

IO5

Development of the CICLO Adaptation and Policy Making Package

Partner: Stimuli for Social Change

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Introduction

The project “CICLO- boosting the Circular economy skills of the EU services Labor force” is an Erasmus+ KA2 project that aimed to upgrade and multiply the opportunities for up-skilling and re-skilling of long term unemployed and low-skilled workers, in the field of the evolving circular economy market, via innovative Vocational and Education and Training (VET)-tools and pedagogies, accompanied by skills acquisition assessment, recognition and validation methods.

The general objectives are:

To upgrade and multiply the opportunities for up-skilling and re-skilling to long term unemployed and low –skilled workers, in the field of evolving circular economy market, via innovative VET tools and pedagogies, accompanied by skills acquisition assessment, recognition and validation methods.

More specifically:

- To combat low levels of circular economy skills among long-term unemployed and low-skilled workers through open and inclusive digital tools, resources and practices
- Empower workers and unemployed to become creators of their own career via the circular economy market and maximize their employability opportunities
- Enhance the development of critical media literacy skills and competences in VET
- Provide innovative VET pedagogical methods, best practice guidelines, and strategies towards the use of digital tools and innovative learning environments
- Empower all stakeholders to use innovative ICT-based VET practices and resources in enhancing new skills for new markets
- To provide contemporary methods and tools for assessment of skills acquisition, recognition and validation

In view of the above, the five following Intellectual Outputs (IOs) were foreseen:

1. **IO1:** Development of the Circular Economy Skills Ecosystem and Methodological Framework
2. **IO2:** CICLO Curriculum and VET Toolbox of Key Skills Acquisition Resources
3. **IO3:** CICLO Multifunctional and Interactive Platform - Open educational & training e-resource
4. **IO4:** CICLO Skills Assessment, Validation and Recognition Tools
5. **IO5: CICLO Infusion of the Circular Economy in the National and EU Economy – Adaption and Policy Package**



IO5: CICLO – Infusion of the Circular Economy in the National and EU Economy – Adaption and Policy Package

Following the course of the project and the finalization of the CICLO training package, STIMMULI developed an online adaptation and policy package where it will provide specific guidelines to the CICLO stakeholders on how to integrate the CICLO training package in their normal training activities, how to utilize it as a VET component and how the modules and trainees be accredited based on the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET).

The accreditation and certification guidelines provided in the toolkit for the CICLO stakeholders will be a motivation for them to implement the materials in their normal training activities. The toolkit will include instructions on the CICLO online education platform and how it can be used by trainers, pedagogical guidelines and directions for accreditation and certification.

Moreover, a policy framework will be provided to promote further efficient digital VET education for the Circular Economy (CE) while also recommending strategies for more CE actions. The policy drafting and making framework will come to address the ongoing challenges of the EU and all partner countries to up-skill and re-skill their unemployed and low skilled workers in a new labor market with enormous positive potentials.

For the creation of this output, partners and trainees from the Training Activity were addressed with an online questionnaire, regarding their opinion on CE Skills development in their countries, impressions on the CICLO Online Platform and were finally asked about their ideas on policies and strategies to be followed to improve CE status quo.



CICLO Adaptation and Policy Making Package_IO5

Within the development of the CICLO Adaptation and Policy Making Package, output Leaders and participants are called to provide feedback on the second part of the IO5 to give some feedback on how VET skills and especially Circular Economy (CE) skills can be better implemented in their countries.

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Adaption of the CICLO Training Package as VET component

Following the IO1 which set the outputs' state of the art, a training package was developed in line with the ECVET specifications which includes the [CICLO Curriculum and VET Toolbox](#) and the [CICLO Multifunctional and Interactive Platform](#).

CICLO Curriculum and VET Toolbox

The second deliverable was led by Meath Partnership with contributions from all partners and is the output mainly addressed to trainers and VET providers. It works as a guide through the platform, it is an open-source resource and includes:



IO2
CICLO Curriculum and VET Toolbox
Partner: Meath Partnership

- ✓ The CICLO Curriculum Framework
- ✓ The accordance with the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) level
- ✓ An overview of the structure and content of the Curriculum
- ✓ A matrix of the learning outcomes of the Curriculum
- ✓ A thorough view of the Units correspondent with the learning content (Modules) developed in the CICLO Online Platform.

