



STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT REPORT

CENTRO REGION (CCDRC), JANUARY 26th 2022

Stakeholder event (semester 5)

The main objective of the Interreg Europe REPLACE project is to improve the management, implementation and monitoring of regional policy instruments targeted at facilitating the transition towards a Circular Economy (CE), while boosting sustainable development by exploiting cross-regional cooperation. To achieve its goal, REPLACE prepared a 4-step based approach: i) Local analysis; ii) Cross-regional synergies; iii) Funding instruments; and iv) Assessment criteria.

Benefiting from the local analysis task, project partners were then able to discuss and identify areas for cross-regional synergies in sectors that could benefit from interregional cooperation. Overall, within the context of the project, considering the strategic economic sectors and the Circular Economy focus of the different participating regions, complementarities were found in the plastics, agri-food, construction, and textile and fashion industries.

As described in Centro region's local analysis report (the summary of this report is available at https://www.interregeurope.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/tx_tevprojects/library/file_1619175436.pdf), Centro, both from a socioeconomic and Circular Economy standpoint, is characterised by the prominence of different manufacturing industries, being the manufacture of plastic products one of the most critical ones.

Given the economic and strategic importance of the manufacturing of plastic products for Centro region, CCDRC, together with the project partners of Hamburg and Fryslân, – who also confirmed the importance of this sector for their region – engaged in coordinated efforts to promote interregional synergies within the plastics value chain.

To prepare this cooperation, at local level, on January 26th 2022, CCDRC organised an online meeting with representatives from CENTIMFE, the Portuguese technological centre for the plastics, mould making and special tooling industry (<https://www.centimfe.com/index.html>). With relevant experience in the field of technical assistance, R&D and technology transfer, as well as in specialised training, CENTIMFE is an active stakeholder in the promotion and development of important foundations for industrial competitiveness based on the Circular Economy and Industry 4.0 approaches at national level.

This meeting had the purpose of identifying opportunities, bottlenecks and the potential of Circular Economy in the plastics value chain, as well as gathering inputs for the cross-regional synergies. It was organised online, via Zoom and had four participants (two people from CCDRC and two people from CENTIMFE).





AGENDA

1. REPLACE Project presentation
 - overall goals and focus of the project
 - contextualizing the value chain based approach
2. Plastics value chain
 - bottlenecks and emerging ideas
 - funding gaps and potential areas for interregional cooperation
3. Definition of next steps

REPORT OF THE DISCUSSION

The meeting started with a brief overview on the project's overall activities (already performed and undergoing), goals and focus, with particular emphasis on the task regarding the promotion of cross-regional synergies in strategic value chains. Given the possibility, within the Interreg Europe Programme, of developing a pilot action focused on activities aligned with the project's approach, the discussion also envisaged the identification of possible activities that could benefit from such support.

Thus, during the discussion, besides confirming the interest in joining the REPLACE effort tackling the plastics value chain through interregional cooperation, CENTIMFE shared some interesting inputs for the development of a potential instrument, like a voucher scheme, to support local beneficiaries active in the plastics value chain (namely, SME, knowledge institutes, research centres, and other institutions). Such inputs could be grouped in the following categories:

- entrepreneurship voucher for start-ups with sustainability solutions (to support business plans development and other initial steps in the business development);
- voucher scheme to support the development of studies by relevant associations (from strategic sectors) to help and inform public policy;
- voucher scheme to support the purchase of innovation services, such as the evaluation of the energetic performance of businesses;
- funding to support the organisation of seminars and events by local entities that are actively involved in raising awareness on Circular Economy;
- Circular Economy Award for a technological solution or innovative idea (open to international stakeholders).

CONCLUSIONS

Given the economic and strategic importance of the manufacturing of plastic products for Centro region, CCDRC, together with the project partners of Hamburg and Fryslân, – who also confirmed the importance of this sector for their region – have been participating in the joint project efforts to promote interregional synergies within the plastics value chain. After this local stakeholder meeting with CENTIMFE, CCDRC confirmed the interest in further developing this task of cross-regional synergies with other and invited CENTIMFE to join the larger stakeholder meeting with other relevant stakeholders from Fryslân and Hamburg to discuss possibilities for interregional cooperation and the promotion of Circular Economy in this value chain.





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ANNEXES

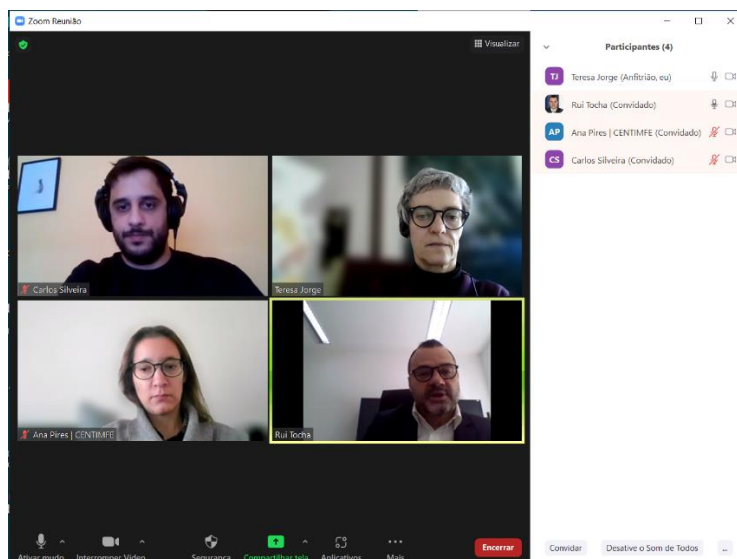


Figure 1 – List of participants



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