

PRESS RELEASE

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Furniture Go International: building alliances, opening markets

The project, driven by eight European clusters and funded by the European Commission, will help SMEs to reach new markets through collaboration and innovation. The project will establish a European Strategic Cluster Partnership to intensify cooperation in furniture and related industries, within EU and towards four third countries, namely USA, Canada, Egypt, and South Africa.

Furniture Go International (FGOI) is a project with solid basis and ambitious goals, starting mid september 2021 and lasting 3 years. It is driven by eight clusters from six European countries which, for the first time, will pool all their market knowledge and experience to design internationalisation activities exclusively for SMEs in the sector and 100% result-oriented. The aim is to offer useful and tailor-made tools to approach markets outside the European Union, in particular the United States, Canada, Egypt, and South Africa.

The participating clusters are: TFC-Transylvanian Furniture Cluster (Romania), HABIC-Association Cluster of Habitat, Wood, Office and Contract Sector (Spain), WIC-Wood Industry Cluster (Slovenia), KCN-Cluster of Czech Furniture Manufacturers (Czech Republic), ICS-Interior Cluster Sweden (Sweden), PWC-PRO WOOD Regional Cluster (Romania), BFC-Bulgarian Furniture Cluster (Bulgaria) and HCB-Habitat Cluster Barcelona (Spain). Combined, they add more than 500 companies, most of them SMEs. SMEs members of the clusters are invited to the official launch event of the project (Kick Off Meeting), on October 21st, at 11:00h (Spain). The meeting will be organized in a hybrid format, and the attendants must register [online](#).

Cluster of Czech Furniture Manufacturers is ready to get involved with great enthusiasm in the implementation of the new project from the very first days. Its main task will be to identify and establish new strategic partnerships across Europe and to organize initial exploratory visits to third countries. The big challenge will be the management of the entire Work Package (WP6) of the project focused on Long term Partnership sustainability with the aim of development of cooperation agreements between the Partnership and international business and / or research intermediaries. Experienced cluster managers will be involved in the entire project management, who we believe will be a worthy partner to the other partners of the project consortium.

The project foresees, for example, the creation of long-term international alliances, the presence of permanent contacts in each of the markets of interest to guarantee the generation of business opportunities, and the design of tailor-made actions for the companies involved.

The European Commission has funded the project after having noted the harsh economic effects of COVID-19 on sectors that usually require products and services from the furniture and wood industry, such as tourism and retail. 70% of the 130,000 companies in the furniture manufacturing sector in the European Union are small or medium-sized, employing more than one million people.

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