This tool offers a context to the development process by explaining the proposed level of the curriculum and the theoretical frameworks used. It also establishes the key learning outcomes of the curriculum and the guidelines and templates used by each partner in the development of their specific part of the online toolbox. It works as a guide for a trainer since it provides them with the tools to use the training materials not only online but also offline, with the use of inquiry- and problem-based learning approaches, authentic learning opportunities, fast and easy-to-use modules adjusted to the learners' level, with provision of stories and case studies and peer to peer support and communication.



CICLO Multifunctional and Interactive Platform

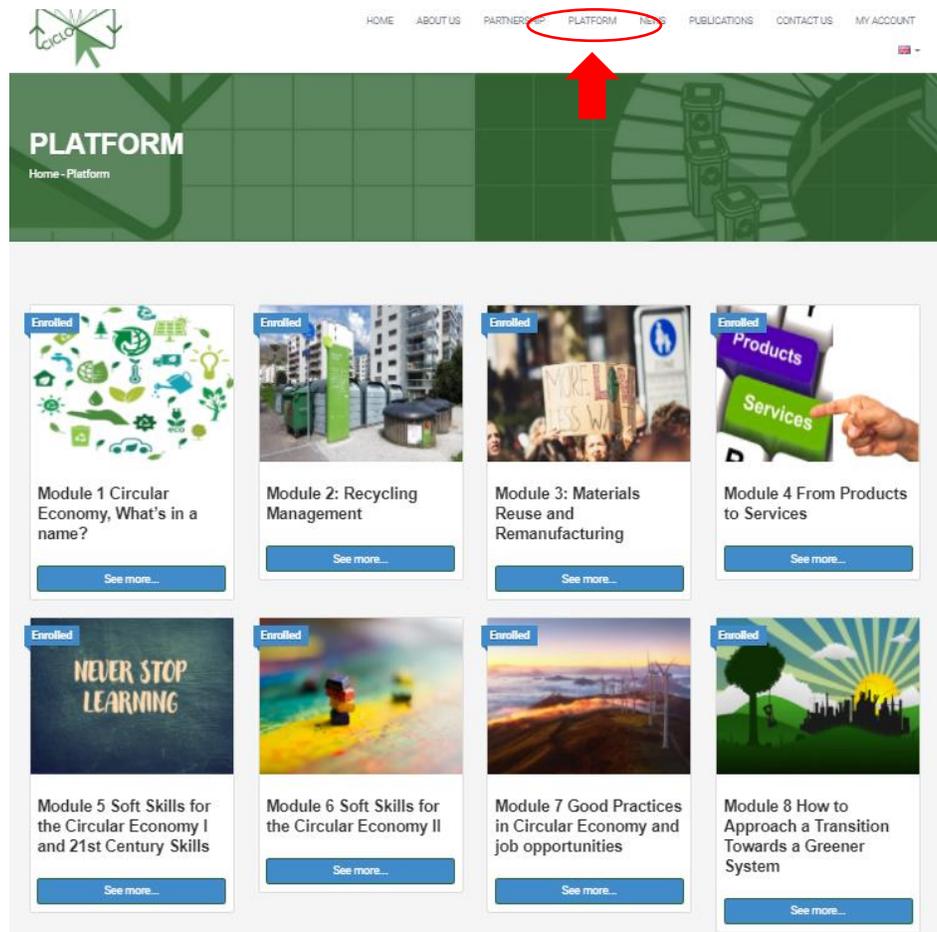


Figure 3

The CICLO online platform can be accessed by the main website of the CICLO project <https://ciclo-project.eu/>. On the top row one may find the 'Platform' button, create a free account, and access the above-featured modules.

An extensive Manual for the Use of the Platform has been developed by the lead partner of this output, Centre of Social Innovation (CSI), and can be found [here](#).

This Platform is a ready-to-use, e-learning tool for users/trainees, with eight Modules which introduce the basic knowledge around the Circular Economy, with respective case studies and quizzes per module and a Final Assessment exercise. It is adjusted for low-skilled users and offers a good first base, an introduction to the Circular Economy concept that can be applied not only to their professional but also to their personal everyday life and shift mindsets.



After having developed the content of the Curriculum and the Online Platform, it soon became clear that its content is highly attractive for any learner who is curious about learning more on the circular economy. So it is not only addressed to learners with a very specific profession but also to those with limited further education, who might benefit from learning more about the CE. Since the CE is a quite recent concept, many people are keen to learn more about the ideas behind it and its potential for our current economy - and even for our lives.

