

Highlights on Action Plans implementation

Umbria Region - Italy



The AURI Action Plan has made decisive steps towards its full implementation. At the beginning of 2023, the agreement for the implementation of the online platform and the management software for current and future public reuse centres was concluded. Once online a campaign will be launched to extend it to the whole region, and for the operators a training will be organised on the different functionalities of the tool. This action is considered fundamental to coordinate and network the Umbrian reuse centres, which currently communicate little with each other and lack synergies.

Another activity envisaged by the action plan is the collaboration with schools and social services to make reuse centres also places of training and work. Presently there is one agreement in force.

A further action foreseen in the plan is the provision of larger spaces, possibly separate from the recycling centres, to better organise the collection and display activities of the centres' objects, bringing them closer in appearance to first-hand shops. The reuse center in Marsciano has succeeded in this.

Finally, the fourth action provides for regulatory activity to support public reuse centres. A big step forward was the inclusion of reuse centres in the Umbria Region's Integrated Waste Management Plan. The Plan was presented last summer and explicitly envisages - and this is the first time - "the incentivisation of the creation of centres for the reuse/recycling and repair of goods to be promoted through dedicated resources as well as the updating of guidelines on management methods". The plan was first approved in June 2022 and will soon complete its process for final approval.

Goriska Region - Slovenia



During the preparation of the Action Plan, the Operational Programme for Cohesion Policy 2014-2020 was closed, and it was therefore impossible for this Action Plan to influence it.

The RDA Nova Gorica, together with the regional structures, defines the conditions and elaborates the main regional documents, including the Regional Development Programme, and thus the basis for the further development of the region. The bottom-up approach in the drafting of the Operational Programme ensures that regional needs and the development vision are taken into account in its elaboration. During the preparation of the new Regional Development Programme, it was noted that the draft lacked the concretisation of regional projects that were to be financially supported by the Operational Programme, and the Action Plan played an important role in the inclusion of specific re-use projects in the Development Programme 2021-2027. The SUBTRACT Action Plan was presented to the Regional Council on 12 April 2022 and 20 September 2022. The Council is composed of the thirteen mayors of the Northern Primorska (Goriška) region. During the first meeting of the Regional Council, it was agreed that the activities of the Action Plan are in line with the regional development priorities and its contents, and during the second one, the activities of the Action Plan were approved and included in the final version of the Regional Development Programme 2021-2027.

The Action Plan activities are part of the regional project The Green Technology Centre, which was also approved at the national level and is included in the new Operational Programme for the Implementation of Cohesion Policy 2021-2027.

Catalonian Region - Spain



Catalonia's action plan foresees two main actions.

Action 1 - Promotion of re-use and preparation for reuse in the policy instrument, through three main objectives:

- 1) The inclusion of some key articles, including: the provision for the application of good practice benefits, in the field of waste prevention and preparation for reuse of waste generated, establishing plans to ensure the reuse of products, their repair or the separation of their components through social economy organisations, promote product reuse through awareness-raising campaigns aimed at different sectors of the population, mainly shops, restaurants and educational centres, from 2025 onwards, incorporate into the ARC structures a plan for the donation of potentially reusable goods or functional components.
- 2) The establishment of Municipal or Super-Municipal Reuse Centres

The ARC helped to establish the obligation to set up this service and Catalan municipalities will have to do so on the basis of specific parameters relating to the number of inhabitants.

In addition, before 2035, these centres may offer complementary services such as libraries of things, re-use of components or re-use of building materials, without prejudice to repair services.

3) Consolidation of the Catalan Stakeholder Group as an expert group on reuse and preparation for reuse
The stakeholder group created has been consolidated and will continue working to improve the situation of reuse centres and make them more competitive in the current market.

Action 2 - Design of a common platform for the online sale of reused goods in Catalonia: the development of the platform was identified as a possible improvement allowing reuse centres a new source of income and as one of the most important links between reuse centres and citizenship. The new municipal or supra-municipal reuse centres (see action 1) that will be created in the coming years will benefit from the platform and contribute to creating awareness of the reuse sector throughout Catalonia.

Vakin - Sweden



Vakin's is engaged in the implementation of three actions.

Action 1 - Creation of a retail platform with SMEs: a consortium has been created comprising the Municipality of Umeå, Coompanion (a business incubator), Diös (a major property owner) and Vakin. This consortium created the Revolt reuse business centre with SMEs that are working in the field of reuse and sustainability. In addition to this physical environment, the consortium is developing a digital retail platform. Vakin has established a working relationship with several SMEs that have access to specific product groups from Vakin's recycling centres. Examples of product segments are bicycles, household appliances and valuable wood that is used to make wood products.

Action 2 - Improve sorting in recycling centres: in order to increase the fraction of products to be reused, it is important to focus on the layout of recycling centres, how to meet customers and how to make the best use of employees' knowledge. An external consulting company held workshops with Vakin employees on the present functioning of the recycling centre and possible future developments.

