



CircPro

Interreg Europe

NEWSLETTER 1 | May 2019

*Smart Circular Procurement
Finland, Norway, Estonia, Lithuania,
Portugal, Spain, Bulgaria, Italy, Greece, Croatia*

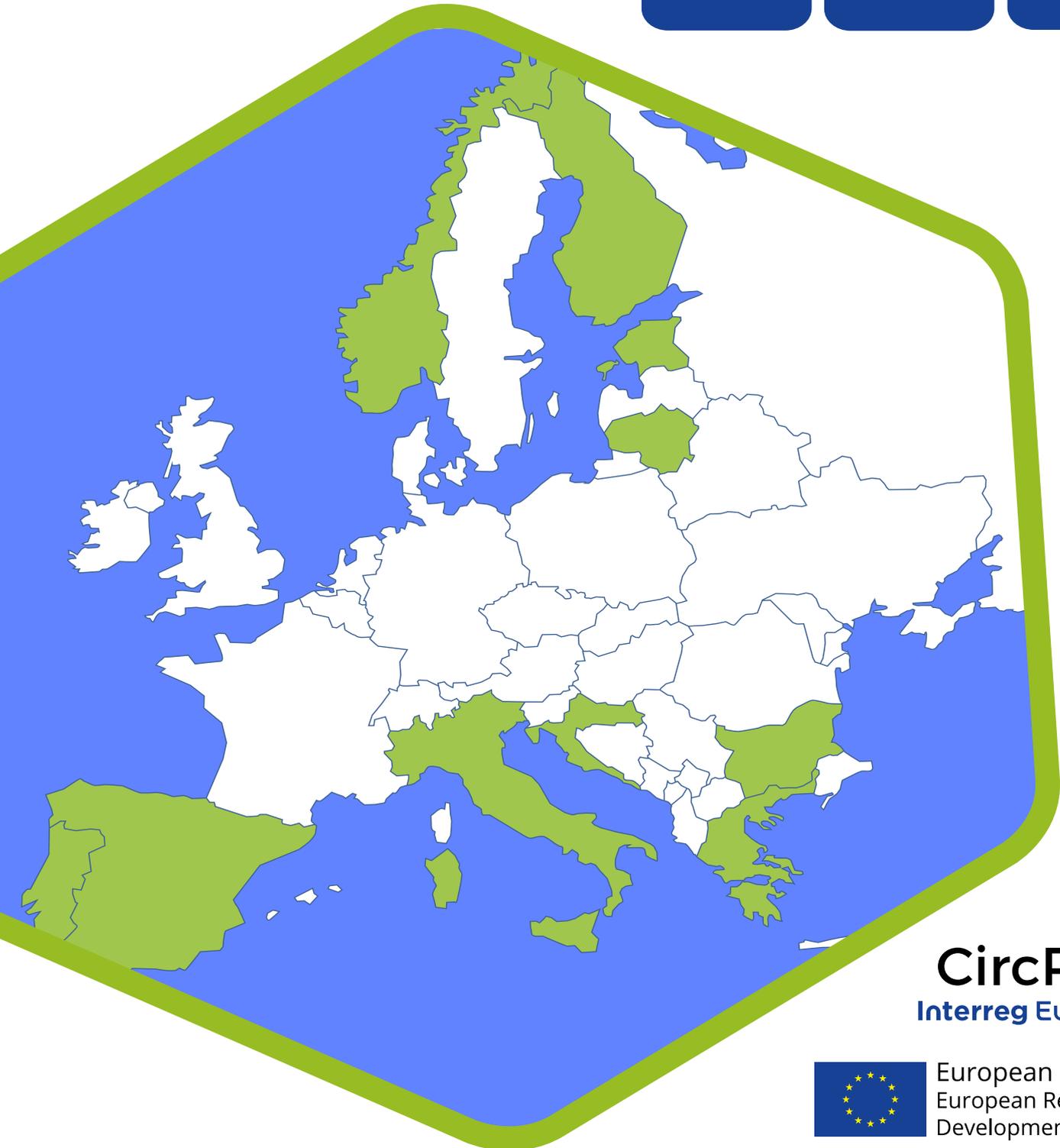
10 REGIONS

11 PARTNERS

PROJECT BUDGET
EUR 1.74 M ERDF

PHASE 1
6/2018 - 5/2021
POLICY LEARNING

PHASE 2
6/2021 - 5/2023
POLICY IMPLEMENTATION



CircPro
Interreg Europe



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund

What is

CircPro?