Given its potential, we would like to outline a particular suggestion for both outputs (Curriculum and Online Platform) regarding their integration into different educational systems. The Curriculum and Training Toolbox could be potentially adapted in relevant accredited courses of VET, Higher Education Institutions (HEI) or other training institutions and public services across the EU. Trainers can use it either in a **cross-curricular** (establishing patterns of information between different academic subjects), or in an **extra-curricular** way (applied outside the regular curriculum courses, probably after training hours but with the possibility to be brought to class) or **as a resource itself** (meaning that it can be used outside of any educational context).

Another suggestion would be to consider the professional orientation context within which this training package could be of use. The CICLO training package and the knowledge acquired is **not only relevant to 'green jobs', but also to other professional sectors with a green policy of work or with greening potential**. It is worth mentioning that many companies in the more corporate sector appreciate certifications of employees with a green mindset because it also shows their openness to alternative and sustainable ways of working with environmental sensitivity. These transversal competences are also beneficial to the employers who will have members in their team who have a diverse way of thinking and who have developed soft skills like communication, negotiation and information literacy coupled with technical understanding of cyclic way of thinking and doing.

Some examples of CE Skills application could be in the food and tourism sector, construction companies, textile sector and transports. However, CE skills should not even be limited to those sectors as every business should reflect on their way of working and consider an approach towards a greener - and ideally circular - business.

Since this is a free e-learning platform, already functional in English, Slovak, Greek, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish it is highly transferable and may attract many users from all countries of the world. Again, **this training package** is not **meant to equip** only low-skilled workers, but **anyone interested in getting to know what the Circular Economy is**, how it contributes to sustainability and the economy and how the development of green skills can nourish the ground for a better world.



Accreditation



After completing all modules and quizzes successfully (upon 60% success rate) the users of the CICLO Online Platform can issue a certification for free, which confirms their competences and mentions the ECVET points and EQF level achieved. The Accreditation system has been built upon the **ECVET framework** and on **Principles of VET learning** while respecting the **CYCLE competences framework** (Figure 4).



Figure 4

1

Specifically, for the CICLO Curriculum, the overall course consists of 60 hours of learning equivalent to 2 ECVET points. Each module should take the learner approximately 7.5 hours to complete (3 x 2.5 hours), according to the Learning Outcomes foreseen in each unit. The learning hours/modules have been calculated this way based on low-skilled learners' competences with

¹ More here <http://www.cycle-project.eu/>



limited literacy in e-learning platforms. This was designed this way to make the platform more inclusive and equip this target group with skills for the labor market but also for their everyday life. This methodology has been developed under “IO4 CICLO Skills Assessment, Validation and Recognition Tools” led by PRISM.

According to the ECVET requirement, partners and VET provider have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with which they all agree upon the recognition of the acquired skills from the CICLO Training Package according to the Learning Outcomes Matrix and Framework. This MoU forms the framework for cooperation between the competent institutions. It aims to establish mutual trust between the partners, where partner organisations mutually accept their respective criteria and procedures for quality assurance, assessment, validation and recognition of knowledge, skills and competence for the purpose of transferring credit. Therefore, users who have been issued their certificate, are entitled with credits that can be transferred to other countries promoting workforce mobility among partner countries of the CICLO project.



Looking Ahead

CE Skills Policy Framework Overview

In this section we will comment on partners' input so far on the policy developments and national status of CE. Under "IO1 Development of the Circular Economy Skills Ecosystem and Methodological Framework", led by Magenta with partners' contributions, some conclusions were drawn for the identification of needs but also for recommendations for the development of the CICLO project.

Conclusions stressed out that even though there are many campaigns and practices for a greener world, awareness raising does not seem to reach everyone and it remains informative. Many citizens are not quite aware of the implications while in the industry sector the priorities need to be reset and re-evaluated. However, many interesting practices occurred and paved the way for more to come, but then legislations set barriers or are not adequate to most countries while the green shift for industries can be of great cost. Furthermore, there is a lack of trained staff with CE knowledge to help this transition.

According to partners and stakeholders who took part in the online questionnaire from Stimmuli the CE Skills issue remains of high importance. The level of these skills in partner countries is of low (41.7%) or medium (50%) scale (Figure 5).

