

Final report

Urban Agenda for the EU on Circular Economy

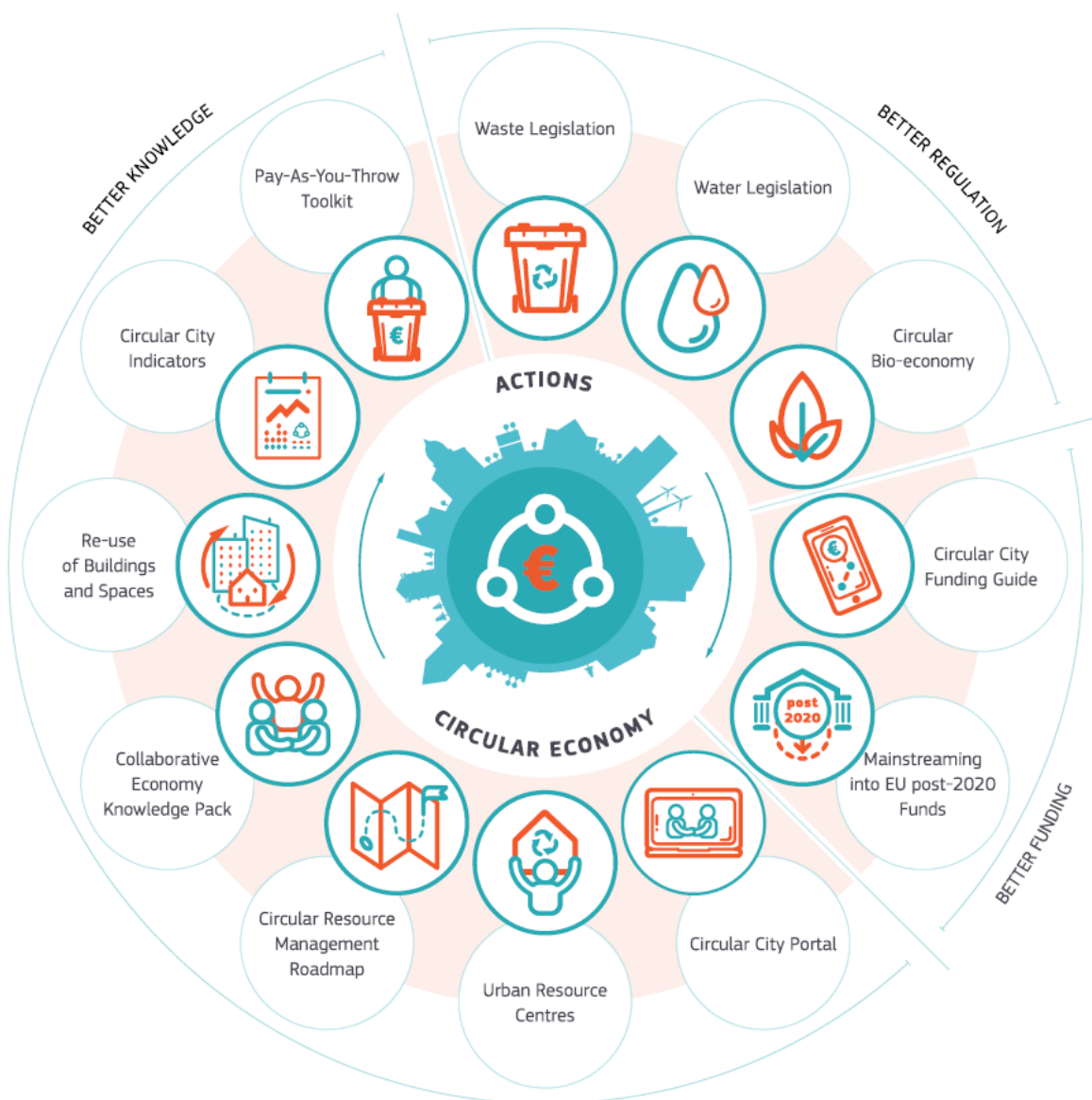


Table of contents

Executive Summary	3
1 INTRODUCTION	6
1.1 The Urban Agenda Partnership on Circular Economy	6
1.2 The circular city context	8
2 ACTIONS	11
2.1 Better Regulation	11
Action 1 - Help make waste legislation support the circular economy in cities	11
Action 2 - Help make water legislation support the circular economy in cities	14
Action 3 - Analyse the regulatory obstacles and drivers for boosting an urban circular bioeconomy	16
2.2 Better Funding	18
Action 4 - Prepare a Circular City Funding Guide to assist cities in accessing funding for circular economy projects	18
Action 5 - Mainstreaming the circular economy as an eligible area into the post 2020 Cohesion Policy and corresponding Funds	20
2.3 Better Knowledge	23
Action 6 - Prepare a blueprint for a Circular City Portal	23
Action 7 - Promote Urban Resource Centres for waste prevention, re-use and recycling	27
Action 8 - Develop a 'Circular Resource Management' Roadmap for cities	30
Action 9 - Collaborative Economy Knowledge Pack for Cities	32
Action 10 - Manage the re-use of buildings and spaces in a circular economy	36
Action 11 - Develop City Indicators for Circular Economy	39
Action 12 - Circular Economy Financial Incentives - Develop a "Pay-as-you-throw" (PAYT) toolkit with coaching	42
3 Impact of the Partnership's work	45
3.1 From the orientation paper to the 12 actions	45
Consolidated report "Mainstream Circular Economy into the post 2020 Cohesion Policy and Corresponding Funds	46
3.2 Further impact beyond the scope of the action plan	47

Disclaimer

The information and views contained in the present document are those of the Partnership and do not reflect the official opinion of the European Commission nor that of the Partners. The Commission and the Partners do not guarantee the accuracy of the information contained therein. Neither the Commission, the Partners, nor any person acting on the Commission's or on the Partners' behalf may be held responsible for the content and the use which may be made of the information contained therein.

Executive Summary

European cities are uniquely positioned to address complex problems through practical experimentation and innovation. The transition to a circular economy requires multi-level governance and new visions of what the future city could look like. Therefore, involvement at a local level is crucial for the transformation from the traditional linear approach to a circular strategy.

The Urban Agenda for the EU Partnership on Circular Economy therefore worked on 12 actions in which cities could have an important impact in reaching the Circular Economy goals of the member states and the European Commission.

Actions	Short description	Outputs
Better Regulation		
Help make waste legislation support the circular economy in cities	<i>In order to keep products and materials in the economic cycle and prevent them from going to waste, the use of secondary resources needs to be supported by a regulatory framework for waste around a consistent material hierarchy.</i>	Booklet on Better Regulation
Help make water legislation support the circular economy in cities	<i>Sustainability in the water sector is a major concern and compliance with the current legislation alone does not seem to be enough to face major challenges like climate change or urban population growth.</i>	Position paper submitted to the European Parliament
Analyse the regulatory obstacles and drivers for boosting an urban circular bioeconomy	<i>This action has identified some regulatory obstacles and drivers contained in specific EU legislations influencing the value chain producing bio-based products from urban bio-waste and wastewater.</i>	Survey report on regulatory obstacles and drivers for boosting a sustainable and circular urban biobased economy Booklet on Better Regulation
Better Funding		
Prepare a Circular City Funding Guide to assist cities in accessing funding for circular economy projects	<i>Cities can be both cradles and catalysts for circular development. The Circular City Funding Guide is a tool that will improve access to funding for circular projects and companies in cities. This will contribute to scaling and speeding up the circular transition in cities.</i>	Interactive funding platform available here: http://www.circularcityfundingguide.eu/



Actions	Short description	Outputs
Mainstream the circular economy as an eligible area into the post 2020 Cohesion Policy and corresponding Funds	<i>It is essential for the European Union to mainstream the circular economy into its policies and particularly into the Cohesion Policy (which through its corresponding Funds amounting around 1/3 of the total EU Multiannual Financial Framework), can provide the required impetus for the promotion of the transition towards circular economy starting from the urban level.</i>	Final report with recommendation and position paper.
Better Knowledge		
Prepare a blueprint for a Circular City Portal	<i>The 'Circular City Portal' is an openly shared knowledge database, inspiring and guiding cities in their journey towards a circular economy. Additionally, an integrated and visually developed governance concept links all other actions within the Urban Partnership on Circular Economy, and potentially other Partnership's related actions.</i>	The blueprint is integrated in the European Stakeholder Platform and the City portal is accessible here: Circular city governance portal
Promote Urban Resource Centres for waste prevention, re-use and recycling	<i>Urban Resource Centres are the testbeds for circular solutions at city level keeping in mind that the policy challenges hindering the implementation needs to be addressed at European level.</i>	Classification of different approaches to Urban Resource Centres. URBACT APN Resourceful Cities established
Develop a Circular Resource Management Roadmap for cities	The Roadmap for a Circular Resource Efficiency Management plan offers cities and urban areas a structured, step-by-step approach to develop a substantiated plan of action that improves resource efficiency and drives the transition to a circular economy .	Roadmap for circular resource efficiency in cities Concept note on test-driving the roadmap
Develop a Collaborative Economy Knowledge Pack for cities	<i>Understanding the workings of the Collaborative Economy as the means to achieve Circular Economy objectives empowers cities and regions to reap most benefit of this new economic paradigm.</i>	Final reports on Urban Circular Collaborative Initiatives
Manage the re-use of buildings and spaces in a Circular Economy	<i>The urban regeneration process passes through changes in society and the industrial area, being able to respond effectively to changes and the emerging needs of a city, with tailored solutions.</i>	The Handbook produced by the Partnership on Circular Economy and



Actions	Short description	Outputs
		Partnership on Sustainable Land Use The handbook has been translated to Italian and Catalan.
Develop City Indicators for a Circular Economy	<i>Transition towards circular economy depends on a significant part on the transition taking place in cities (and metropolitan area). Indicators that are Relevant, Accepted, Credible, Easy to monitor and Robust against manipulation (RACER) need to be made accessible for cities.</i>	Issues and mapping paper – Indicators for circular economy transition in cities
Develop a “ Pay-as-you-throw ” toolkit with coaching	<i>Although PAYT is identified as a useful tool for cities, cities have experienced several barriers in introducing and the use of PAYT. This Action has addressed some of these barriers by developing a toolkit for use of PAYT. For cities, PAYT can be an effective option for waste reduction, source separation and an essential first step to produce clean streams and consequently increase recycling</i>	“Pay-as-you-throw”-Toolkit

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Urban Agenda Partnership on Circular Economy

Cities play an essential role in the development of a circular economy; they act as enablers of potential measures by which they can influence both the citizens and the businesses. Moreover, overall governance, enabling businesses, public procurement, consumption, and resource management are the themes that bear upon the development of circular economy concepts within cities.

