemplifies the use of **recycled glass fibers** in the circular economy, while their **MIMOSA project** focuses on **multi-material lightweight structures**—both aligned with **I3 and Horizon Europe** priorities. Veplas also exemplifies a **dual-use model**, engaging both civilian and defense markets.
- **EcoCocon (Slovenia/Slovakia/Lithuania)**: Introduced a **fully certified straw-based wall system**, offering a **net carbon-negative alternative** for external wall construction. Their pre-fabricated panels are CE marked and Cradle to Cradle certified, with rapid installation and excellent performance in energy efficiency, fire resistance, and health standards.
- **Gees Recycling (Italy)**: A pioneer in **recycling thermoset and composite materials**, Gees presented their circular manufacturing model which transforms industrial waste into **custom building elements and sandwich panels**. Their EU-funded **REFRESH and LIFE projects** were highlighted as best practices for integrating **waste valorization** into prefabricated construction and building component design.
- **Celiquim (Romania)**: Demonstrated **cellulose-based insulation and prefabricated homes** using recycled paper – a powerful example of circular, local bio-based innovation. The company is also launching a **blockchain-enabled tokenization system** to incentivize decentralized recycling and sustainable housing investments.
- **Mondo Impex (Romania)**: Showcased ergonomically designed **outdoor furniture from acacia wood**, replacing tropical hardwoods. Their design avoids metal and harmful chemicals, contributing to sustainable urban and public space planning.

- **Kaminota (Romania):** Through the EchoLiving platform, they presented **natural clay plasters and renders**, ideal for preserving **heritage buildings and healthy interiors**. Their system is already in use across Romania and being scaled to 13 countries.

Financial innovation was also in focus with a pitch by **Nekster Finance (Slovenia):** A fintech solution offering **invoice factoring** (also for SMEs with no credit history) and **liquidity bridges** for SMEs, especially those operating in capital-intensive construction innovation.

The platform is well-suited to support **scaling phases of green construction firms** and can connect with public projects and private investors. These types of instruments are crucial at the moment when a company needs support in the scale-up phase, before it reaches stable revenues.

"Access to liquidity at the right moment makes the difference between a successful pilot and a market failure," (emphasised Alenka Bea Logar Pučnik.)

Building Value Chains and Cross-Border Business Cases

The Polish partners, led by **Cezary Molski and Dominika Grodkowska**, presented promising **value chain configurations**, combining **software (Binderless)**, **mounting systems (Sadar)**, and **prefabricated houses (Celiqum)** into **scalable business cases** for upcoming 13 investment calls.

Their message was clear: **interregional cooperation must be grounded in practical co-development and mutual trust across cultural and market differences.**

The session highlighted that **building value chains is not just about innovation, but also about removing barriers to collaboration**, sharing risk, and **designing for real deployment**.

Special Highlight: "Dual-Use" Innovations in Construction – Insights from the Ministry of Defence

One of the conference's key contributions came from **Colonel Robert Šipec**, representing the **Logistics Directorate of the Slovenian Ministry of Defence (MORS)**. His talk underlined the **strategic intersection between civil construction innovation and defense logistics**, particularly in the context of **dual-use technologies**.

'This is not merely a two-way transfer of knowledge, but a circular flow of innovation that enriches both the defense and civil sectors—contributing directly to the goals of a green, digital, and resilient transition' pointed out Colonel Robert Šipec.

Colonel Šipec gave a brief presentation of the MORS participation in the EURAMP, RescEU, Smart Defence, PESCO and EU CDP projects and stressed the **growing operational need for modular, mobile, low-emission infrastructure** within European defense strategies, civil protection systems, and peacekeeping logistics. He argued that **advanced composites, prefabricated bio-based structures, energy-autonomous shelters, and circular material systems** developed by civil companies offer **direct application potential in defense and crisis response**.

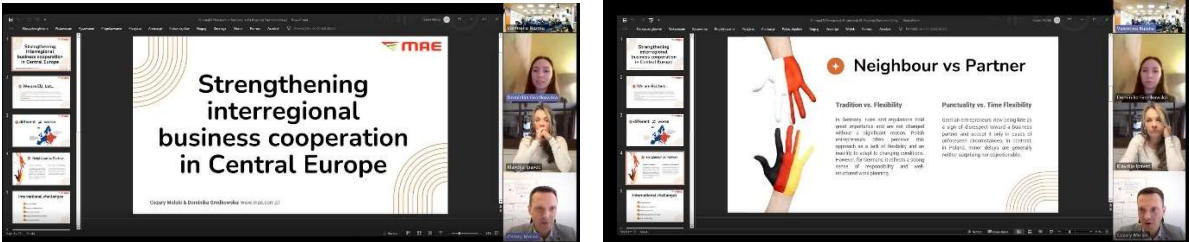
He encouraged SMEs and pilot actors to **consider the defense sector as a user and co-developer** in future I3 proposals, particularly in areas like **emergency response units, resilient housing modules, rapid deployment camps, and infrastructure reconstruction in crisis zones** – all of which require **robust, sustainable, and mobile construction solutions**. MORS is open to facilitating dialogue between industry and the defense ecosystem in this regard.