Which in your opinion is the level of CE skills development in your country? 1 is low 5 is high
12 απαντήσεις

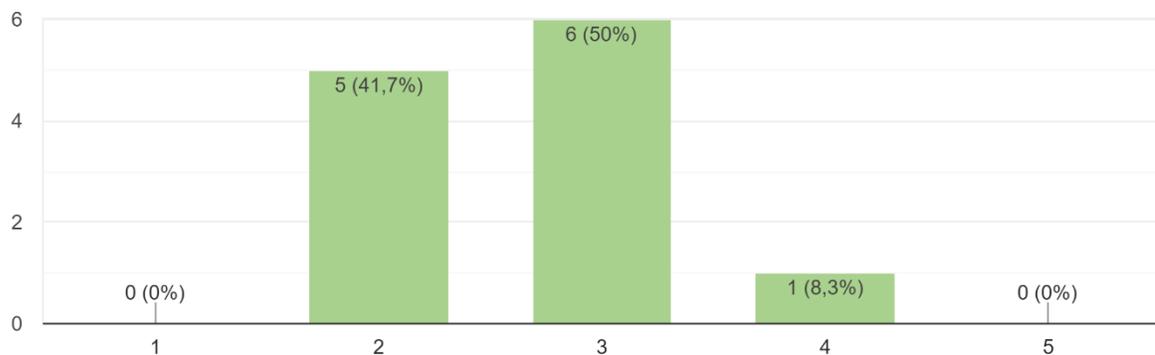


Figure 5

After the CICLO Learning and Training Activity (LTTA) took place, partners were asked to identify the most important barriers that cause implications to green skills development. By far Policies and Laws took the first place; equally important is also the fact that there is no clear understanding of the importance of CE Skills for employability (figure 6). With lower percentages but equally



important are: administration obstacles/bureaucracy, no effective training programmes, no financing for green jobs and low-skilled trainers.

Which do you think are the most important barriers for the green skills' development in your country? 1 is low 5 is high.

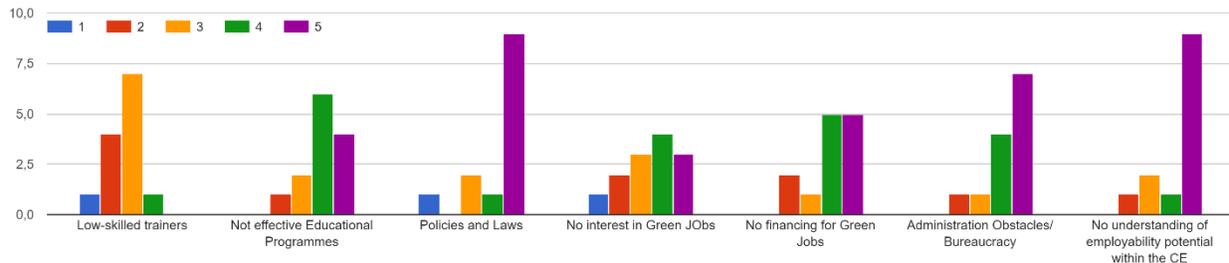


Figure 6

As concluded under IO1 we also see that public administration and authorities have not set as a central priority the CE and the development of skills for that. It becomes clear that the majority of citizens have low understanding of the consequences of not transitioning to CE lifestyles because there is no solid central policy to facilitate and give inspiration towards the CE way of living and working.

CE Policy Recommendations

As climate change has taken already a dangerous course and efforts have been initiated on EU level with **Green Deal**² strategies and with the European Commission launching the **Pact for Skills**³ under the European Skills Agenda⁴, firmly anchored in the European Pillar of Social Rights⁵, it is more than urgent for national policies to activate themselves towards a greener future.

Some additional proposals to the IO1 recommendations that can be of interest for the CE Skills development could be:

1. Public Legislations towards a CE for the development of green VET training.
2. Financial empowerment of VET institutions for green upskilling.
3. Up-to-date and action-oriented trainers' trainings.
4. Development of circular training curricula in different topics of VET areas (fashion, art, food production, engineering, etc.) validated by the competent Ministry of Education.