European cities are uniquely positioned to address complex problems through practical experimentation and innovation. The transition to a circular economy requires multi-level governance and new visions of what the future city could look like. Therefore, involvement at a local level is crucial for the transformation from the traditional linear approach to a circular strategy.

Cities are the drivers of innovation, but also the battleground for many of the societal struggles of the 21st century, as emphasised in the United Nations agreements both the New Urban Agenda ¹ and the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development ². The **Urban Agenda for the EU** helps to ensure that these facts are acknowledged and reflected in the EU legislation, funding and knowledge sharing.

The Urban Agenda is composed of **14 priority themes** essential to the development of urban areas. Each theme has a dedicated Partnership. These Partnerships bring together cities, member states and European institutions. Together, they aim to implement the Urban Agenda by finding workable ideas focused on the topics of EU legislation, funding and knowledge sharing. One of these Partnerships is the **Partnership on Circular Economy**.

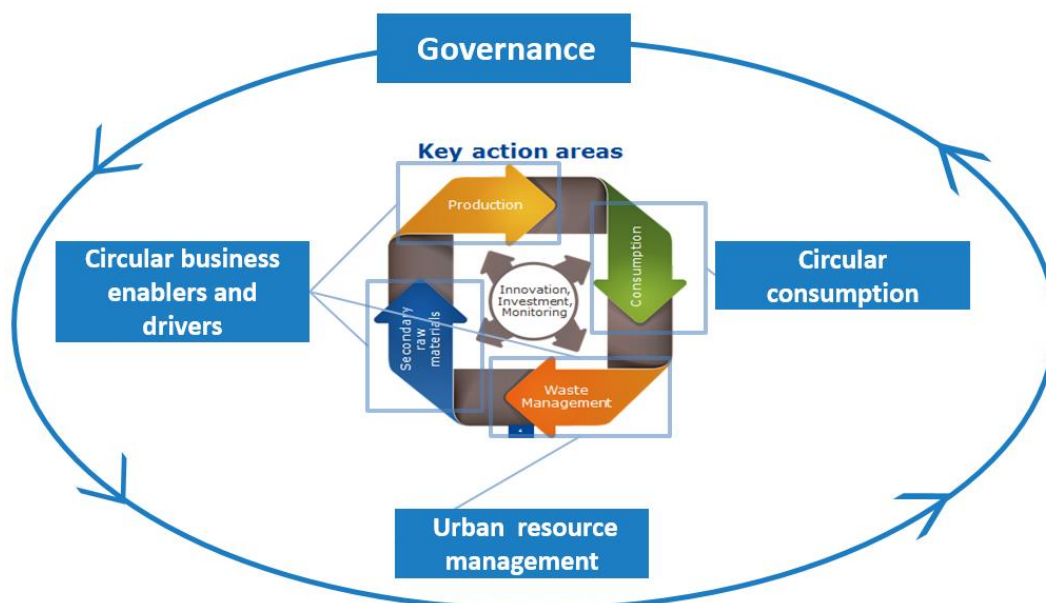
Objective

The Partnership on Circular Economy has looked into the whole circle, starting with the extraction of raw materials to the design, production, transportation, consumption and, finally, the recycling of waste with residues for final disposal.

¹ <https://unhabitat.org/new-urban-agenda-adopted-at-habitat-iii/>

² <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/development-agenda/>

Figure 1 Partnerships focus within the Circular Economy



However, given time and resource constraints, this scope had to be limited, and the Partnership has focused on the parts of the circle which are most relevant to cities and which they have the greatest potential to influence. To choose among several potential topics and actions, a set of criteria have functioned as guidelines in their screening and evaluation:

- Cities' needs – the urban dimension clearly reflect cities' needs;³
- Fit the concept of the Circular Economy – as put forward by the Commission in the Circular Economy Package on 02.12.2015;⁴
- Potential for improvement – give the greatest potential for improvements in relation to Better Regulation, Better Funding and Better Knowledge;
- Reality check – are feasible and can be realistically implemented;
- Expertise – it is possible for the Partnership to mobilise the necessary expertise needed;
- Added value – that add unique value to this Partnership, and cannot, or are not, being undertaken easily by other Partnerships/initiatives, stakeholders, etc.

In the Orientation stage, the following themes were selected by the Partnership:

- Circular consumption
- Urban resource management
- Circular business enablers and drivers
- Governance

³ ESPON, Interact, Interreg Europe and URBACT – Pathways to a circular economy in cities and regions. Policy brief addressed to policy makers from European cities and regions, October 2016

⁴ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Closing the loop - An EU action plan for the Circular Economy, December 2015

Based on an extensive scoping phase, the Partnership proposed an Action Plan with 12 different Actions which was approved in November 2018 by the Directorate General on Urban Matters.

Partnership members

The Circular Economy Partnership consists of six urban authorities, namely the City of Oslo, The Hague, Prato, Porto, Kaunas and Flanders region. The partners which are EU member states are Finland, Poland, Slovenia and Greece. The European Commission (DG REGIO, DG ENV, DG CLIMA, DG RTD, DG GROW), the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR), EUROCITIES, URBACT, the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the Association of Cities and Regions for sustainable Resource management (ACR+) are also partners.

Activities

The Partnership have had a total of 14 Partnership meetings throughout the three years. In addition, several partners have been present at different conferences and seminars to present the work of the Partnership. This includes:

- The World Circular Economy Forum, Finland
- 1st OECD Roundtable on the Circular Economy in Cities and Regions, Paris
- The World Resource Forum, Antwerp
- ISWA World Congress, Bilbao
- UNECE Working Party on Public-Private Partnerships, Geneva
- Green Week, Brussels
- Week of Cities and Regions, Brussels
- Cities Forum, Rotterdam
- URBACT City Festival, Lisbon
- 10th Annual Forum of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region 2019, Gdansk
- Cities Forum 2020, Porto

The Partnership have also had regular conference calls with Action Leaders and within the Working Groups of the different Actions.

1.2 The circular city context

In Europe, over 70 per cent of the population live in cities and with increasing urbanisation, the share of the population living in cities is expected to increase to 85% in Europe⁵. On a global scale, cities generate about 85% of GDP and they consume about 70% of global resources and 70% of all energy generated. Furthermore, about 70% of all greenhouse gases are emitted in cities and they generate about 50% of all waste.

Cities have a density and concentration of producing businesses and consuming citizens that generate material and resource flows with a big circular potential. Most cities also have a scale that on the one hand enables quick decisions, building on the autonomous power to regulate and

⁵ <https://population.un.org/wup/Download>

incentivise, and on the other hand is large enough to enable the establishment of new circular city functions and services, and circular business models. Said in other words, cities are big enough to make a difference and small enough to make it happen.

Cities also have infrastructures, utilities and services with circular potential. What is also relevant is that cities have administrations that can define and communicate a circular vision, define a circular strategy and embed circular principles in city functions and services, and thus create a good framework for the circular transition. City administrations can also lead by example, e.g. offering and/or procuring circular solutions and services.

Finally, city administrations have the ability to build awareness of circularity and promote a culture of collaboration among all stakeholders. In summary, a circular city is not the sum of its circular activities. It must also fully realise and exploit its potential to be a cradle for circular development and use its governance tools and levers as catalysts for circular change.

In 2018, an explorative study on Circular City Governance was commissioned by the EIB to support the work of the Partnership. The researchers interviewed several front running cities in Europe on their current barriers and governance practices in their circular city transition. Below you find the key findings, in the form of shared opportunities and challenges.

Figure 2 Key findings of the explorative study on Circular City Governance in the form of opportunities

OPPORTUNITIES

- 1 Develop and communicate a long-term, holistic vision about the circular ambitions of the city
- 2 Introduce cross-thematic coordination and promote a culture of cooperation and knowledge exchange and creation within the own municipal organisation.
- 3 Identify, address and include non-municipal stakeholders early on in the transition process (e.g. businesses, knowledge institutes, citizens) - in order to craft the process to come to circularity within an urban context, together.
- 4 Analyse the urban metabolism (material and energy streams, bio-sources and sinks) as a basis for developing a strategic plan for the CE transition with contextualised priority sectors.
- 5 Use circular public procurement to create demand for circular innovations.
- 6 Educate consumers (and other stakeholders) in civil society and more in particular cities based on an inclusive and participatory approach. In order for the CE to thrive in an urban context, co-creation from the start with citizens is crucial.
- 7 Identify external sources of funding/financing for CE initiatives and projects available at EU and/or national level to complement the cities' own budgetary sources and get acquainted with their rules and procedures.
- 8 Facilitate appropriate spaces and funding for experimentation, (private) innovation, knowledge transfers and match-making in the field of CE for businesses, research institutions and interested citizens.
- 9 Create forums with like-minded cities at the national (and possibly also at EU) level to lobby for necessary changes in EU and national legislation that currently block the transition to a CE.
- 10 Continuous monitoring and evaluation of implementation of circular projects and initiatives, with the aim to develop a solid knowledge base and provide feedback to guide/adjust the transition process.

Figure 3 Key findings of the explorative study on Circular City Governance in the form of challenges

CHALLENGES

- 1 Political support is key in creating a common long term vision on circular economy developments.
- 2 Confusion and a wide range of interpretations on what the circular economy is, what the transition to a circular economy requires, and why it is relevant.
- 3 The circular economy is often only regarded from a waste or environmental management perspective, instead of from a wider multi-sectoral economic development perspective.
- 4 Circular projects require new and far-reaching levels of cooperation and coordination amongst all stakeholders involved. This is difficult to organise and maintain.
- 5 Citizens awareness and participation is very low.
- 6 There are insufficient funds available to support circular projects and programmes.
- 7 Private innovation power for circular companies can be insufficient.
- 8 City development strategies are currently often made in silos.
- 9 The current tax system obstructs circular development.
- 10 Current (waste) legislation hinders innovative reuse and/ or recycling of products and materials.

The Partnership has been given a very broad remit. From the beginning, the Partnership has been clear not to be developing the ultimate guide towards a circular economy. Neither has the Partnership been able to identify all the barriers or bottlenecks that cities experience. Nevertheless, the Partnership has, based on the expertise and knowledge obtained throughout its work, identified several actions and recommendations to be put forward to the EU, Member States, and cities. To summarise, these actions and recommendations touch upon some of the most important barriers, and provide advice for cities in their work towards a strategy for circular economy.

2 ACTIONS

2.1 Better Regulation

The Partnership has identified several barriers in existing water, waste and bio legislations. Concrete proposals for change of articles was delivered to the Commission and other relevant EU institutions. However, the overall findings through the stocktaking and working on the actions have been that existing legislation is not optimal for a circular economy. The main focus of the existing legislation is to protect human health and the environment. Which is of course extremely important and the legislations put in to force the last 40 years have done exactly what they are meant for, reducing pollution as risk for humans and nature.