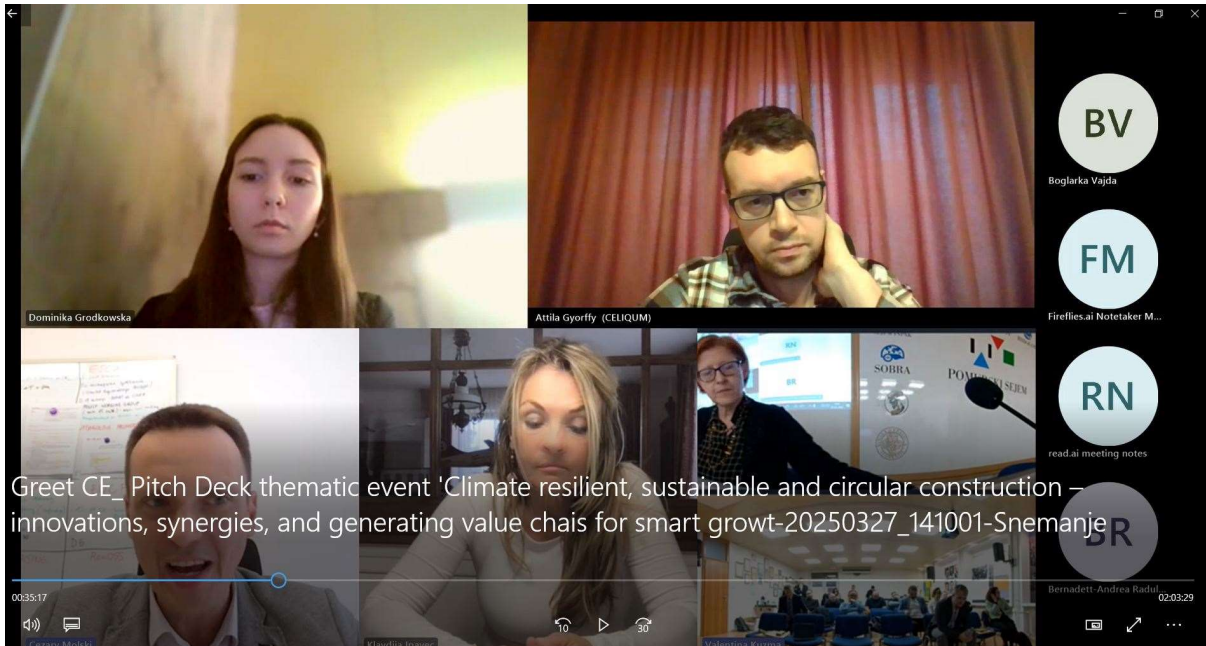
The conference closed with a forward-looking message: Central Europe’s construction industry stands at a **strategic crossroads**, where **sustainability, resilience, circularity, and competitiveness** must align. The GREET CE Eco-Construction Pilot is well-positioned to serve as a **launchpad for green innovation**, investment partnerships, and **smart regional growth**.

Participants were encouraged to **join upcoming I3 calls**, deepen transnational cooperation, and **leverage defense-civil synergies**, especially in modular and climate-resilient building technologies.

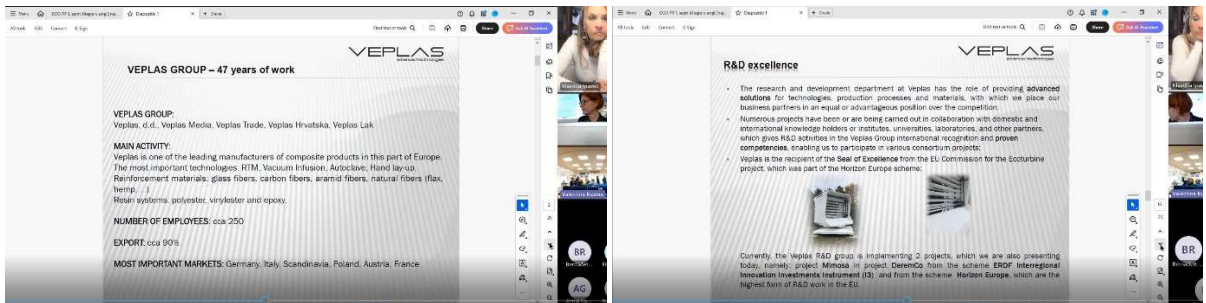
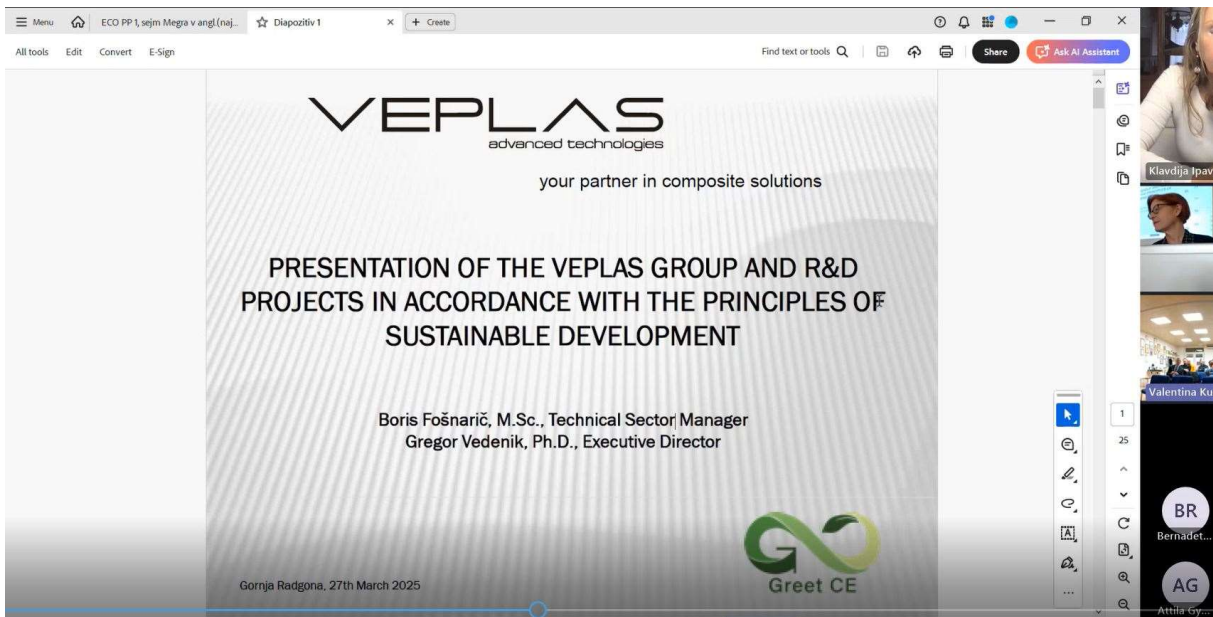
The GREET CE event demonstrated how cross-border cooperation, backed by **EU cohesion instruments**, can empower SMEs and innovation ecosystems to lead the **green and digital transition** in construction—transforming challenges into **circular, scalable business opportunities**.