²https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/European_Green_Deal

³<https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1517&langId=en>

⁴<https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1223&langId=en>

⁵https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/economy-works-people/jobs-growth-and-investment/european-pillar-social-rights/european-pillar-social-rights-20-principles_en



5. Connect and support enterprises which work towards CE practices, to encourage CE-skilled VET trainees to actually implement knowledge gained.
6. Build a more universal education system starting from schools, applying green practices like recycling or reusing, by legislative decisions; the Member States shall provide for the proper infrastructure or relevant funds for all schools to be properly equipped. Education for a greener society is not supposed to start during the academic/higher education period, but it should be nourished from an early education level, when mindsets are shaped, and tomorrow's citizens are harvested. An important factor is also that this process should be followed by teachers and families also, while simultaneously promoting innovative methods like intergenerational learning (e.g., child teaches adult).
7. Promotion of work and consultation with Green practitioners and activists, at all levels of education and during VET training are needed. Cross-sectoral collaboration may involve the industry and policy makers and it could be applied also in the form of job shadowing and coaching.
8. Conduct thorough frequent market analysis to match the skills with the market's needs; this way the CE skills remain relevant and are meaningful and less abstract.
9. Increase penalty policies when a certain dangerous amount of waste is produced; this requires more attention to research and trust to the scientific community. Tax reliefs or bonuses can be foreseen for industries that reach a certain level of green practices with the relevant green impact.
10. EU consideration on including more reusable/recycled materials, choosing green travelling etc. when applying for EU calls, encouraging candidates to follow greener practices.
11. Updating on and monitoring of new forms of pollution like [Digital](#) and [Emotional](#) Pollution which are transparent due to their intangible nature; and investing on research for 2030 forecasts in order to be proactive and prevent new forms of pollution while fighting against the current ones.
12. Ensure funding for CE projects not to result in a once-off initiative but guarantee continuity.

The importance of Advocacy

As implied above it is highly important to promote cross-sectoral dialogue in order to fix burning issues like climate change and call for actions, since collaborative solution-finding and action-taking has been proven to be more effective with team-work.

In this framework advocacy and active lobbying have been proven to have brought positive change, voices have been heard and action has been taken. Advocacy is a process of influencing selected people or institutions in order to achieve desired policy, practice, social, behavioral or political changes that will benefit particular groups. For instance, the **Green 10**⁶ is a coalition of the biggest environmental organisations fighting for greener policies at EU level.

Change can also be achieved at national level. There are different kinds of Green and Solidarity Associations, Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs), public bodies, academia, research institutes and networks in respective partner countries which work towards this direction.

⁶ <https://green10.org/>



Who are they?

Under the framework of the project the main green networks in respective partner countries were identified which could cooperate with each other to advocate as a transnational coalition, co-signing for CE Skills development and for the promotion of green policies and strategies. Namely and indicatively:

Slovakia



**Circular
Slovakia**

The Slovak Environmental Strategy prioritises the transition to circular economy. Building on the Transition to Green Economy process, the Slovak Ministry of Environment, alongside the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Institute for Circular Economy, PwC Slovakia, Slovak Business Agency and Slovak Environment Agency joined forces to establish Circular Slovakia in October 2019. This platform aims to increase discussion between the public and the private sector, as well as between businesses about opportunities

and barriers in the circular transition to result in new projects and partnerships. Simultaneously, Circular Slovakia will share good practice examples nationally and internationally while raising awareness of the circular economy. More information: <https://zelene-hospodarstvo.enviroportal.sk/en/circular-slovakia>

Ireland

Community Resources Network Ireland (CRNI) is the only community reuse and recycling network in Ireland and along with its members, it has the potential to play a unique and valuable role in the development of resource efficiency and circular economy initiatives at both local and national levels. The network is on the board of the REUSE network of Europe, and at a local level it is involved in the National Waste Prevention Network. Their vision is that Ireland is the country where the word ‘waste’ doesn’t exist and where their entire community benefits from the social, environmental and economic value of all reusable resources. Goals are to: provide a range of support for CRNI Members, through a dynamic network, support to strengthen members’ capacity, representing members and promoting our membership base; mainstream the Community Resources Sector through influencing behavioral change, positioning CRNI as a “Go-To” organisation on community based repair, reuse and recycling, and supporting innovative research and pilot projects; develop the capacity of the network. For more information here: <https://crni.ie/>



Greece

The integrated LIFE project LIFE-IP CEI-Greece aims to contribute towards the implementation of the National Waste Management Plan, the National Waste Prevention Plan and the National Strategy for Circular Economy. A new concept for waste management emerges with-in this



project; based on circular economy principles, promoting behavioral changes and supporting actions to increase product life cycle, convert waste into valuable resources and implement successfully the legislative framework for waste. The project team members are Ministry of Environment and Energy (MEEN), Hellenic Recycling Agency (HRA),