Most of the legislation is end of pipe legislation. Which is not enough or optimal for a Circular Economy thinking. The Partnership has as a result raised the more fundamental question on how an optimal legislation should be to support the circular economy in 2035. This is a big challenge, both for The Commission, the EU Parliament and the member states.

Action 1 - Help make waste legislation support the circular economy in cities

In order to keep products and materials in the economic cycle and prevent them from going to waste, the use of secondary resources needs to be supported by a regulatory framework for waste around a consistent material hierarchy.



Waste Legislation

Scope and working method

The recent revision of the Waste Framework Directive and associated regulations (2018) primarily aim at improving existing policies and regulations. A logical first step for this particular action of the Partnership was to conduct a more in-depth assessment of the (revised) legal and policy frameworks in order to gather more precise and comprehensive information on the regulatory obstacles and drivers for boosting the use of secondary raw materials from waste streams.

Furthermore, an extensive survey was conducted to collect inputs from urban practice in terms of obstacles and barriers as well as drivers and opportunities. A draft position paper with a set of recommendations was prepared and used as base for the booklet on better regulation.

Drivers and Barriers

For drivers, if we want to build a regulatory framework that is consistent with the goals of the circular economy, then we need to complement the current risk-based approach to waste management with a value-based approach. It is however important to stress that this action on waste legislation will not remove the obstacles and barriers on its own. This action has to be placed within the context of a broader set of measures that drive waste prevention, resource efficiency and the use of secondary resources from waste streams, such as those regarding financial incentives, product design standards, planned obsolescence, procurement, etc.

Two main barriers have been identified by the Partnership:

1. The regulatory framework for waste is very much risk oriented which makes it very difficult to divert products and materials away from the waste stream and back into the economic cycle. Once a product or material is labelled as waste, it is very complicated to relabel it as a secondary resource.
2. Current regulatory frameworks for product design and producer responsibility do not provide the proper incentives for eco-design and innovation aimed at for example prolonging the life span of products or making it easier to disassemble products for refurbishment, reuse and recycling.

Product

[Booklet on Better Regulation](#)

Potential impact

- Creation of new value chains based on secondary resources, circular business opportunities in cities, and reduction of costs of waste collection and treatment.
- Reduction of carbon footprint and increased resource efficiency by reducing use of virgin materials and promoting the use of secondary resources.

The necessary next steps

This Partnership Action on waste legislation has produced a position paper with a set of recommendations for future action. An important next step would be to support these recommendations with proof of concept, which will have to be developed from practical experience. For example, one line of thought touches upon the current waste definitions and the 'end of waste' procedures by developing a hands-on toolkit for setting standards (including those for public health and environment) to divert end-of-life products and materials away from the waste stream, and keep them in the economic cycle as secondary resources for re-use and recycling. In the recent past, the Dutch institute for public health and environment has already experimented with this in their 'safe loops' project.

Recommendations from the Partnership to the EU Commission

- Complement the current risk-based approach to waste management with a consistent value-based approach to foster the uptake of waste as secondary resources.
- Develop practical proof of concept of these complementary approaches by test-driving/prototyping a hands-on toolkit for setting standards for the reuse and recycling of end-of-life products and materials.
- Put in place a strong legislative framework for eco-design that is in line with the circular economy and sets minimum standards for reparability and disassembly for refurbishment, reuse and recycling.
- Look at possibilities to make EPR schemes more effective drivers for innovation in product design.

How will this help the new Circular Economy working program of the European Commission?

Waste prevention and resource efficiency are key objectives in a circular economy. Cities, as urban waste managers, play a central role in realising these objectives. Recognising that a risk-based approach and a value-based approach are basically two sides of the same coin, will help cities

maximise the value of products and materials while minimising waste. This shift from waste management to resource management is at the heart of the resource efficiency goals that the Commission has set.

Where to find more information

- Booklet on Better Regulation developed by the Partnership, [available here](#).

Connection to the SDGs and contributions to better governance



Better Governance: Implementing the recommendations of this Action will encourage and enable cities and businesses to innovate and develop resource efficient business opportunities in the transition towards a circular economy.

Action 2 - Help make water legislation support the circular economy in cities

Sustainability in the water sector is a major concern, and compliance with the current legislation alone does not seem to be enough to face major challenges like climate change or urban population growth.



Water Legislation

Scope and Output

The Partnership considered the issue of water reuse as key factor at urban level. Discussion among the members of the Partnership as well a recognition of legislative barriers at European and at national level were carried out in order to propose an effective action. Meanwhile, in 2018, a proposal for “Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on minimum requirements for water reuse” was presented. In the European Parliament, the rapporteur, Simona Bonafè, submitted her draft report at the end of September 2018. The Partnership welcomed the proposal and, after consultation with relevant stakeholders (e.g. EUROCITIES, EurEau) decided to deliver a position paper in January 2019.

Drivers and Barriers

The position paper provides the following comments and proposal of integration:

- The regulation should include, among the classes of destination, water reuse for civil purposes (e.g. street and car washing; watering of flowerbeds, public gardens and parks). For each purpose, it should be crucial to define distinct levels of quality, according to the foreseen impact on human health and environment.
- Requirements are realistic and vary in a reasonable manner in correspondence with the different types of crops and destination.
- The competent authority should be in charge of overseeing the risk management in collaboration with the entities responsible for water reuse projects, operators of reclamation facilities and users. In order to guarantee a standardisation in risk management, the regulation should expressly indicate to refer to international recognised standards.
- In order to ensure that the reclaimed water is safe, thus protecting citizens and the environment, a collaboration among the reclaimed plant operator and food operators could create positive industrial symbiosis.

The draft legislation was adopted by the European Parliament in February 2019 with 588 votes in favour. The amended texts, adopted by the European Parliament, met with our position paper.

Potential impact

Main potential sustainability impacts are:

- Social – The use of reclaimed water creates strong social relationships among the involved local actors, end-users, including surrounding neighbourhoods.
- Financial – Reclamation activity needs to be considered as part of a wider water reuse project, involving several actors and stakeholders. Need to address the interconnection of all waters (freshwater supply, rain, rivers, and wastewater), and link it with other urban areas

(parks, roads, energy and waste) so that efficiencies and circular synergies arise from a coordinated approach.

- Environmental – At local level, with several activities and productive processes, many different by-products are generated (e.g. wastewater, among them), and the range of potential uses can be equally various, according circular economy principles.

How will this help the new Circular Economy Action Plan (March 2020) of the European Commission?

Ensuring a more broadly reuse of treated wastewater could limit extraction from water bodies and groundwater. An integrated approach in terms of water supply, wastewater treatment and drainage services need to be followed to protect the environment and biodiversity, together with the safeguard citizens' health and wellbeing.

Recommendations from the Partnership to the EU Commission

The following recommendations are addressed to DG ENV and DG RTD:

- The goal of a more sustainable water cycle at urban level needs new infrastructures and the definition of innovative policies.
- Definition of specific funding programs to stimulate innovation and R&D support innovation in reclamation technologies at urban level and the up-skilling of professionals in the water sector.
- New regulation on water reuse needs to be broadly communicated to member state level through information campaigns. The aim is to raise awareness among end users and citizens about the saving of water resources resulting from the reuse of urban wastewater and the controls able to guarantee conformity of water.

The necessary next steps

Workshops at national level, inviting policy makers, stakeholders, authorities and treatment plants in order to discuss the possible applications of the new regulation at territorial level, is a possibility, also after the end of the partnership.

Where to find more information

- Position paper developed by the Partnership, [available here](#).
- Proposed text by the European Parliament, [available here](#).

Connection to the SDGs



Action 3 - Analyse the regulatory obstacles and drivers for boosting an urban circular bioeconomy

This Action presents the feedback of experts on regulatory obstacles and drivers contained in specific EU legislations influencing the production of bio-based products from urban bio-waste and wastewater.



Circular
Bio-economy

Scope and working method

The scope of this Action is to present to EU legislators the direct feedback from experts, operating in the value chain producing bio-based products from urban bio-waste and wastewater, on how specific EU legislations influence the production of bio-based products from urban bio-waste and wastewater. A report is written based on a survey carried out by the Partnership on Circular Economy between 2018 and 2019. The survey involved experts from cities, industries and academia working on this value chain.

Drivers and barriers

The 2018 EU Circular Economy package presents some regulatory drivers to boost an urban circular bioeconomy; for example, it supports the separate collection of bio-waste and limits landfilling. Although progress has been made, barriers have been identified that may impede the valorisation of urban bioresources. The survey report contains experts' recommendations on how to improve the circularity of specific elements contained in the EU regulation in order to support the production of bio-based products from urban bio-waste and wastewater.

Potential impact

The survey report provides the basis for further analysis and discussion on how the existing EU regulation can be improved to support the development of this value chain, staying at the heart of an urban circular bioeconomy in European cities. Urban bio-waste and wastewater contain valuable substances that urban waste-based biorefineries can process into innovative biowaste-based products such as chemicals, plastics, fertilisers and feed ingredients.

How will this help the new Circular Economy Action plan of the European Commission?

The survey report contains inputs for the analysis of EU legislators to improve the circularity of the EU legislation with special reference to the production of bio-based products from urban bio-waste and wastewater, including the EU Circular Economy Action Plan.

Recommendation from the Partnership to the EU Commission

The Partnership recommends the EU legislators to get information on how specific EU legislation is influencing the current production of bio-based products from urban bio-waste and wastewater. The direct feedback from experts in this report provides a useful basis in order to improve the circularity of the EU legislation on this policy area.

The necessary next steps

- The survey report will be shared with the European Commission.

- A brochure containing some of the key messages of the main report will be disseminated among relevant organisations and stakeholders.

Where to find more information

- The full survey report is [available here](#).
- Link to the [Booklet on Better Regulation](#)

Connection to the SDGs



This Action contributes most to the Sustainable Development Goals 6, 11, 12 and 13.

2.2 Better Funding

The transition to a circular economy in cities requires funding for circular solutions. Increasing awareness about different funding sources and ensuring that EU funding properly acknowledges the need for circular funding are the goals of the two Better Funding Actions.

Action 4 - Prepare a Circular City Funding Guide to assist cities in accessing funding for circular economy projects

Cities can be both cradles and catalysts for circular development. The Circular City Funding Guide is a tool that will improve access to funding for circular projects and companies in cities. This will contribute to scaling and speeding up the circular transition in cities.



Circular City
Funding Guide

Scope of the Action and output

The Circular City Funding Guide is a web site with information and resources that will help cities and project promoters identify and access suitable sources of funding for their circular projects. The Guide also provides guidance on how to design and set up effective funding schemes for circular city projects. The Guide covers funding for project preparation and implementation and for capacity and public awareness building. It also features case studies showcasing good practice circular actions and funding solutions.