CircPro's main objective is to increase the implementation of circular procurement under the targeted policy instruments so that the circular economy principles and criteria would be incorporated into them or taken into account as a horizontal principle.

CircPro targets the circular procurement from different approaches that have different complexity: all of which facilitate closed loops, but where the focus shifts from better quality products to new and innovative products and new business concepts. Ultimate goal after the project is to get circular procurement as an established practice of the procurement procedures within the partnership regions' municipalities and towns.

CircPro partnership consisting of 11 partners from 10 regions has identified main barriers that hinder the systematic implementation of the circular procurement in their regions. These are general lack of knowledge and expertise related to circular procurement, procedural and legal barriers, and procurers' preconceptions about using, as well as lack of, recycled materials.

With inter-regional cooperation, we aim to tackle these challenges by:

- ***increasing partner regions' know-how on circular procurement and recycled materials***
- ***identifying, assessing, exchanging and disseminating the existing national/regional initiatives, good practices, supporting measures, pilots and initiatives, main actors, organisations and networks that could boost the implementation of the circular procurement in the regions***
- ***identifying the procedural and legal barriers experienced by procurers and suppliers when implementing procurements with circular elements***
- ***providing a meeting place and enhance dialogue between procurers and suppliers (both groups are represented in the partnership and stakeholders' groups)***
- ***preparing regional Action Plans with specific proposals for improving the existing regional policies, programmes or instruments with their local stakeholder groups.***

Project covers two phases: Phase 1 from June 2018 to May 2021 and Phase 2 from June 2021 to May 2023.

Phase 1 is devoted to inter-regional learning process – identifying, analyzing and exchanging knowledge and practices on circular procurement.

Phase 2 is dedicated to implementing the Action Plans and evaluating their impact.

ALMOST ONE YEAR IN WITHIN THE PROJECT

– what has happened?

Setting up the foundations for exchanging experiences among partners and for involving key stakeholders.

Over the past year, project partners have made significant progress in implementing the project's aim of moving towards circular procurements. This has been made by focusing on activities to promote the exchange of experience between regions and to organize meetings at national/regional level with their key stakeholders (procurers, suppliers, decision-makers and other valid parties) who have shown great interest towards the project and its objectives.

For fostering the interregional learning, each region has been mapping their current operating environment in order to find out whether there are already procurements made with circular elements; who the regional main actors are; and the type of legal and policy framework each region has in place that would

support the implementation of circular procurements. These regional overviews enable us to understand the regional starting points: what are the challenges and opportunities related to implementing circularity into procurements; how different types of procurement and decision-making processes examples and practices could act as an inspiration for other partners; and what are the next steps. The work is ongoing and after further processing, these results will be eventually gathered as practical guidance on circular procurements to the regions.

In addition to the kick-off meeting in Kouvola, Finland in September last year, one of the main events of the first project year was the second interregional partner meeting in Seville, Spain at the end of May, 2019.

Our Spanish partner, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Sustainable Development - Regional Government of Andalusia, hosted the 2-day event that gathered multiple partners, stakeholders and high-level speakers.

Welcoming words for the first day were given by Francisco José Gutiérrez Rodríguez (General Secretary of Environment, Water and Climate Change - Regional Ministry of Agriculture, livestock, fisheries and sustainable

development), José Antonio Miranda Aranda (General Director of economic management and services - Andalusia Health Service) and Manuel Molina Muños (General Manager of the University Hospital Virgen del Rocío).

The day continued with the presentation given by Manuel Huerta Bueno (Andalusia Health Service Environmental Manager) about Andalusia's experience in waste management and circular procurement, which was followed by the presentation about waste characterization in Health Service given by Juan José Verdejo Barrón (Andalusia Regional Manager of Ferrovial Services).

The first day included also a Round table session about the state of the circular procurement where José María Alegre (ANARPLA National recycling plastics association) shared with us the challenges of implementing circular procurement in health service in Andalusia. María Briones Alcañiz (Communication and Documentation service manager - Regional government of Andalusia) told about Andalusia's experiences in another Interreg Europe project GPP-4Growth. Jos Pees (Europa Deceentral) highlighted the current developments in plastics and public procurement within the EU's circular economy framework.