- MAE:





• VEPLAS:



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DEREMCO project

VEPLAS advanced technologies

Demufacturing (Mechanical)

WIND BLADES
PRODUCTION WASTE

Collection

SHREDDING

SHREDDED MATERIAL

+ THERMOSET RESIN

Reprocessing (RTM injection moulding)

OUTPUT rGFRP Putty for mould an Shelf for motorhomes

DEREMCO

Menu ECO PP 1, sejm Megra v angl (naj... Diapozitiv 1 + Create Omogočilo die skupno rabo Ultra: digin

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MIMOSA project

VEPLAS advanced technologies

mimosa PARTNERS

FENICE

TUV SUD

JOANNEUM RESEARCH

VEPLAS

LEONARDO

Politecnico di Torino

GBF METAL GROUP

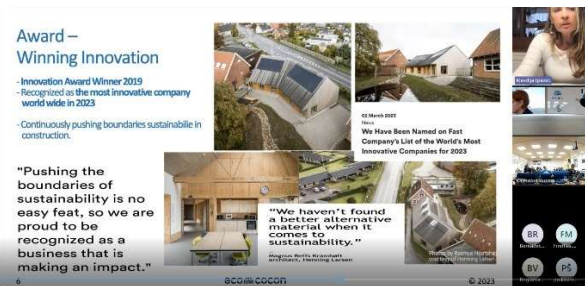
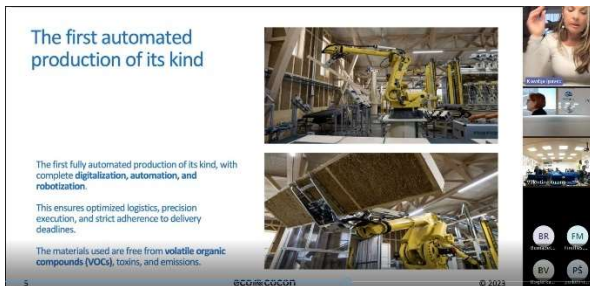
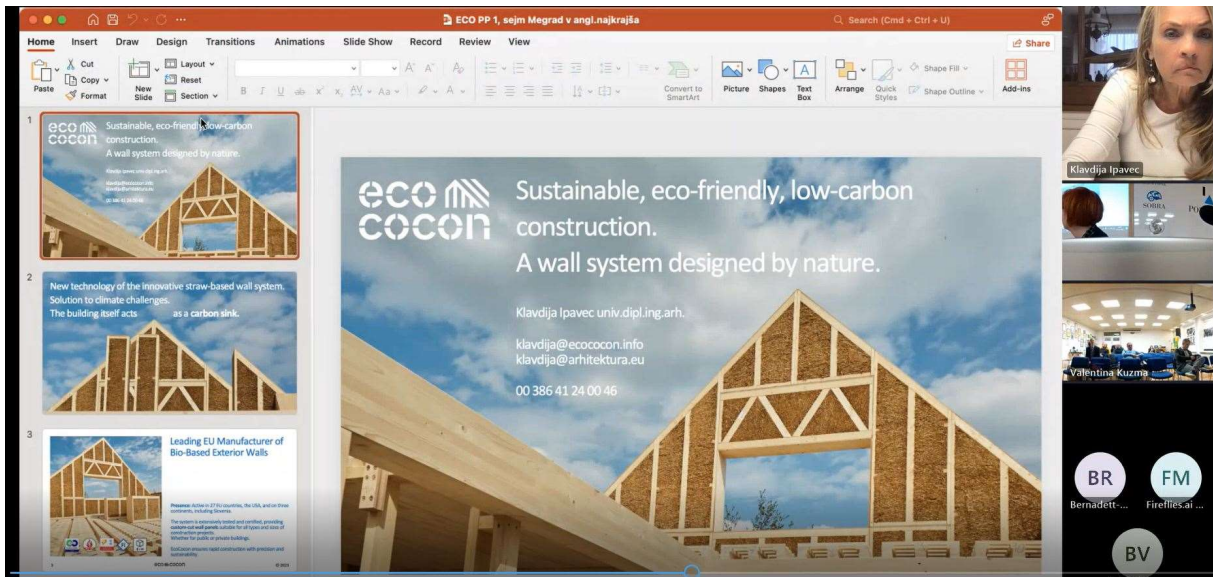
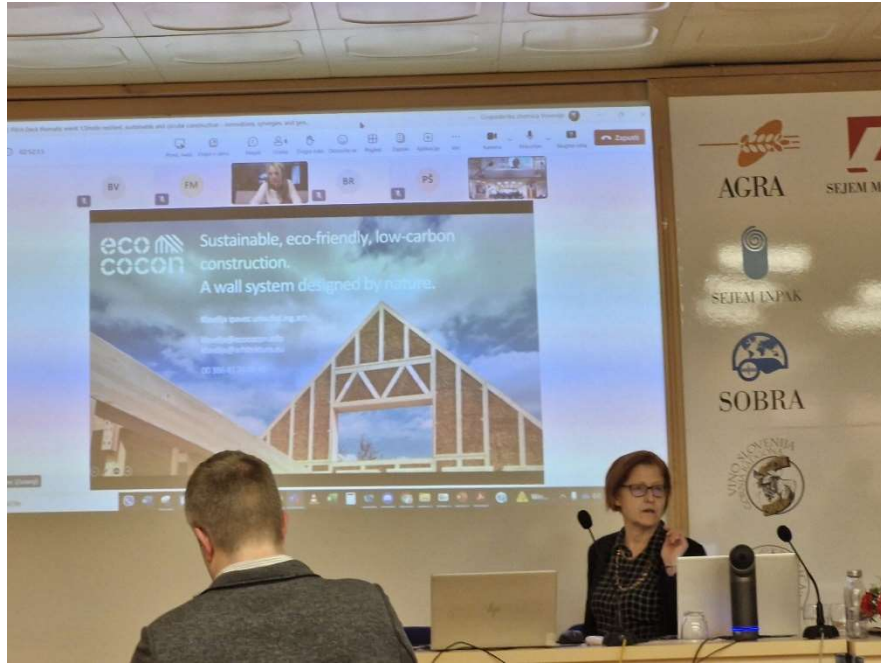
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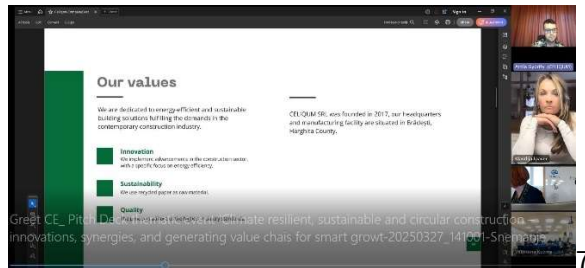
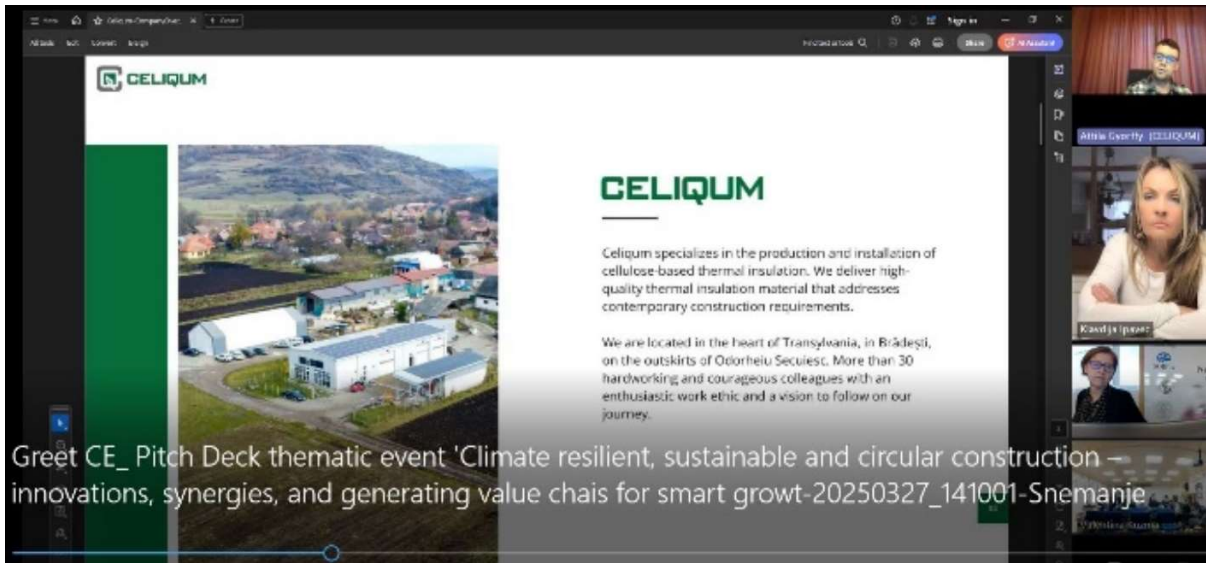
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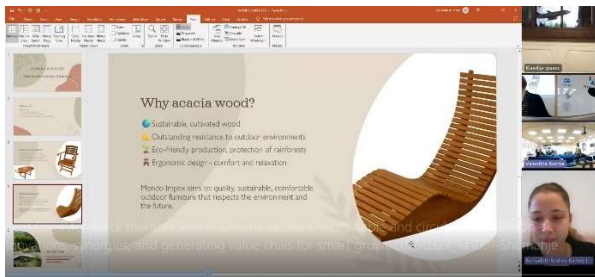
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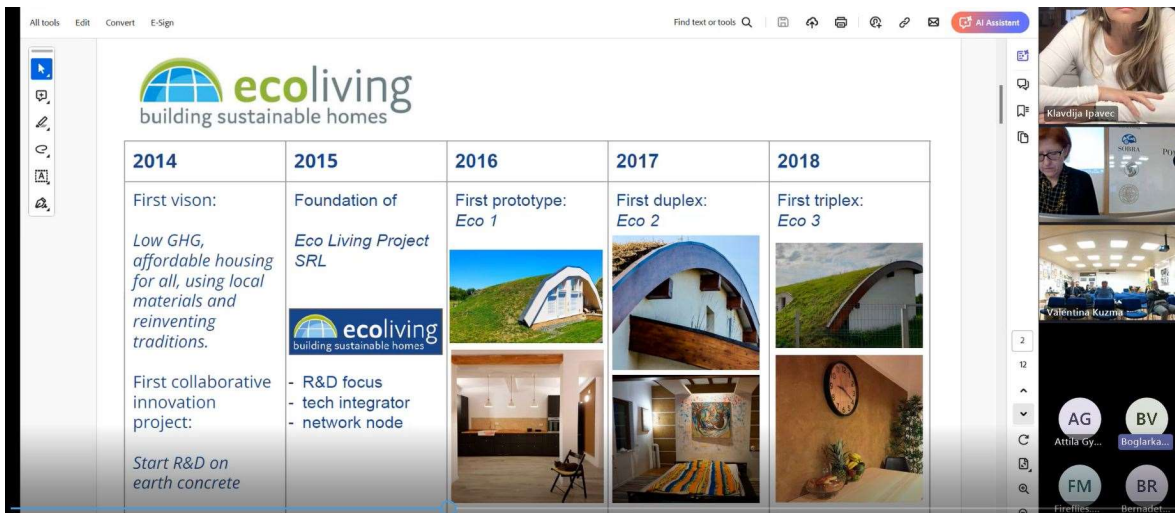
- CELIQUM:

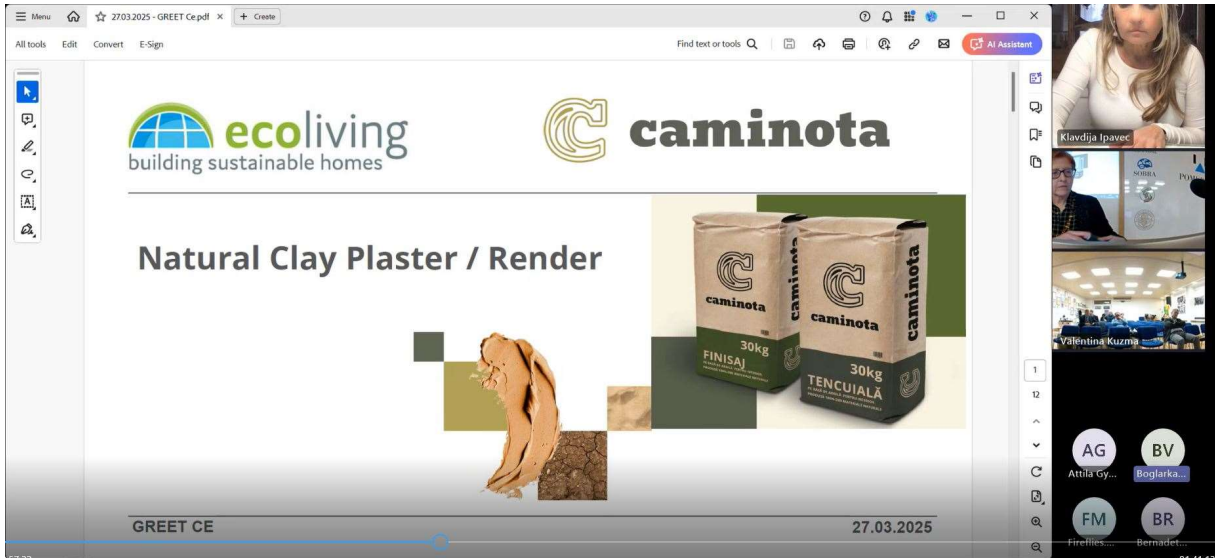


- MONDO IMPEX :