Drivers and barriers

The main barrier justifying this Action is the difficulties experienced by many cities and companies in securing funding for their circular projects. This can be explained both by challenges in preparing bankable circular projects, and by challenges for funding institutions to relate to the particularities of new circular business models.

Potential impact of the Action

The Guide is expected to increase awareness on circular funding among fund seekers (public and private promoters of circular projects in cities), funding providers, cities with varying circular experience, other CE stakeholders facilitating and supporting circular project developments and funding. In addition, the Guide will help to raise public awareness about Circular Economy initiatives in cities and enable more projects and measures to be implemented.

How will this help the new Circular Economy Action Plan of the European Commission?

The Guide will contribute to an improved access to funding of circular projects and companies and thus support the scale- and speed up of the circular transition.

Recommendations from the Partnership to the EU Commission

Support to updates of Commission related information in the Guide, and to its further dissemination is encouraged.

The necessary next steps

Following the launch of the Guide in January 2020, the EIB will continue to develop the Guide under the EIB Circular City Centre (C3) to ensure both the technical hosting and maintenance of the site, and the updates and further development of the content of the Guide.

Where to find more information

- www.circularcityfundingguide.eu

Connection to the SDGs



Action 5 - Mainstreaming the circular economy as an eligible area into the post 2020 Cohesion Policy and corresponding Funds

It is essential for the European Union to mainstream the circular economy into its policies and particularly into the Cohesion Policy (which through its corresponding Funds is amounting to around 1/3 of the total EU Multiannual Financial Framework), can provide the required impetus for the promotion of the transition towards circular economy starting from the urban level.



Mainstreaming
into EU post-2020
Funds

Scope and working method by the Partnership

The aim of the Action was to contribute to shaping part of the content of the post 2020 EU Cohesion Policy to include in its rationale the circular economy. The Action, which was implemented by the Partnership members, comprised: a) analytical review of the regulatory framework ruling the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) 2014-2020 in order to identify possible barriers in the funding and implementation of various actions that fall within the concept of circular economy in urban areas, b) elaboration of respective policy recommendations and ideas for regulatory provisions for the 2021-2027 programming period. The results were brought to the attention of the European Commission and other European institutions and organisations for further use.

Drivers and Barriers identified and how the barriers are addressed through the Action

By definition, the Cohesion Policy framework provides all the options and opportunities for the effective and efficient implementation of innovative and sustainable projects and/or investments aiming at social, economic and territorial cohesion in the EU. This framework appears to fit very well in enabling the shift towards circular economy in the EU due to the critical amount of financial resources that could be invested to relevant projects, but also due to the leveraging possibilities as well as to the financial and legal certainty that this framework provides. The main barrier identified is that the current EU Cohesion Policy 2014-2020 and the related regulatory framework on the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) for this programming period lack absolutely the term of 'circular economy'. Thus, corresponding focused provisions and funding are very limited. This Action succeeded to address the above barriers by:

- Drafting a position paper and submitting to the European Commission as the Partnership's contribution to the public consultation on the post 2020 cohesion policy in February 2018.
- Providing a working document with recommendations/ proposals for the 2021-2027 Cohesion Policy provisions relevant to circular economy with focus in urban areas and submitting it to the European Commission ahead of the time of publication of the legislative proposals.
- Distributing the above-mentioned documents to the European Parliament, the European Committee of the Regions and other organisations (Council of European Municipalities and Regions, EUROCITIES and ACR+) in order to inform on the proposals of the Partnership and to feed the thinking of policy makers.

As a result, the Partnership is happy to see that Circular Economy is now explicitly mentioned in the European Commission's legislative proposals for the 2021-2027 programming period.

Potential impact of the Action

The overall potential impact of the Action lies on the strong impetus that could be succeeded in the cities through the expected use of the significant amount of financial resources provided by the EU cohesion policy towards achieving the transition of the EU growth process based on the circular

economy model, which ensures financial, social and environmental sustainability. Indicative specific impacts:

- Social
 - Support of job creation and new skills responding to circular economy
 - Promotion of collaborative/ sharing economy schemes, and change of consumption patterns as well as facilitating access to employment and combat poverty
 - Promotion of multilevel government with the involvement of all local stakeholders
- Financial
 - Support of entrepreneurship, innovation (new business models) and competitiveness
 - Financial stability in terms of availability of resources, better sharing of financial risk and higher financial leverage for circular economy investments
 - Contribution to the restructuring of industry (industrial transition)
- Environmental
 - Promotion of natural resources saving
 - Contribution to tackling climate crisis

How will this help the new Circular Economy working program of the European Commission?

This Action has no direct impact on the new Circular Economy working program of the European Commission. However, the Cohesion Policy 2021-2027 and its related Funds could possibly finance relevant initiatives, e.g. studies focusing on circular economy in cities, etc. In addition, it could benefit from the relevant strategies, policies, and projects to be included in the Partnership Agreements 2021-2027 and the respective Operational Programs.

Recommendations from the Partnership to the European Commission

Since circular economy has now been mainstreamed in the regulatory provisions for the 2021-2027 programming period particularly of the cohesion policy, the Partnership further recommends focusing on **ensuring an adequate programming and effective implementation** of the relevant regulatory provisions in the next years. The cohesion policy programs should aim among others at **reinforcing capacities at local level in order to accelerate the transition towards a circular economy**. Moreover, we recommend to the European Commission to extend the aims of its existing expert groups (where relevant), in order to introduce/ strengthen the theme of circular economy in its tasks and involve in its meetings/ working groups delegates from the city level. As an example, we would like to mention the European Network of Environmental Authorities and Managing Authorities (ENEMA) which operates under DG Environment and its main goal is to contribute to the integration of environment and sustainable development within the Cohesion Policy programs and projects. Finally, the Partnership encourages using existing platforms such as the Urban Agenda Partnerships, the Circular economy stakeholder's platform or local government networks to **enhance peer to peer learning and capacity building**.

Where to find more information

- Consolidated report developed by the Partnership, [available here](#).

The necessary next steps

The Action successfully accomplished the purpose for which it was designed and implemented. However, promoting the outputs on the occasion of other relevant dissemination activities, as its proposed ideas are still timely and may prove useful to the regions/ member states concerned in the planning process of their 2021-2027 Operational Programs.

Connection to the SDGs and contributions to better governance

This Action fits indirectly to the following SDGs:



The planning and programming of circular economy actions in the framework of Cohesion Policy should be guided by the Partnership principle according to the European Code of Conduct on Partnership. It therefore promotes multilevel governance with the involvement of all stakeholders.

2.3 Better Knowledge

There are a lot of barriers in lack of knowledge for introducing circular economy in cities. The Partnership has identified around 30 and picked 7 of them to try to reduce the knowledge gap. All parties of the Pact of Amsterdam will have to continue their efforts in identifying barriers in lack of knowledge and support efforts to overcome these barriers. This will be a work that will continue for decades. Support by funding like Horizon 2020, Life, URBACT or other programs will be essential support for cities in these efforts.

At the same time, reduce knowledge gaps are going on in cities all over Europe. To connect, learning and inspiring cities in their work are as important as the removing of the barrier in itselves. To facilitate and support the exchange of knowledge will be one of the most important measures to support the transition into a circular economy in cities.

Action 6 - Prepare a blueprint for a Circular City Portal

The '**Circular City Portal**' is an openly shared **knowledge database**, inspiring and guiding cities in their journey towards a circular economy. Additionally, an integrated and visually developed **governance concept** links all other actions within the Urban Partnership on Circular Economy, and potentially other Partnership's related actions.



Circular City Portal

Scope and Output

While only few frontrunner cities have the experience, many other cities are looking for insights in how they can support circular models within their governance/administration; how they provide service (connecting resources to services); and how they can help and impact citizens and businesses. The Partnership therefore worked on demystifying the concept of circular economy and provided gateways to **inspiration for cities** to start the transition.

As an output a cooperation with the Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform (joint initiative of the **European Commission** (EC) and the **European Economic and Social Committee** (EESC)) was set up and suggestions for blueprint of a real Circular City Portal were given.

Besides the portal, the Partnership also created easy to understand infographics on what the circular economy means for the city; why it can be beneficial (what can cities gain); what areas and steps the city can address; and what tools and possibilities they have at their disposal. This governance aspect also serves as the umbrella for the tools developed by the other actions from this Partnership and potentially also from other Partnerships.

Drivers and barriers

Working towards circular economy is a creative process, requiring a lot of networking, connecting practices and knowledge. While there is a vast amount of literature dealing with the barriers and obstacles for the circular economy and the possible actions needed to overcome these, only very few sources are focusing on the specific needs of cities. Strategic approaches, individual roadmaps and projects promoted by front-running cities that have initiated the transition to a circular economy are presented on different websites and can inspire other cities, but the information available is often not

intended to guide cities that have not yet embarked on such a journey. The observation of the Partnership was that there was no **dedicated information-portal** available on **urban circular economy**. The information on the Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform lacked a specific entry for the **urban/local level**, making it difficult for them to find a starting point for transitioning into a circular economy.

The biggest driver to change this was the willingness and a good cooperation with the EC, the EESC and many stakeholders that led to a **blueprint** for getting the **urban dimension** more visible on this Platform. Up to 50 urban/ local cases have been shared through the Platform already. By doing so we are showcasing the **significance of the local level** as laboratories of change and lead a new target group to the Platform.

Potential impact

Cities want to improve their capacity on the ground by learning from each other. Specific Q&A for pioneer cities or a practical guide with instructions and ideas on possible steps provided through the Circular City Portal will help them. But most interesting of the ‘Best practices’ is the governance aspect: who initiated the experiment, how was the internal cooperation within a city or with their citizens and businesses, how was the public-private financing organised, etc. A lot of experience is already out there but there is a big gap between cities that are aware of the process or are already on the way to circular models, and the cities for which circular economy seems too far reaching and they feel that they might not be up to it, have the resources, or the knowledge. To help those cities our Partnership demonstrates those governance aspects and disseminates them via the Platform so the efforts and the money spent on CE will be used more efficiently, building on previous experiences.

How will this help the new Circular Economy working program of the European Commission?

Our work on this Action illustrates how a **bottom-up cooperation** – inherent to the urban Partnerships - can influence and ameliorate (existing) (policy) tools and instruments of the EC. Our concept of **how to govern** the transition to a circular economy in cities, can inspire the new commission when unrolling the ‘Green Deal’ and writing the associated **Circular Economy Action Plan 2.0**, for example when it comes to the importance of having a long-term, holistic vision and introducing cross-thematic coordination.