The study visit demonstrated how the separate collection and treatment of non-hazardous waste in Seville's university hospital Virgen del Rocío is managed, and what would be the long-term savings and impacts for local authorities and stakeholders if circular procurement practices would be systematic approach.

The first day ended with a late evening networking get-together with the project partners and accompanying stakeholders in the downtown Seville.





The second day included a programme both for the project partners for checking on the progress and deciding about the next steps of the project, and the stakeholders, who had the chance to visit an E-waste management company RECILEC.



Feedback from the meeting will be collected from the participants for gathering the lessons learnt and also to develop the concept for future partner meetings and study visits.

The next interregional partner meeting with study visit will take place in Evora, Portugal in mid-October 2019. There the theme will be construction and demolition waste.

Finland

Building bridges between the project goals and stakeholders needs in the Kymenlaakso region

The first year of the project has showcased that although circular economy is one of the key strategic focus areas in the Kymenlaakso region, and municipal strategies are currently being updated, or even created, accordingly, circular procurement culture per se is still very much in a nascent stage.

Public procurements are recognized as an important economic instrument and a tool for fostering the growth and vitality of the regional economy. At the same time, adding circularity into purchasing process systematically, in a way that the procurements would generate the desired impacts set for the purchase, and produce quantifiable and qualified information both of the process and results, will be challenging as discussed with our local stakeholders. This requires among

others practical guidance and knowledge building on how, when and why to include circular elements into procurements, and how specific sectoral characteristics need to be considered. At the same time, we need to make sure that circular procurements will be ultimately incorporated into our chosen regional policy instrument that would hence enable valid policy change and in turn would guide e.g. future ERDF funding to the region.

Finding balance between the requirements of the programme, our local stakeholders' needs and heterogeneous expertise and perceptions level towards circular procurements, available resources, lessons learnt from our project partners, and ultimately producing Kymenlaakso's Action Plan

out of these elements will undoubtedly pose some challenges.

Some interesting initiatives regarding the circular economy and procurements are however gradually starting to form in Kymenlaakso. Especially low-carbon construction and how valid procurement practices that foster circularity can be used as enabling tools for reaching the low-carbon targets, is at the moment one of the most promising ones. These types of initiatives create positive atmosphere that Kymenlaakso region's stakeholders are ready to take action towards circular procurement culture, slowly but surely, learning not only by themselves in the process but also providing inspiration for the partners.

Italy

Italian partners presented CircPro at the RePlaCE event

Regione Piemonte, along with the University of Turin, was invited to present CircPro's aims and objectives at "Re-Pla-Ce - From Green economy to sustainable finance", which is an annual event on Circular Economy. The 2019 event took place in Turin, Italy on the 8th of May and was co-organised and hosted by the regional Innovation Cluster Environment Park that is also one of CircPro's regional stakeholders.

The purpose of this edition was to examine the relationship that links the world of economics and finance with that of sustainability, both environmental and social.

The event, that gathered around 100 participants, had speeches by:

- financial rating sector experts who explained the assumptions that justify a positive evaluation of an investment and what the current orientation of the major savings funds is;
- investment fund delegates who cleared up benefits connected to Green investments and the operating methods adopted to implement them;

- speakers of the industrial sector who reported first-hand experiences on the new policies adopted to improve their assets and obtain benefits linked to competition on the markets as well as access to credit;

- professionals belonging to the technical and legal sector who analyzed the tools needed for the implementation of the new system and the useful regulatory solutions for neutralizing the so called "Administrative risk";

- representatives of the public institutions who evaluated administrative and bureaucratic benefits

and obstacles that green enterprises can face both in relation to procurement activities and rules of public office; in this slot CircPro project partners Regione Piemonte and University of Turin presented to the audience the challenges and objectives related to their participation to CircPro where the aim is to promote the transition to a more circular economy by establishing a fruitful collaboration with territorial stakeholders, by involving regional decision-makers, and by increasing the knowledge of the circular procurement in order to implement it in public procurement processes.



Bulgaria

A successful start in Bulgaria

Two major events marked the successful start of the CircPro project in Bulgaria - The first stakeholder meeting in November 2018 and the presentation of the project to a large audience of the Round Table, organized by the Bulgarian Recycling Association in March, this year.