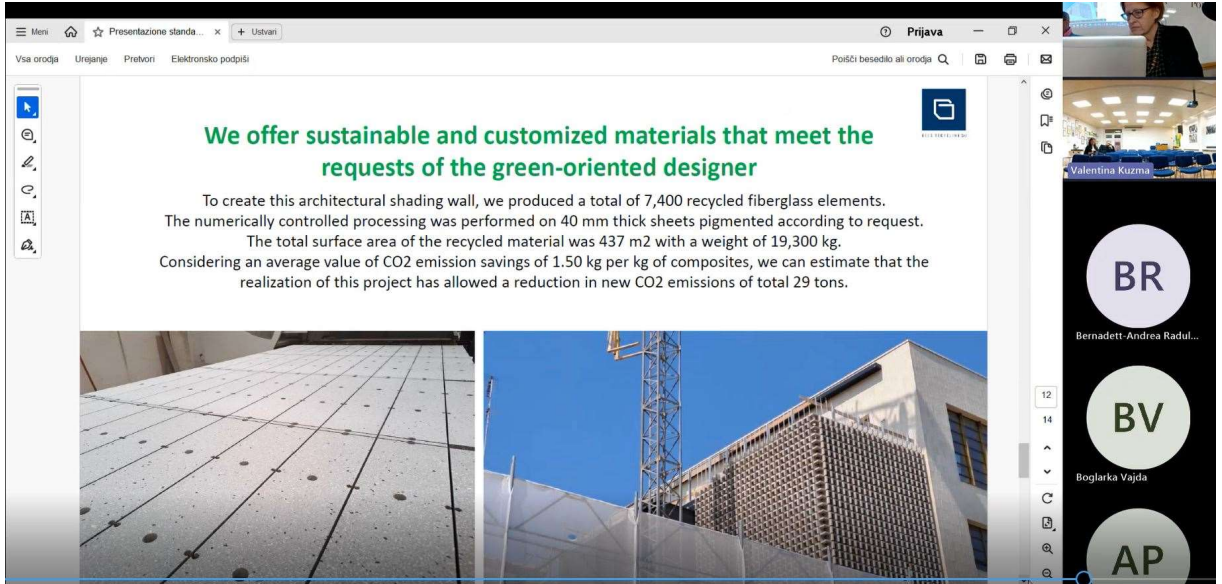
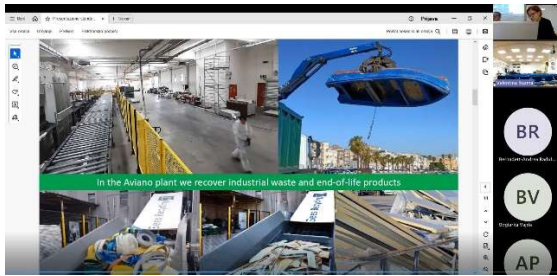
- CAMINOTA / ECOLIVING:

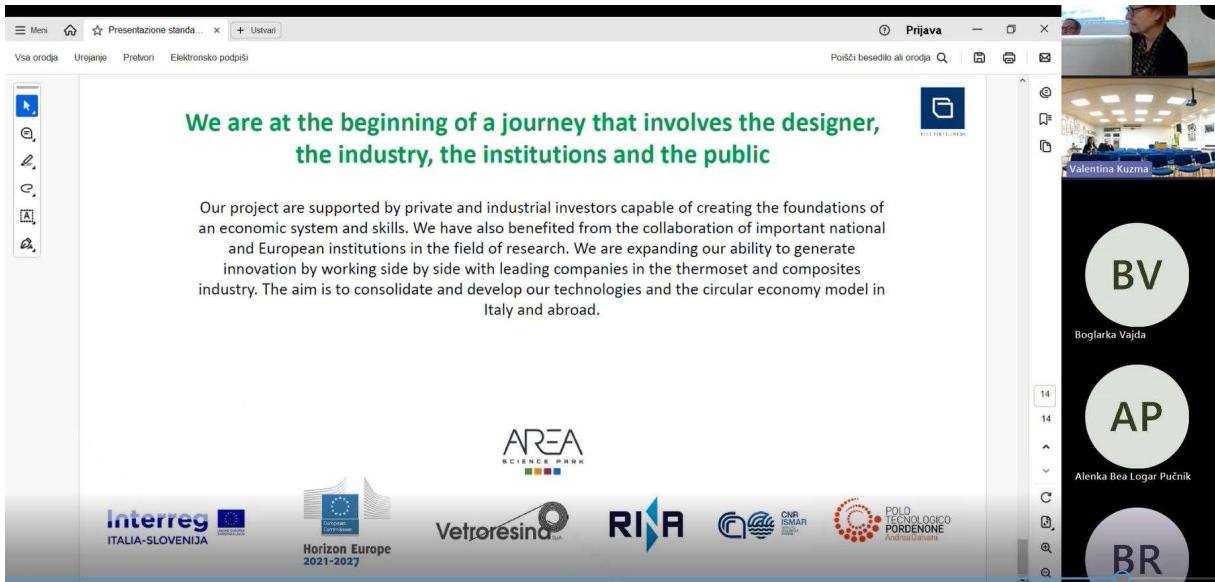




- Gees Recycling

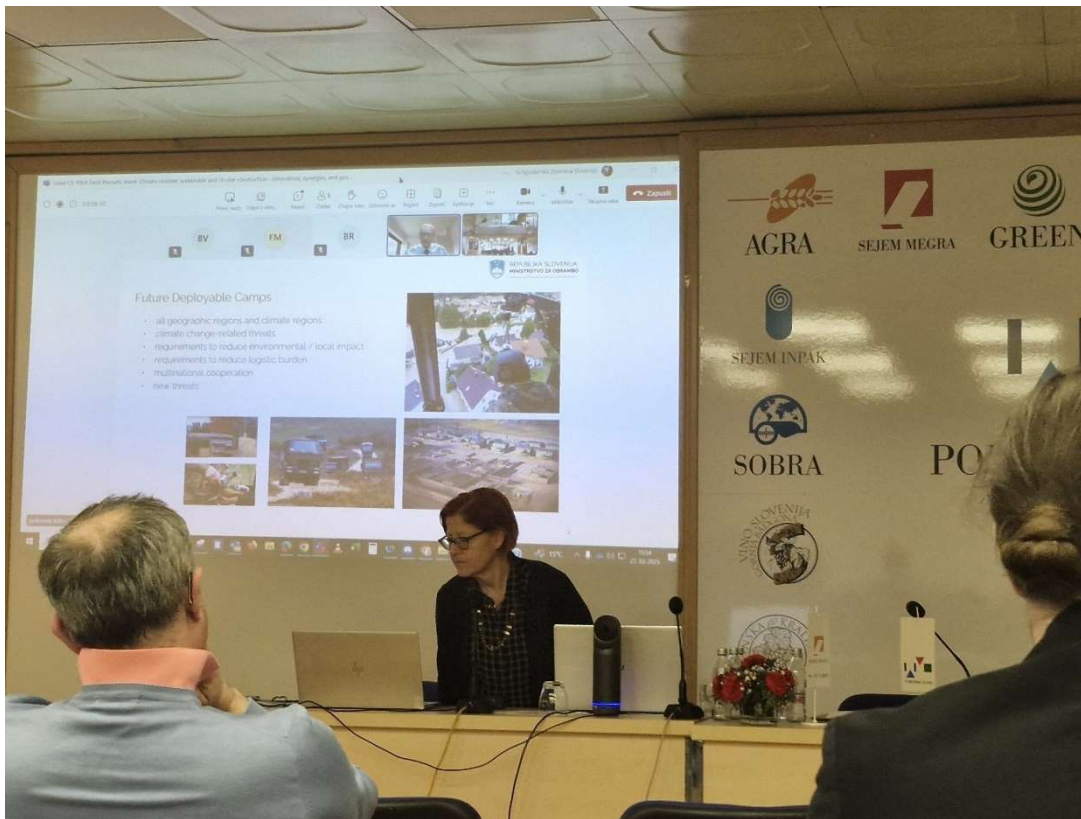
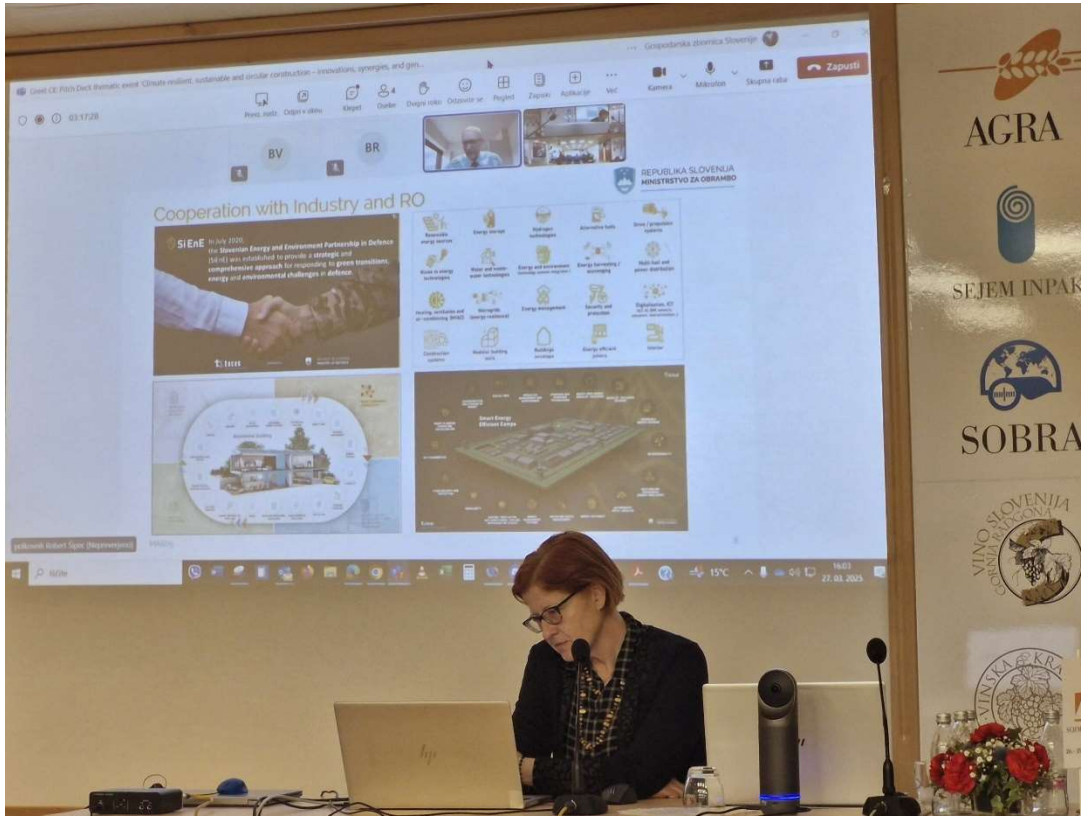


