



Sharing good practices about ERDF use for Circular Economy

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Title of the instrument

Rationale: *define here the issue/bottleneck faced – diagnose the situation not just the symptoms*

Actions implemented: *(define the objectives and actions that are implemented to reach the objectives, be specific : who is in charge, doing what, when, using which resources, ...)*

Main impacts: *(describe the main impacts of the instrument on CE, the indicators that show that the objectives have been achieved or not)*

Lessons learnt: *(describe the implementation of the instruments : surprises, feedbacks received, obstacles faced, fallback solutions developed, etc.)*

AVISO N.º 20/SI/2018

Circular Economy Voucher

Rationale: *define here the issue/bottleneck faced – diagnose the situation not just the symptoms*

The Circular Economy voucher is a mechanism that resulted from recognising the importance of strengthening research, technological development and innovation across all sectors in order to accelerate the transition to a circular economy while creating new economic opportunities. To promote this, it was understood that it was important to **foster the development of partnerships between the business sector and the entities from the national scientific and technological system**. If properly developed, SMEs could use this vehicle to study, evaluate, identify and finally develop strategies leading to innovative business models based on new technologies / new processes / new products / new materials / new services that are efficient in terms of resource use and management and contribute to the promotion of a circularity economy.

Prior to the call launch, there was a process of accreditation of entities for the provision of innovation services within the Circular Economy, which was launched in January 2018. The list of accredited entities was then made available by the Managing Authorities.

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Circular Economy Voucher

Actions implemented: *(define the objectives and actions that are implemented to reach the objectives, be specific : who is in charge, doing what, when, using which resources, ...)*

The eligible entities to this call were the SMEs. The beneficiaries would receive financial support to, within a period of 12 months, purchase:

- Consultancy services for the identification of a strategy leading to the adoption of circular economy business plans (respecting the principles of process and product eco-design, eco-efficiency, energy efficiency, eco-innovation, industrial symbioses, product lifecycle extension, Recovery of by-products and waste, new business models, dematerialization and digital transformation)
- Advisory services for the implementation of solutions that result from the outlined circular economy strategy, including the implementation of ISO 50001 energy management and 14001 environmental management systems.

The maximum incentive to be granted to each Voucher was of € 7,500 (€ 2,500 for diagnosis services and € 5,000 for technical assistance services for the implementation of short-term recommendations).

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Circular Economy Voucher

Main impacts: *(describe the main impacts of the instrument on CE, the indicators that show that the objectives have been achieved or not)*

The selection of proposals to acquire advisory services on innovation activities associated with the Circular Economy ensured the alignment of those projects supported with the OP indicator “SMEs with innovation activities in regards to all SMEs”. Given the nature of these simplified projects, there were no specific indicators for contracting, either for performance or outcome.

The deadline for the submission of applications started on July 31st of 2018 and it staid to open until the number of applications reached the budget allocation from each Operational Programme. Given the high demand and the budget imitation from the Operational Programme, this Voucher scheme is already closed for Centro Region.

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Circular Economy Voucher

Lessons learnt: *(describe the implementation of the instruments : surprises, feedbacks received, obstacles faced, fallback solutions developed, etc.)*

Programa Operacional	Dotação Orçamental (milhares de euros)	Nº Máximo de Candidaturas (*)
Competitividade e Internacionalização	500	87
Regional do Norte	100	17
Regional do Centro	200	35
Regional de Lisboa	500	87
Regional do Alentejo	200	35
Regional do Algarve	500	87
Total	2.000	

- (i) Although it is a very hot topic, Circular Economy is still an unknown concept for many. This Voucher created an opportunity for a first interaction with the Circular Economy approach;
- (ii) The Circular Economy Voucher should be understood as a very simplified mechanism within the variety of funding instruments made available by the National and Regional Operational Programmes. There are other instruments for the road ahead;
- (iii) One of the potential levers of CE could be the cooperation between companies and the scientific and technological system;
- (iv) The high demand for the CE voucher should illustrate the ongoing transition process.



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Thank you!

Questions welcome



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