The first stakeholder meeting was attended by representatives of government, business and non-governmental sector. The event aimed to present the project's objectives and activities, various business models of the circular economy, good practices and successful examples of green entrepreneurship. The meeting participants discussed the regional challenges related to Circular Economy and Circular Procurements. At the end, all stakeholders declared strong support and co-operation for achieving project's aims and objectives.

Third annual Round table of the Association again brought together experts, companies from the recycling sector, representatives of the European Commission, European Parliament, National Assembly, Ministry of Environment and water environments, organizations and institutions at European and national level. Conference "Circular economy - introducing recycling sector" was a great opportunity for the hosts to present to the general public the key aspects in the project CircPro, which fully meets the needs of the new time of transition from linear to circular economy.



Croatia

Already planning the meeting in Croatia in 2021

Inspired by the Partner Meeting in Seville, Development Agency IGRA and its main stakeholder and founder, the Town of Ivanić-Grad, has started to make plans for the meeting in Croatia to be held in 2021. Ivanić-Grad is a small town 35 km southeast from the Croatian capital Zagreb with 14,500.00 inhabitants in the wider area.

Since the circular procurement concept is still unknown in the region, participation of the local development agency IGRA in the CircPro project is of a great importance for developing and implementing the circular practices into the Town and its affiliates' public procurement processes.

Bearing in mind the primarily rural characteristics of the region, agriculture and food sector could offer the best opportunity for presenting inspiring initiatives to the CircPro project partners.



Lithuania

Number of Challenges to win in Lithuania

In Europe, the spread of circular economy ideas is increasing, and in Lithuania, government and business representatives and consumers are still not well prepared to accept them. This was revealed during a recent stakeholder meeting organized by the Lithuanian Innovation Center and Lithuanian Confederation of Industrialists.

The businessmen involved in the discussion admitted that the new legislative changes in Europe could have a negative impact on the entire plastic industry in our country. The high demands made by the EU are a source of concern for local producers, as there are still no solutions available to help the manufacturers most affected by the Plastics Directive. The country's business will have to invest a lot to reorient the production of new products.

There are a number of barriers to the development of a circular economy - cultural, market, technology, regulatory - the market and regulation of which are most difficult to overcome. Participants in the discussion agreed that the implementation of the circular economy is a very complex process that should be supported by both

manufacturers and consumers themselves. By choosing environmentally friendly products, the latter form the demand for such products. If there were greater interest in society and intolerance of unsafe products, the business would adapt to it and offer new alternatives to the market, because of the four barriers to the circular economy, technological barriers are the easiest to overcome. Therefore, the further implementation of the circular economy will be impossible without the joint efforts of business, government

and society to move towards more environmentally friendly production.

An important tool for the implementation of the circular economy may be circular procurement. However, the representative of the Public Procurement Office noticed that circular procurement is not legally defined, and even green procurements still represent only a very small proportion of the total public procurement in the country.



Norway

Elverum: We want a CPP policy based on reliable facts and updated statistics

The Norwegian CircPro partners - Elverum Municipality - together with our stakeholders in Sør-Østerdal have made a detailed study of carbon emissions by sectors and activities in our municipalities. The study is based on all available statistics and modern calculation methods, and it is made in collaboration with the consulting company Asplan Viak. The study was presented now at the beginning of May 2019. The main source of the statistical basis comes from Statistics Norway - the Norwegian State Statistics Authority.



"The report will be used as background material for both the CP context, and our work within the climate," says Ane Christensen Tange - coordinator for policies related to sustainable energy and climate, as well as for CPP. "When it comes to discussing and adopting policies, strategies, and action plans at a political level in the Municipalities, it is crucial to agree on basic facts. This will be easier with such a report."

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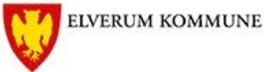
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Kouvola.Innovation



An interregional cooperation project for improving resource-efficient economy policies.



PARTNERS

- Finland (Kouvola Innovation Oy)
- Bulgaria (Bulgarian Association of Recycling)
- Spain (Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, Regional Government of Andalusia)
- Italy (Piemonte Region & University of Turin)
- Greece (Region of East Macedonia and Thrace)
- Croatia (Development Agency IGRA)
- Lithuania (Lithuanian Innovation Centre)
- Norway (Municipality of Elverum)
- Portugal (Alentejo Coordination and Regional Development Commission)
- Estonia (Stockholm Environment Institute Tallinn Centre)

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REGIONS

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PARTNERS

For more information: www.interregeurope.eu/circpro