Recommendations from the Partnership to the EU Commission

- Take duly into account the contribution of cities for transition to a circular economy in the next Action Plan - Circular economy 2.0. To do this effectively: take into the consideration the listed barriers and opportunities for cities and the innovative circular governance focus, necessary to realise the transition to circular economy;
- Take into account a more **integrated approach** for European urban (circular economy) policy in the next programming period of the **cohesion policy**, e.g. in terms of priority actions (allowing circular topics) and funding (stimulating further sectoral integration), and by integrating existing initiatives like URBACT, Urban Partnerships, Urban Innovative Actions, etc. and think about ways of disseminating the conclusions and/ or findings of finalised cohesion-funded projects on the Platform;

- **Invest (money & time) in a circular city portal** (as part of the Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform), to help cities in a successful transition to the circular economy.

The necessary next steps

- Creation of the dedicated landing/entry page on the Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform makes it a real 'circular city portal', with integration of the Circular City Funding Guide. Keep the Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform alive and kicking, by promoting and uploading more and new cases (including the governance aspects), strategies and knowledge.
- Create opportunities for people within cities to exchange experiences on circular governance. This will reduce silos and stimulate different departments in a city to work together with the citizens, NGO's, and businesses in implementing a circular economy strategy.
- Create a strategic vision on the future of the Urban Partnerships within the Urban Agenda and/ or the European cohesion policy.

Where to find more information

- <https://circulareconomy.europa.eu/platform/en>
- [Circular city governance portal](#)

Connection to the SDGs and contributions to better governance

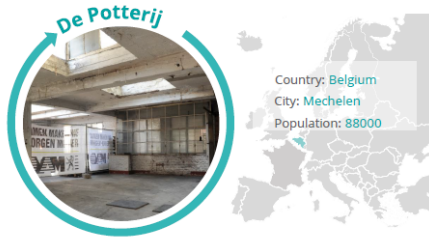


By disseminating inspiring urban cases on circular economy and on how to set-up an appropriate governance scheme, we clearly recognised the importance **of a culture of cooperation** and information exchange. For this specific Action, the primary focus lies therefore on **SDG17: Partnerships for the goals**. At the same time, we are convinced that circular economy is a key promising strategy to obtain results on different goals and SDG's, more specifically SDGs 11 and 12. Circular city governance could also allow the developing countries to leap-frog in the quality of their sustainable urban development and have positive economic and social benefits.

Figure 4 Case: de Potterij, Mechelen, Belgium

Case: De Potterij, Mechelen

<https://potterij.be>



Description

The Potterij will be a circular economy incubator where entrepreneurs can meet up with likeminded people, and a big supporting network of researchers, government and experts to make their circular ambitions a reality.

The city got involved when the Public Waste Agency of Flanders started with the remediation of the historical soil & water pollution, due to former laundry activities. Together with Circular Flanders, the social, economic and environmental Dept of the city and a university of applied sciences and companies & citizens, the idea grew to create a circular hub at this central location.

Takeaways & challenges

- 1 Different governmental levels (regional & local) worked together to realise a new point of attraction in the city
- 2 Next to circular economy, the project connects to other needs in the society such as urban agriculture, local jobs, depolution, .. Combining different challenges will strengthen your project
- 3 Urban development is a strong trigger to innovative a city when different stakeholders are involved. A solution for one problem gives opportunities to another

Actions and cooperations initiated by the city

REORGANISE YOUR LOCAL AUTHORITY

- 1 **Create common long term ambition** – the vision of the city to invest in circular economy created an opportunity for an abandoned, polluted site. Together with the stakeholders new business and social activities will be organised there.
- 2 **Set up cooperation between city departments** – The regional government involved the economic, as well as the environmental and social dept. of the city, to discuss the temporary use and the future of the site
- 3 **Act Circular** – local legislation has been adapted to promote the concept of a circular business hub
- 4 Get insights in your resources

STIMULATE CITIZENS INITIATIVES

- 5 **Promote sharing & functional economy** – a library for tools (Klusbib) was one of the first users of De Potterij
- 6 Raise awareness and coach citizens
- 7 **Support bottom up initiatives** – in a workshop citizens could list their main needs. Together with experts a brainstorm was organised to find circular solutions to these challenges

STIMULATE ENTREPRENEURS & INNOVATION

- 8 **Stimulate local symbioses** – The local government, local entrepreneurs and the local university is involved in the implementation of circular economy start-ups and social initiatives related to the circular economy
- 9 Create incentives to attract circular business
- 10 Communicate success stories



GENERAL AND TECHNICAL NUTRIENTS



BIOLOGICAL NUTRIENTS



Action 7 - Promote Urban Resource Centres for waste prevention, re-use and recycling

Urban Resource Centres are the testbeds for circular solutions at city level but the policy challenges hindering the implementation need to be addressed at European level.



Urban Resource
Centres

Scope and Output

The Partnership identified that the social and behavioural side of a transition towards the circular economy and how citizens will be involved in the transition process are still not adequately addressed at local level. There is also a need to transform the traditional recycling stations to fit with the priorities of the waste hierarchy and enable more circular resource loops at local level.

Our solution is to promote the so-called Urban Resource Centres where the circular economy is implemented at local level, serving as an arena to work with waste prevention, re-use, repair and recycling at the same time as new business models and jobs are created. The centres also serve as a meeting place for new collaborations, innovations, and inclusion of citizens to ensure a participatory approach to the local circular solutions. The Partnership has collected experiences from 12 different Urban Resource Centres, identifying key barriers and success factors. To ensure sustainability, we have successfully established an URBACT Action planning network to develop the concept further with 10 cities.

Drivers and Barriers

Urban Resource Centres are being established all over European cities and there is a multitude of projects, programs and networks working to promote the position these centres have in the circular transition in cities. There is a growing understanding among urban authorities that working with these types of centres can enable more innovation and local circular resource loops. The success factors behind some of these centres and initiatives are a wide variety of stakeholders involved, co-location, small scale testing and experimentation, as well as a strong link to the social economy.

The centres need tools and resources to be able to scale up their activities and develop a viable business model. There are still regulatory obstacles within the current waste legislation that create challenges in the operations of these centres, and it is a growing need to look at ways of capturing their impact in the form of unified performance indicators.

Potential impact

The implementation of this Action has contributed to collecting knowledge about different innovative approaches to Urban Resource Centres in European cities, which has led to better knowledge on how cities can work with waste prevention, re-use and recycling at local level. As a result of the knowledge collected, the Partnership has organised a network of cities dedicated to taking this work forward in the URBACT Action planning Network “Resourceful Cities”. Ideally, this will help European cities find effective tools to establish and facilitate for Urban resource centres. These centres have a

multitude of functions depending on the focus, but the aim is that they all include social, environmental, and economic functions that help stimulate a more circular economy at local level.

How will this help the new Circular Economy Action Plan of the European Commission?

The promotion of these centres will enable new spaces for circular solutions at local level, enabling more citizen participation, innovation, and new circular business models. By promoting these types of centres, the Commission will support test beds where solutions will be implemented, and experiences harnessed that can feed European policymaking.

These centres share some common barriers and success factors that the Partnership has already identified, and these aspects can be addressed directly in the new Circular Economy working program of the European Commission.

Recommendations from the Partnership to the EU Commission

- There should be funding made available to pilot larger scale Urban Resource Centre-projects, also connecting this to industrial symbiosis.
- Size and scalability are crucial and there is a need to find a viable business case for these types of centres.
- Development of indicators to be able to measure the progress is important; this should be linked to the reporting on re-use and waste prevention at member state level.
- member states should get on board and develop measures in their waste prevention programs that support the establishment of Urban Resource centres and collect valuable knowledge from the implementation.

The necessary next steps

- Promote the role that these centres play as urban test beds for the circular economy
- Ensure that resources and funds are directed to solving the challenge of scalability
- Highlight the policy challenges that come out of the establishment of these types of centres and promote it at European level
- Ensure a good learning environment for all the knowledge generated within the different programs, projects and networks promoting Urban Resource Centres

Where to find more information:

- See the full classification with recommendations [here](#).
- Follow the further work in the URBACT Action Planning Network “Resourceful Cities” [here](#).
- The main points are summarised in [this infographic](#).

Connection to the SDGs and contributions to better governance



Better Governance: Urban Resource Centres can work as a meeting space for the citizens, the city administration, the private sector, NGOs, and academia. By having a physical space where actors meet, this can enable new types of collaborations and partnerships where you find common ground on sustainable solutions. There is an urgent need to connect to new stakeholders, create new synergies and work to break down the silos.

Figure 5 Case: Made in Moerwijk, the Netherlands

Case: Made in Moerwijk



Description

Made in Moerwijk is a social circular initiative and was initiated by the municipality of The Hague. Initially, the local university participated as well as a technical school and a local fund. Nowadays, Made in Moerwijk is a foundation. The local municipality contributes financially in part for the employees. Subsequently, Made in Moerwijk gained a larger role in the local area, contributing to social cohesion and providing jobs for the community. In total 18 partners are contributing to Made in Moerwijk. Examples of products that are being made are: belts from old bicycle tires and bags from broken umbrellas.

<https://www.madeinmoerwijk.nl>

Takeaways & challenges

- 1 Several departments teamed up to facilitate Made in Moerwijk; the waste department, the social department and the local districts.
- 2 The project also has a social function by providing jobs and opportunities for the people living in the district of Moerwijk.
- 3 A challenge is to connect the contributing partners to the project and give them ownership.

Actions and cooperations initiated by the city

REORGANISE YOUR LOCAL AUTHORITY

- 1 **Create common long term ambition** – Made in Moerwijk provides a scale-up possibility for small businesses.
- 2 **Set up cooperation between city departments** – Different departments worked together to realize the project.
- 3 **Act circular** – The municipality has provided access to the network of circular businesses.
- 4 Get insights in your resources

STIMULATE CITIZENS INITIATIVES

- 5 Promote sharing & functional economy
- 6 **Raise awareness and coach citizens** – Local citizens are stimulated to collect their waste separately and bring it to Made in Moerwijk.
- 7 Support bottom up initiatives

STIMULATE ENTREPRENEURS & INNOVATION

- 8 **Stimulate local symbioses** – starts-ups are connected to each other.
- 9 **Create incentives to attract circular business** – Made in Moerwijk is a local circular hub and it helps (circular) businesses to scale up.
- 10 **Communicate success stories** – on social media, Made in Moerwijk is being promoted as a good example of circular economy and sets the example for new upcoming hubs.



GENERAL AND TECHNICAL NUTRIENTS



BIOLOGICAL NUTRIENTS



Action 8 - Develop a 'Circular Resource Management' Roadmap for cities

Identifying and understanding material stocks and flows is important to transform linear resource flows into circular flows. Cities and regions are essential partners in realising the circular economy and need more knowledge on how to map and understand material flows.



