

PRESS RELEASE-IV



ENCODE-IT INTERNATIONAL HACKATHON ADVANCES AI-SUPPORTED DIGITAL EMPOWERMENT AND COLLABORATIVE INNOVATION

The ENCODE-IT project successfully implemented its International Hackathon activity in Brussels, Belgium, bringing together women from Türkiye, Portugal, and Belgium for an intensive and practice-oriented learning experience focused on artificial intelligence, digital creation, collaboration, and innovation. Organized by SDSN as the final practical phase of the ENCODE-IT project, the hackathon transformed the knowledge and competencies developed during the Interactive Coding Modules and Virtual Bootcamp activities into real collaborative production processes. The event created an international learning environment where participants worked together in teams, explored AI-supported technologies, and experimented with practical digital creation methodologies.

Throughout the three-day activity, participants explored modern AI tools and digital platforms such as ChatGPT, Cursor, GitHub, Vercel, Netlify, and several no-code and low-code systems. The educational content focused on prompt engineering, workflow logic, AI-supported coding, automation concepts, design thinking, and practical product development while encouraging creativity, experimentation, and problem-solving.

The hackathon adopted a highly hands-on methodology centered on active participation and practical experimentation. Participants did not only attend presentations but also directly tested AI-supported systems, explored digital workflows, generated prompts, developed small prototype ideas, and learned how modern digital production processes operate from idea generation to deployment and presentation.

A strong emphasis was also placed on accessibility and inclusion. The activity brought together women from different educational, social, and professional backgrounds, including students, newly graduated participants, unemployed women, housewives, and professionals interested in digital transformation and future-oriented technological skills. Through collaborative teamwork and mentor-supported workshops, participants strengthened not only their digital competencies but also their confidence, communication skills, and motivation to engage more actively in digital environments.

The hackathon additionally promoted intercultural learning and European collaboration by creating opportunities for participants from different countries to exchange ideas, share experiences, and work together within an inclusive and supportive atmosphere. Interactive activities, collaborative workshops, and practical group exercises contributed to a highly dynamic and motivating learning experience throughout the event.

Many participants experienced AI-assisted production processes for the first time and expressed strong interest in continuing to explore artificial intelligence, no-code systems, and digital innovation tools after the activity. Participants highlighted that the practical and accessible teaching methods helped reduce technological anxiety and made complex digital concepts easier to understand and apply. By implementing the International Hackathon, the ENCODE-IT project continues to support women's participation in digital transformation processes while demonstrating that accessible, collaborative, and AI-supported education can empower women, strengthen digital inclusion, and create new pathways toward future-oriented skills and opportunities across Europe.