Action 3 - Change attitudes and behaviour: a very successful campaign on re-use was implemented with a series of different events and exhibitions. These had a significant impact and raised awareness of reuse among Vakin staff, the public and local politicians. A circular economy education programme focusing on waste and reuse is currently in the works for all employees of Umeå Municipality (16% of Umeå's working population). The programme will start in early 2023.

Helsinki Region - Finland



Action 1 "Combining reuse and recycling collections at the reuse centres" is a pilot project with one unit in operation since February 2022. The use of the facilities is being monitored, and customer surveys are being conducted.

Most of the activities during the reporting period focused on action 2 "Reuse shopping mall". The idea is to create in Helsinki a reuse shopping centre along the lines of a traditional mall based on the principles of circular economy. The final location will be available in 2027. In the meantime a pilot phase has started at the Redi shopping mall in spring 2022. Negotiations were held with several companies and at the end, 40 of them started at the new Second Hand Market store. The store has been accepted well by customers and companies. It is a welcome opportunity for small companies to increase their business and for online stores to have a brick-and-mortar location. Companies are offered business development programmes. The services of the companies are versatile, from lending clothes to second hand, to mending. The concept will be developed further for upscaling in 2023.

Action 3 "Targets for reuse" started with the establishment of a network for reuse. At the planning phase in 2022 several meetings were held with possible participating organisations. The name of the network was decided to be RENEET Uudelleenkäyttöverkostory and there are several committees within the network for example for Quality standard and policy influence. The official papers were signed at the joint meeting in Tampere in November 2022 and the official adhesions of the NGOs were received by mid-January 2023.

Styrian Region - Austria



Styria's action plan consists of two actions. The first "Reuse map and autumn 2022" has been expanded from around 60 reuse shops in January 2022 to the current 93 entries. They are distributed in all 13 districts of Styria. The product range includes household appliances, furniture, bicycles, textiles, books, all kinds of household items, toys and sports equipment. Many reuse shops also offer repair services in their workshops, e.g. for bicycles. In 2022, the online map was visited about 2000 times. To facilitate the registration of new shops, an online form was designed and implemented.

The Autumn of Re-use was organised in close cooperation with Styrian waste management associations and local re-use shops. Seventeen events took place in 10 Styrian districts. About 4,000 persons visited the exhibitions/events of about 50 re-use organisations. The Styrian region allocated about 30,000 euro for these events. The media coverage reached approximately 400,000 people.

Reutilisation Autumn 2023 and the continuation of the Reutilisation Map were included in the work programme of Directorate 14, Styrian Regional Government Office, for 2023 and the appropriate resources have been allocated. Action 1 has been fully implemented and evaluated.

Conception of action 2 "Re-use guide for re-use operators and workshop" took place in March 2022 in consultation with legal experts from the Province of Styria. Already then, the contents were tested in an online training course for re-use operators in cooperation with the Austrian re-use network RepaNet, which

frequently offers online training courses for this sector. The written draft of the guide was presented at a stakeholder workshop where applicability and completeness were discussed. Final approval by the legal department of the Province of Styria is under way. This will be followed by the final draft and online publication.

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Project topics news

Final conference of SUBTRACT: Making re-use centres successful and sustainable enterprises in the social economy



The final conference of the SUBTRACT project took place on 14 October at the headquarters of the Umbria Region in Brussels. SUBTRACT focused on reuse centres as small and medium-sized enterprises, at a particular time when the circular economy in general, and the social economy as a vital element, are receiving special attention from the EU as an innovative guiding principle for a sustainable future of Europe. Presenting and discussing the EU Action Plan for the Social Economy, Simone Schirru, head of social and economic policy with the consultative partner Rreuse, expressed the hope that the plan will provide a coherent legislative framework - to be adopted by the member states where often contradictory rules are in force, and that it will also improve funding with targeted support for the social economy. Project Officer Ilaria Ramaglioni presented data from the last period of Interreg Europe, 2014-2020, which show an impressive success story. The four calls saw the approval of 258 projects that produced 1,244 action plans and mobilised almost EUR 1,300 million in funds, 83% of which were structural funds. The social economy was the focus of only five projects and SUBTRACT was the only one to deal with reuse. The conference concluded with a look at the highlights of the partners' action plans, continuing the discussion with numerous stakeholders. The two topics of interest for all partners were the shopping centre model, taken up by Vakin, Sweden, the Finnish and Slovenian partners, and the promotion of collaboration and marketing through the creation and further development of digital platforms in Catalonia, Styria, Finland and Umbria.

Consortium Partners

AURI - Umbrian Regional
Waste and Water Agency (IT)

Office of the Regional Government of Styria
Directorate 14 – Water Management,
Resources and Sustainability (AT)

RREUSE - Reuse and Recycling
European Union
Social Enterprises (BE)

ARC - Waste Agency
of Catalonia (ES)

Kierrätyskeskus - Helsinki
Metropolitan Area Reuse
Center Ltd (FI)

VAKIN - Water and waste
competence in the north (SE)

Regional Development Agency
of Northern Primorska
Ltd. Nova Gorica (SI)



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