Circular Resource
Management
Roadmap

Scope and working method

A structured transition to efficient resource management based on circular principles consists of three working areas: creating insight in the cities resource metabolism, development of brokerage activities and monitoring. Concrete steps connect the three pillars, ensure structured execution, and can be repeated after completion in order to continue to shape the transition to a circular economy.

Drivers and Barriers

Only a few cities and regions had developed a structural approach towards a circular economy. Making this knowledge and experience available and translate it into a practical roadmap would enable more cities to contribute to the transition towards a circular economy.

Most cities are mainly focused on transporting household waste out of the city as quickly as possible and at the lowest costs. The same applies for businesses. Furthermore, cities only have partial insight (household waste) in the resource flows in their city. Information on resource flows is scarce and fragmented and cities only have legal duties with regards to household waste.

Product

The roadmap provides cities and regions with a step-by-step approach and assessment framework to implement a tailor-made resource efficiency plan. The roadmap is available as a report on paper and as an interactive pdf.

Potential impacts

- Social – the roadmap will realise higher resource efficiency within cities and thus create jobs and additionally contribute to an inclusive economy;
- Financial – involvement of stakeholder increases not only implementation power but also the activation of chains and generation of (new and more) circular business opportunities within the cities. On the other hand, it reduces costs of waste processing for municipalities and businesses and increases profits from using secondary resources;
- Environmental – a circular resource efficiency plan focusses on achieving a (local or regional) circular economy, by promoting waste prevention, reducing use of virgin materials, stimulating usage of environmentally friendly and secondary materials and renewable energy, and therefore reduces environmental impact.

How will this help the new Circular Economy Action Plan of the European Commission?

The roadmap promotes and offers a tool for a structured approach to circular resource management at the urban level. By making the roadmap readily available and by supporting its use with the appropriate resources in terms of funding, knowledge, and legal frameworks, this will strongly support the goals of the working program and the recently presented Green Deal.

At the same time the structured approach offered by the roadmap will contribute to the objective of strengthening the urban dimension of the post 2020 framework for EU Cohesion Policy. This is not only true for the more general goals of physical sustainable urban development, but also touches upon issues like capacity-building, education and employment and innovative investment strategies for the urban transition to a circular economy.

Recommendations from the Partnership to the EU Commission

The roadmap is a potentially very strong tool for cities to systematically implement resource efficiency and waste prevention through the increased use of waste as secondary resources. It is a way for cities to significantly contribute to a greener and more inclusive European economy. That is why the Urban Agenda Partnership recommends to:

- facilitate the continuation of this Action by supporting the next steps for prototyping as mentioned above with the necessary resources in terms of funding and knowledge.
- incorporate the concept of the circular resource management roadmap as developed by the Urban Agenda Partnership in future EU strategies, policies, and legislation.

The necessary next steps

The roadmap is not meant to sit on a shelf. The proof of the pudding is in the eating. Therefore, the next necessary steps will be to develop a proof of concept and to test the roadmap in practice in order to:

- generate user experiences and incorporate these into the roadmap.
- identify possibilities and the added value of standardising actions that will frequently be selected and applied, like for example material passports, resource exchange platforms.
- develop a final prototype that is fit for implementation.

Where to find more information:

- The roadmap for circular resource efficiency in cities is available [here](#).
- Further information for test-driving of the roadmap is available here: [Concept note on test-driving the roadmap](#).

Connection to the SDGs and contributions to better governance



Better Governance: The roadmap assists cities in developing a circular resource efficiency plan together with different stakeholders, like businesses, NGO's, knowledge institutes and others to work in common understanding and corporation in the transition towards a circular economy.

Action 9 - Collaborative Economy Knowledge Pack for Cities

Understanding the workings of the Collaborative Economy as the means to achieve Circular Economy objectives empowers cities and regions to reap most benefit of this new economic paradigm.



Collaborative Economy
Knowledge Pack

Scope and Output

As we enter a make-or-break decade with not only environmental challenges, but also social and economic challenges, the Partnership identified the Collaborative Economy as an important instrument to foster urban and democratic resilience. The first step of the Partnership was defining the wide range of initiatives that operate in the Collaborative Economy, from local *for benefit* grassroots initiatives to global *for profit* market players. Focusing on local resilience initiatives and the urban social economy provided a focus and a niche in which we can create an added value.

This niche is furthermore classified as the intersection between the Circular Economy and the Collaborative Economy. Our solution is to develop a Collaborative Economy Knowledge Pack for Cities with recommendations on how to interact with and employ this rapidly developing new economy. The Collaborative Economy Knowledge Pack for Cities inducts the grassroots and democratic dimensions into the Circular Economy discussion by emphasising the role and impacts of community-driven Circular Economy initiatives. In close partnership with ESPON we conducted a Targeted Analysis in six European Territories to identify the (potential for) social, economic, and environmental impacts of the Collaborative Economy. These findings are then translated into a Collaborative Economy Knowledge Pack for Cities with drivers, barriers, and practical tools to foster the Collaborative Economy in service of the Circular Economy in cities and regions.

Drivers and Barriers

- Quantifying the impact (social, economic, and environmental) of the Collaborative Economy levers, its importance and position on the political agenda.
- The Collaborative Economy has gained momentum in Circular Economy circles as well in discussions on economic development on local, national, and European level.
- Lack of data on the impacts of the Collaborative Economy in relation to the Circular Economy.
- Collaborative Economy is too often regarded merely as a digital platform-based economy as opposed to a peer-to-peer, community led social innovation and economic movement.

Potential impact

- **Environmental**

- **Environmental impacts** can be expected if the initiatives save the use of primary resources or reduce waste streams by common usage of goods (e.g. tools) or mobility solutions (e.g. cars, bikes) or other scarce resources (built-up spaces or urban spaces). Other initiatives can also have an indirect impact on the environment by fostering environmental awareness.

Carsharing in Porto: The 740 members of the carsharing initiative Via Verde Boleias in Porto have estimated that their sharing initiative has saved 2,911 car rides or a distance of 66,012km, which is equivalent to a saving of 16 tons of CO2 emissions.

Sharing of clothes in the Hague: The Kleding Bank avoids the production of about 16,800 pieces of clothing per year by collecting and redistributing used clothes. From the literature, we know that 20,000 litres is the amount of water needed to produce one kilogram of cotton; this is equivalent to one t-shirt and a pair of jeans (2 clothes items).⁶ The Kleding Bank in the Hague therefore contributes to saving 168 million litres of water per year.

- **Social**

- **Social impacts** on the other hand are expected when initiatives foster interactions between citizens or support specifically poor or socially deprived citizens. This can be by providing a place where people meet and interact, job opportunities to long-term unemployed (e.g. a waste collection service) or by fostering purchasing power of poorer people by providing them services or goods cheaper than there were available before (e.g. food sharing).

Tool sharing initiative in Flanders: At Peerby 800 to 1000 individuals meet on a monthly basis fostering community spirit.

Repair cafes in Prato or the Hague: Initiatives such as Recuperiamoci! Onlus in Prato or Made in Moerwijk in the Hague respectively employ 10 and 20 persons who were long-term unemployed before.

Food cooperatives in Maribor: The food cooperatives Robin Food Maribor estimate savings of around EUR 100 per supported person monthly. This is the equivalent of almost one tenth of the monthly disposable income of an average inhabitant of Maribor (EUR 997.25).⁷

- **Financial**

- **Economic impacts** can be expected if the initiative creates new value chains or move value chains into the city or region concerned. Examples can be waste collection initiatives (replacing waste burning outside the territory) or the provision of services that were not conducted in the territory before and bring new purchasing power into the territory (shared apartments or shared cars). Initiatives can also foster business innovation and or new skills as collaborative economy business models often use online platforms or other ICT tools.

⁶ <https://www.worldwildlife.org/industries/cotton>

⁷ <https://www.stat.si/obcine/sl/2016/Municip/Index/94>

Energy cooperatives in Greece: For some Greek Islands energy cooperatives can be a method to move the production of energy to the island instead of relying on the energy produced on the main land. The Sifnos energy cooperative in the island of Sifnos in Greece is expected to produce enough energy to cover the needs of the island's inhabitants, with expected annual earnings of EUR 3.55 million.

Tracking of waste flows in Maribor: The Cinderella project in Maribor will develop an online platform for one-stop-shop service to track and model urban waste flows potentially an important starting point for other initiatives that can make better use of the waste streams.

How will this help the new Circular Economy Action Plan of the European Commission?

While this Action focuses primarily on the positive urban impact of the Collaborative Economy, it does not ignore the negative impacts of the elephants in the room that are the large multinational sharing platforms and the current throw-away economy. By identifying and pushing forward positive Collaborative Economy alternatives like Fairbnb⁸ and community-led movements like the Right to Repair⁹, this Action provides additional knowledge and tools for the new Circular Economy working program to apply in the circular transition.

Recommendations from the Partnership to the EU Commission

Work has already been done to provide guidance on legislation around the Collaborative Economy with the European Commission Communication on a European Agenda for the Collaborative Economy in June 2016. Regulatory frameworks of the different member states have been assessed in a Collaborative Economy Scoreboard¹⁰ published in 2018. This work could be reproduced for 2020 in order to analyse if progress has been made in member states. This follow-up study could be framed in a way that circular economy goals are emphasised (e.g. more emphasis on waste regulations, resource use, food, etc.).

The necessary next steps

- To further develop the results of the ESPON Targeted Analysis into a practical guide for cities and regions.
- To develop a white paper with key findings in co-creation with relevant stakeholders in the field.
- To set up a Peer-to-Peer TAIEX exchange program for interested partners.

Where to find more information:

- Final report of the ESPON Targeted Analysis 'Sharing', [available here](#).
- ESPON Targeted Analysis 'SHARING' as part of this Action, [read more here](#).

⁸ <https://fairbnb.coop/>

⁹ <https://repair.eu/>

¹⁰ Available at : https://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/scoreboard/performance_per_policy_area/collaborative-economy/index_en.htm

Connection to the SDGs



Action 10 - Manage the re-use of buildings and spaces in a circular economy

The urban regeneration process passes through changes in society and the industrial area, being able to respond effectively to changes and the emerging needs of a city, with tailored solutions.



Re-use
of Buildings
and Spaces

Scope and working method by the Partnership

As available land is often scarce in the cities and their spatial expansion, known as urban sprawl, burdensome and costly, re-using existing buildings emerges as an alternative. Promoting re-use practices can help to ensure more sustainable urbanisation, with multiple benefits not only for managing authorities, but also for citizens. The Partnership on Circular economy and the Partnership on Sustainable use of land and nature-based solutions decided to work together on this Action because the re-use of abandoned or underused buildings and spaces emerged as relevant topic for both Partnerships. They agreed in making joint efforts to develop a shared handbook, adding together the different perspectives.