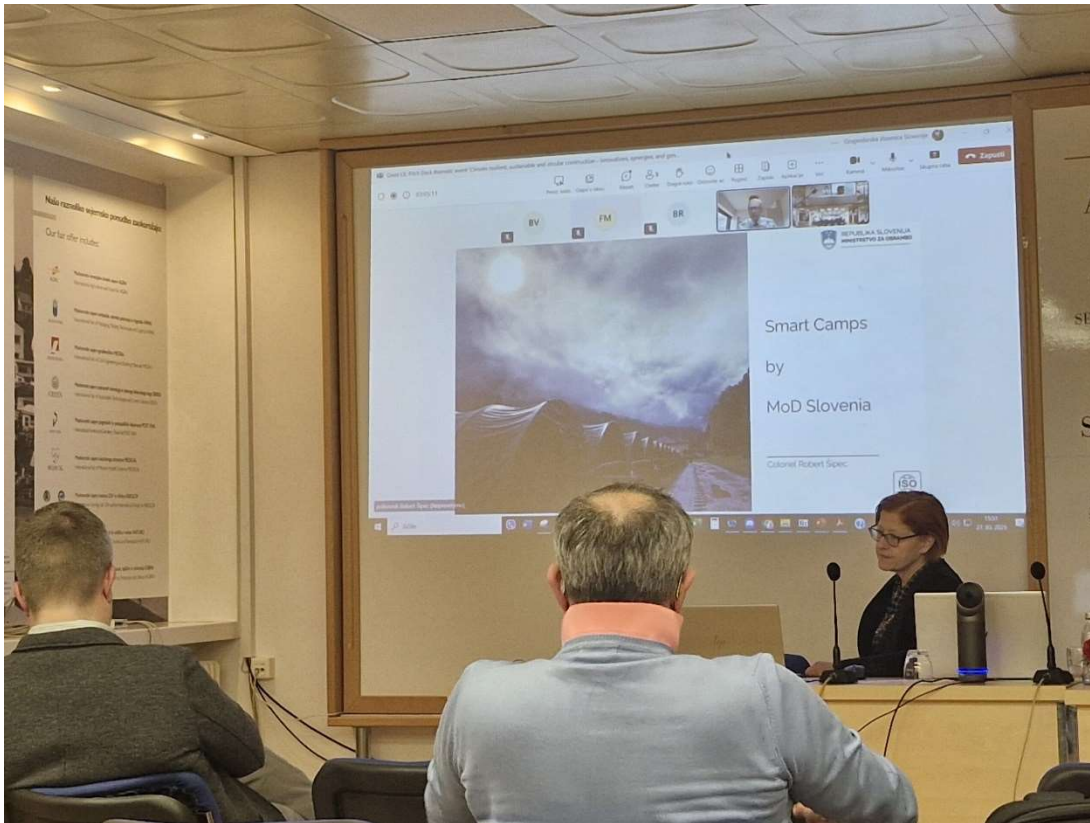




- Logistics Directorate of the Slovenian Ministry of Defence







- EU Funding Opportunities for Sustainable Construction



Maximizing Success: Aligning Projects with EU Funding Priorities

- EU funding programs prioritize projects that contribute to strategic objectives such as the Green Deal, Circular Economy, and Digital Transformation.
- Projects that fail to align with EU priorities are less likely to receive funding.
- Proper alignment ensures easier approval, better evaluation scores, and long-term project impact.

EU Priority	What This Means for your Project?
Climate Resilience (Green Deal)	Focus on low-carbon construction, renewable energy, and CO ₂ reduction.
Circular Economy	Incorporate recyclable, bio-based, and waste-reducing materials.
Energy Efficiency	Invest in smart buildings, energy-efficient designs, and retrofitting solutions.
Digitalization	Integrate AI, IoT, and BIM (Building Information Modeling) for construction efficiency.
Knowledge Cooperation	Foster interdisciplinary research with universities, SMEs, and municipalities.