Drivers and Barriers

Cities are increasingly moving to actions aimed at reconsidering settlement models and preferring solutions based on re-use, recycling, and development of innovative and creative communities. In fact, there is a need for involving multiple departments in a municipality under a same strategic umbrella. The challenge is the re-use and the transformation of existing buildings (and spaces), in particular the unused ones (“Rethinking the city”), with the logic to:

- Create new economic and social opportunities, without consuming new land (following the paradigm of the no net land take).
- Improve the environmental performance of buildings and infrastructures in their entire life cycle.
- Propose new urban scenarios.

The proposed handbook can be a tool to lay the foundations for establishing an overall strategy that looks at a new model of urban re-use management of the city and that increasingly looks to be circular. The book intends to serve as a stimulus and incentive for strategic planning at urban level, especially carried out by public authorities, but also supported by the regional and national level.

Among the solutions proposed by the handbook, there is the Urban Agency for Re-use. It aims at facilitating local public administrations in the definition and the application of strategies of building re-use at city level. Any city can establish its own agency for the promotion of re-use of buildings and spaces, through an integrated approach and using new model of governance in order to manage and plan the various re-use strategies. One of the tools the Urban Agency for Re-use can use to analyse the propensity of a building to be re-used and/or be changed in destination is the proposed Reusability Index. With a multi-disciplinary approach, the index includes technical, environmental, economic, and social indicators.

With a widespread review and analysis of good practices of urban re-use, each city could obtain from the handbook inspirational suggestions about the different solutions that can be applied, taking into

account its specific urban environment. The approach could be bottom-up or, vice versa, top-down, adopting different models of governance for the management of specific situations, as well as participatory methods.

Potential impact

- Social – Participatory processes and listening to citizens must contribute to regeneration.
- Financial – the generation of new jobs, the development of innovative business models and the promotion of new cultural and social opportunities.
- Environmental – there is an important potential to reduce the use of new land, favouring a transition to the circular economy, aiming at reducing the environmental impacts in relation to greenhouse gas emissions and climate mitigation effects with adaptive reuse of old buildings.

How will this help the new Circular Economy Action Plan of the European Commission?

The application of the circular approach within an urban area involves municipalities, production activities, relevant stakeholders, and citizens, in order to create opportunities lowering the depletion of new resources.

Recommendations from the Partnership to the EU Commission

The following recommendations are addressed to DG REGIO and DG RTD:

- Providing financial resources: buildings cannot be regenerated without financial investment, reason why it is very important to guarantee resources towards regeneration of large areas in the public interest.
- Partnerships: different levels of the administration (local, regional, national) as well as private and social stakeholders need to create long lasting operational pacts to work together.
- Allowing administrative flexibility to enable city in the adaptation of regulation in order to allow more flexibility to adapt to changing needs, thus increasing the building's long-term life cycle and propensity of re-use.

Connection to the SDGs and contributions to Better Governance



SDG11 ('Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable'), call as well at urban regeneration and reuse of buildings. In addition, SDG 15 (Life on land) is implicated for land saving.

Where to find more information

- [Handbook for Sustainable and Circular re-use of Buildings and Spaces](#). The handbook is translated into Italian and Catalan.

Figure 6 Case: Municipality of Prato, Italy

Case: Municipality of Prato

<http://www.comune.prato.it/>



Description

The City of Prato is famous for its textile district, which represents about 3% of European textile production. The recycling techniques of textiles led to consider Prato one of the most advanced and innovative industrial city in Italy. Moreover Prato:

- was the first industrial district arranging a close water cycle so to be able to reuse the waste water more than one time and to clean it before giving back to the environment;
- limited the waste produced from the construction and demolition of buildings where many materials are recyclable or reusable..

Takeaways & challenges

- 1 Create a strong governance model with all the actors at local, national and European level for the creation of "Prato circular City";
- 2 Make a mapping of all existing initiatives in cities concerning the circular economy;
- 3 Create an urban reuse agency for the management of abandoned or semi-used spaces and buildings of the city, even in a key of collaborative economy.

Actions and cooperations initiated by the city

REORGANISE YOUR LOCAL AUTHORITY

- 1 Create common long term ambition - with the setting of an international portal of the Prato Circular City initiatives;
- 2 Set up cooperation between city departments - with a monitoring cabin on circular economy which involves the relevant stakeholders;
- 3 Act circular
- 4 Get insights in your resources - feasibility study on urban waste flows (by typology) with analysis of their possible re-use

STIMULATE CITIZENS INITIATIVES

- 5 Promote sharing & functional economy
- 6 Raise awareness and coach citizens - coaching developed by PIN university during thematic workshops on new fundraising on circular economy dedicated to ONGs and citizens;
- 7 Support bottom up initiatives - collecting ideas from citizens and SMEs of Prato during the Reco' festival (the first festival on circular economy of the city)..

STIMULATE ENTREPRENEURS & INNOVATION

- 8 Stimulate local symbioses - local authority and university are involved in promoting new startups on circular economy.
- 9 Create incentives to attract circular business
- 10 Communicate success stories - with a dedicated city portal and during the main city events.



GENERAL AND TECHNICAL NUTRIENTS



BIOLOGICAL NUTRIENTS



Action 11 - Develop City Indicators for Circular Economy

Transition towards circular economy depends on a significant part on the transition taking place in cities (and metropolitan area). Indicators that are Relevant, Accepted, Credible, Easy to monitor and Robust against manipulation (RACER) need to be made accessible for cities.



Circular City Indicators

Scope and Output

Lack of indicators for Circular Economy transition on city level was identified as one important barrier for cities. The Partnership used a part of the available expert days to undergo a survey and organisation of Circular Economy indicators in use. The survey was discussed in two different workshops attended by experts working on circular economy and ended in a note categorising possible indicators and limiting the list to 30 different indicators in four themes. The themes are picked from the EU Monitoring Framework for Circular Economy in member states.

Drivers and Barriers

- Relevant and easy to access data is, as always, a challenge at local level. Data available on national level are for the most part not available for cities. member states have to develop collection of data especially on production and consumption down to at least a regional level.
- Environmental indicators are challenging to monitor, but it is even more challenging to monitor the impact of circular economy on economic and social issues. For instance, there is no clear definition of jobs in a circular economy. The focus on jobs in existing sectors like waste management or repair is not sufficient for monitoring a transition towards a circular economy. There is a strong need for a better definition of circular jobs and circular enterprises, and this should be done at European Level.
- There is a need for knowledge exchange between cities developing set of indicators. Given the importance of CE strategies on local level, a network financed by the Commission should be set up to facilitate a testing program of indicators on city level.
- RACER based set of indicators could boost the work of circular economy in cities.

Potential impact

- Social – Circular Economy strategies tends to focus on traditional economic and environmental areas, hence losing the impacts on the development of living cities for citizens. Indicators will help cities to monitor the link between circular economy and other vision/targets for local development.
- Financial – indicators help cities to take the right measures in a right way, securing limited financial resources to be used as efficient as possible.
- Environmental – as for financial, indicators help cities to develop targets and measures in best efficient way to reach the visions for the cities.

How will this help the new Circular Economy Action Plan of the European Commission?

The Circular Economy WG 2.0 should raise the efforts to help local and regional level in implementing Circular Economy strategies. Alongside the work of monitoring framework on member states, the

Commission should initiate a program on developing and implementing (training) indicators on local and regional level.

The necessary next steps

The Partnership has developed an issue paper presenting different ways of measure circular economy. The list of 29 indicators can be used as input to other European initiatives on circular economy indicators.

Where to find more information

- The note on circular economy indicators could be found on the [Futurium Website](#).

Connection to the SDGs

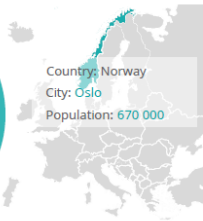


The SDGs have already developed a set of indicators to be used on local level for following up the 17 goals. SDGs' objectives could act as indicators for circular economy, and indicators on circular economy will add perfectly into the SDGs indicators. The two sets fit together perfectly.

Figure 7 Case: Action Plan to reduce plastic pollution on the Oslo Fjord, Norway

Case: Action Plan to Reduce Plastic Pollution in the Oslo Fjord

[Link to the Action plan](#)



Description

To prevent plastic from entering the environment and reaching the Oslo Fjord and to remove existing plastic pollution, an action plan with short-term and long-term measures was co-created by many stakeholders.

Unique was the collaboration of several municipal sectors: the Agency for Urban Environment, Agency for Improvement and Development, Agency for Waste Management, Agency for Water and Sewerage Works, Agency for Planning and Building Services (including The urban ecology hub, "By Kuben"), and Oslo Port Authority.

Takeaways & challenges

- 1 **Cooperation** with different stakeholders is essential in developing a realistic (but ambitious) action plan. This will contribute to a stronger sense of ownership to the content and consequently stronger efforts of commitment.
- 2 When developing an action plan one should work in parallel with developing a results framework to ensure the ability to **measure results and the effects** of adopted measures.
- 3 Anchoring of the action plan should be made at a high level to ensure **political commitment**, however also down the line to the different municipal bodies to ensure sound follow-up of measures.



Actions and cooperations initiated by the city

REORGANISE YOUR LOCAL AUTHORITY

- 1 **Create common long term ambition** – the goals and measures co-created the stakeholders address a long-term vision. Together with a revision every second year, the action plan is kept updated and in line with the LT goals
- 2 **Set up cooperation between city departments** - a inter-agency consultation group will coordinate the work, follow up the actions and revise the action plan when needed
- 3 **Act circular** – The Action plan provides the city administration with concrete tools on how to reduce the consumption on single-use plastics and encourage other stakeholderse to do the same.
- 4 **Get insights in your resources** – The city will map the use of single-use plastics and the scope and source of marine pollution together with relevant research institutions

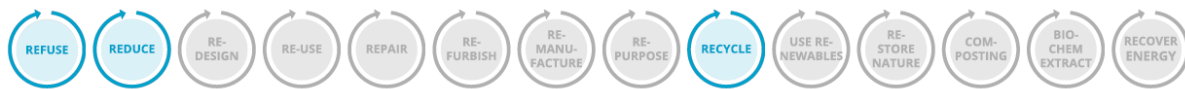
STIMULATE CITIZENS INITIATIVES

- 5 **Promote sharing & functional economy**
- 6 **Raise awareness and coach citizens** - "Knowledge information and collaboration" is one of four main focus areas in the action plan. The City wants to actively involve and train the citizens in beach clean-ups, to raise awareness and empower the citizens to take action in their every day lives to reduce the consumption of plastics.
- 7 **Support bottom up initiatives**

STIMULATE ENTREPRENEURS & INNOVATION

- 8 **Stimulate local symbioses**
- 9 **Create incentives to attract circular business** – Oslo has set up a scheme that various actors can apply to, in achieving the objectives of the action plan. The City wishes to take an active role as a coordinator, connecting different initiatives and companies to facilitate innovation and knowledge creation. Over 40 different projects have received support for their projects. The private sector in the city is also encouraged to sign a plastic-pledge, where they commit to concrete measures to reduce use of single-use plastics.
- 10 **Communicate success stories** - The city aim to showcase the actors that take a leading role and demonstrate the best practices.

GENERAL AND TECHNICAL NUTRIENTS



Action 12 - Circular Economy Financial Incentives - Develop a "Pay-as-you-throw" (PAYT) toolkit with coaching

Although PAYT is identified as a useful tool for cities, cities have experienced several barriers in introducing and the use of PAYT. This Action has addressed some of these barriers by developing a toolkit for use of PAYT. For cities, PAYT can be an effective option for waste reduction, source separation and an essential first step to produce clean streams and consequently increase recycling.



Pay-As-You-Throw
Toolkit

Scope and Output

By offering door-to-door collection and electronically tracking rubbish and recycling citywide, the scheme could increase recycling by relevant percentage. PAYT system rewards people and business who separate rubbish and penalises those who do not. An in-depth analysis of the diffusion of PAYT schemes in Europe has led to the development of a Toolkit with the aim of supporting European cities, so as to connect stakeholders with experts in the field, providing guidelines, proposals, technical and regulatory references. This will help municipalities start up a PAYT system, establish a proper fee level and monitor the process, making it as efficient and effective as possible.

In addition, by implementing PAYT schemes, the Smart city principles for an effective, virtuous, advanced and sustainable management of our cities are also made tangible.

The application proposal aims to offer an adequate balance between operational details and the possibility of adapting to different contexts as may be found in the various member states, ensuring compliance with the "polluter pays" principle. In this way, each European city will be able to identify the PAYT system that best suits its territory, knowing in advance the advantages and disadvantages of every feasible solution. The proposals included regulatory, methodological, technical and communication aspects and were divided into three levels: "minimum", "best practice" and "advanced".

In order to make the system clearer and simpler, cases of PAYT application based on the different levels were also presented, creating a space in which to learn about and discuss the topic with experts and entities that have already made the transition to PAYT. Each solution entails different performance levels.

The "advanced" scenario explicitly and proactively aims to reduce the waste to be recovered, but also to reduce CO2 emissions or improve the performance of other environmental parameters, applying a univocal measuring element to the entire management system of municipal waste. This methodology makes it possible to attain the highest possible level of citizen involvement. In fact, they will clearly perceive the economic advantage of reducing and properly sorting waste, but also - and above all - the environmental impact and the contribution to the collective well-being that come with their participation in a project such as the introduction of PAYT.

Drivers and barriers

PAYT Barriers:

- Introduction of PAYT schemes may result in illegal disposal of waste (although this effect is disputed), avoidance of charges by travelling to areas without PAYT schemes and cost avoidance by polluting recyclable streams with residual waste.
- Worries about the costs to local authorities and households.
- Lack of recycling infrastructure expansions.
- For weight based PAYT systems, setting up a data collection system for billing, accounting and system optimisation purposes can be a complex and challenging task.

Main drivers are:

- Guidance required from national legislation. Local municipal authorities are helped when the national government gives guidance how to design and rate the level of a PAYT waste charge.
- Outreach to consumers about how to change purchasing habits. As also noted earlier, it is important to increase social and environmental awareness of citizens.
- EPR scheme.

Potential impact

- Social
 - The whole community benefits from the improvements in waste collection;
 - Better health and safety standards because streets are cleaner;
- Financial
 - A fair system because people pay according to the amount of waste they generate and how they separate it;
 - More jobs in the recycling sector;
 - Less non-recyclable waste, so fewer collections – saving on fuel and labour costs.
- Environmental
 - Reduction of residual waste;
 - Increase of recycling.

How will this help the new Circular Economy Action Plan of the European Commission?

To stimulate source separation and high recycling rates in municipalities, PAYT is one of the tools necessary to be used by cities.

The PAYT instrument is one step towards a smarter city. PAYT demands developing of data collection and tools that could be valuable in developing sustainable value chains for products from design, production, consumption, and waste handling.

Recommendations from the Partnership to the EU Commission

Efficient Extended Producer Responsibility systems will demand more data from municipalities on collection and treatment of different waste streams. PAYT system could provide EPR with these data. At the same time, EPR could help cities in the financing of source separation systems and also help cities in avoiding the finance trap in PAYT.

Cities need help from both the Commission and member states in developing and introducing PAYT. The Commission should seek out how to encourage member states to do this. The PAYT toolkit could be one important measure in this regard.

member states, municipal organisations or others that would like to use the toolkit should be able to ask for support for translation of the toolkit into member states languages.

The necessary next steps

- Promote PAYT Toolkit through EU Institution's channels.
- Distribute toolkit to municipalities of member states that do not apply PAYT.
- Collaboration with associations and institutions to translate PAYT Toolkit in different languages.
- Activate TAIEX P2P Program to support municipalities to implement PAYT.

Where to find more information

- The toolkit is available for free download at: <https://www.operate.it/payt/>

Connection to the SDGs



3 Impact of the Partnership's work

3.1 From the orientation paper to the 12 Actions

The Urban agenda Partnership on Circular Economy started its work in February 2017 and the ambitions of Partnership were laid out in the Orientation Paper, which stated:

The Urban Agenda Partnership on Circular Economy will identify, analyse, review and recommend the need for better regulation, better funding and better knowledge sharing to help cities expedite this transition.

The Circular Economy Partnership, in particular, will aim at increasing the uptake of circular economy concepts within the cities while fostering increase the re-use, repair, refurbishment and recycling of existing materials and products in order to promote a more sustainable growth and new job opportunities.

The Partnership will for a set of selected themes and topics review the specific problems and barriers, the effectiveness of existing policies, and propose solutions that contribute to the take-up of the circular economy in an urban environment.

Within the field of **Better Regulation**, the Partnership has identified three main areas where regulations needs to be improved in order to promote the Circular economy transition in cities; waste legislation, water legislation and bio-resource legislation.

To address the issues the Partnership has worked together with relevant stakeholders and the responsible parts of the European Commission to analyse and review the barriers within the current legislation, in addition **the Partnership have provided the European institutions with our stated position based on these reviews, with input to changes from the urban perspective.**

For **Better Funding** the Partnership have had very good help from the representatives of the member states and the European Investment Bank. Early in the process, we identified that a main barrier was the lack of knowledge and access to funding for circular economy projects at local level.

The opportunity to use the Urban Agenda platform to give input and emphasise the need for specific mentioning of Circular Economy within the post 2020 Cohesion Policy and corresponding funds was also essential to the next generations of cities embarking on the circular journey. In addition, **we will be able to provide them with tools on how to access the different funds and educate both funders and fund-seekers on how to successfully start and implement a circular project at urban level.**

As for many other Urban Agenda Partnership, there has been a relative larger portion of Actions addressing **Better Knowledge**. These Actions might be seen as easier to identify and implement

from an urban perspective, as they do not in the same way require changes in legislation or financing structures at EU level. There is however **great value in the all the knowledge the Partnership have acquired through these three years, which leaves all parties involved well equipped to guide other cities and urban authorities towards a circular economy.** The collaboration with the EU Circular Economy Stakeholder platform also provides us with a unique opportunity to disseminate all the toolkits, guidelines, reports and handbooks the Partnership has developed to the relevant stakeholders.

The Action Plan and the work within the three overarching themes of Better Regulation, Better Funding, and Better Knowledge has resulted in the following output:

Output	#	Description
Reports	6	Survey report on barriers to a circular bio-economy in cities
		Consolidated report on how to mainstream circular economy to post-2020 EU Cohesion policy and corresponding funds
		Classification of Urban Resource Centres
		Issue and mapping paper – Indicators for a circular economy transition in cities
		Final report on Urban Collaborative Circular Initiative – ESPON Targeted Analysis
		Consolidated report "Mainstream Circular Economy into the post 2020 Cohesion Policy and Corresponding Funds
Position papers	2	Position paper on minimum requirements for water re-use
		Position paper on mainstreaming circular economy in post-2020 cohesion policy and corresponding funds
Guidelines/Handbooks/Toolkits	4	Handbook for sustainable and circular re-use of buildings and spaces
		Toolkit for cities implementing a "Pay-as-you-throw" scheme
		Booklet on Better Regulation
		Roadmap for a circular resource efficiency in cities
Online Platforms	2	http://www.circularcityfundingguide.eu
		http://www.circulargovernance.city
Other EU Projects or Networks	3	ESPON Targeted Analysis "Sharing"
		URBACT Action Planning Network "Resourceful Cities"
		Planned consortium - Concept note on test-driving the roadmap

3.2 Further impact beyond the scope of the Action Plan

In addition to focus on solving the bottlenecks we identified earlier in the process, several of the partners have used the participation in the Partnership to push the circular economy transition in their own organisations. Several of the Partners within the Circular Economy Partnership have developed their [separate strategies on Circular Economy](#).

The Partnership has worked to make links to other on-going European programs and projects addressing this policy area. Among others, there has been a continuous dialogue with the **Urban Innovative Action (UIA)** program, where input on both barriers and solutions have been exchanged. The practical experience from some of the UIA projects has also added value to the Partnership's work. As part of the implementation of the Actions, the Partnership also took initiative to apply for an **URBACT Action Planning Network** focusing on implementing circular economy in cities through Urban Resource Centres. In the URBACT Network "Resourceful cities", 8 new cities joined and allowed the knowledge gathered in the Partnership to be further promoted through the URBACT program. The Partnership have also initiated a **ESPON Targeted Analysis** on the topic of Indicator for circular economy in cities and Collaborative Economy which have added more value through the work, specifically emphasising the social aspect of the circular economy transition.

The partnership on circular economy created an innovative and unique kind of cooperation between stakeholders from different levels of governance. This framework gave to the partnership an **invaluable legitimacy and provided us the opportunity to enter into dialogue and cooperate with crucial partners at the European and international level**. Moreover, the partnership with its multi-level governance structure was an unprecedented platform to exchange on topics related to circular economy and to raise awareness on the challenges experienced at different level. This unprecedented form of dialogue was instrumental to work towards innovative and creative solutions involving partners from different levels of governance.

Lastly, the Partnership has been active in highlighting the important role of cities in the circular economy transition. This has enabled both cities; member states and European institutions to reflect on the role of cities in the circular transition and to be more aware about the bottlenecks that needs to be addressed and the necessary cooperation to be engaged with partners at the local level.

Each of the partners has gathered experience and expertise on the topic that will be invaluable to their organisations and other stakeholders interested in learning about the circular economy.