Green Fund (GRFU), Natural Environment and Climate Change Agency (NECCA), the Municipalities of Athens, Thessaloniki, Paros, Antiparos, Tinos, Thira, Voula, Vari, Vouliagmeni, Nafpaktia and Alonnisos, Ecological Recycling Society (ERS), Network of Sustainable Greek Islands (DAFNI), Terra Nova (TN), DIADYMA S.A., Harokopeio University of Athens and the Hellenic Organization for Standardization (ELOT). More information: <https://circulargreece.gr/el/>

Cyprus

The Cyprus Circular Economy Network (CCEN) is a network of 5 strategic partners in Cyprus, International and European Collaborators, Supporters and Members. Following the challenges of recent years, the growing demands from the European Union (EU) for the transition of the economy to a green and circular growth model, as well as the recognition of the significant benefits that circular economy offers to businesses, industry, consumers, environment and the economy, the Cyprus Federation of Employers & Industrialists (OEB) took the initiative to establish the Cyprus Circular Economy Network (CCEN), the first pioneering Circular Economy Network in Cyprus. The Cyprus Circular Economy Network consists of the following parties: The Cyprus Federation of Employers & Industrialists (OEB), the Cyprus International Institute of Management (CIIM), the Cyprus Institute (Cyl), the Cyprus University of Technology (CUT), the Cyprus Organisation for Standardisation (CYS). The ultimate goal of the CCEN is to enable and accelerate the transition of Cyprus economy to a circular and green economy, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic, offering its services in a multilevel stakeholder approach; businesses, academia and public sector, contributing to the achievement of the economic and social resilience of Cyprus, for a sustainable future. More information: <https://cypruscircular.org.cy/>



CYPRUS CIRCULAR ECONOMY NETWORK
ΔΙΚΤΥΟ ΚΥΚΛΙΚΗΣ ΟΙΚΟΝΟΜΙΑΣ ΚΥΠΡΟΥ

Portugal

Circular Economy Portugal (CEP) translates the principles of the circular economy into concrete projects, using zero waste strategies, social innovation and collaborative action. It invests in practical and replicable solutions with a positive and structural impact, creating value for society and the environment. In addition to technical skills, it offers social innovation strategies, which means that, it facilitates institutional and behavioral change processes that generate progress for the community. Members are both promoters and consultants or partners in projects initiated by other organizations. Fundamental to CEP's way of operating is the cooperation with other entities and networking. In this way, it accelerates the transition to a circular economy in Portugal. Its Ambition is to make CEP a dynamic hub for





promoting the circular economy, supporting and inspiring the business community, government bodies and civil society in Portugal. More information: <http://www.circulareconomy.pt/>

Italy

To support and accelerate the process of acting on climate change, the Foundation for Sustainable Development, supported by the first group of companies and organizations from different economic sectors, has created the Circular Economy Network, as a tool capable of promoting the development of the circular economy in Italy. The work of the Circular Economy Network is based on some main axes: promote, collect and disseminate studies, research and elaborations on the circular economy; define the key circularity indicators and analyze national performance; analyze the main critical issues and the barriers to be removed, indicating possible solutions; develop strategies, policies and measures to be proposed to political decision makers, favoring a positive dialogue between the business world and institutions; enhance and contribute to the dissemination of good practices and best techniques. More information: <https://circulareconomynetwork.it/>



Spain



COGERSA and EMULSA operate at a regional level and local level in Asturias. These entities focus on recycling methods and promote new ways of reusing. They develop projects at local, regional and European level that promote employment in areas related to the circular economy. These companies have established recycling systems that cover from organic waste to home appliances, they also use electric vehicles to carry out their duties and they develop educational programs in close collaboration with schools and city councils. For more information please visit:

COGERSA: <https://www.cogersa.es/metaspaces/portal/14498/14519-inicio>

EMULSA: <https://www.gijon.es/es/directorio/empresa-municipal-de-servicios-de-medio-ambiente-urbano-de-gijon-sa-emulsa>

Model Strategy

At the beginning of June 2020 the Spanish Government published **España Circular 2030**, the new Strategy for Circular Economy in Spain until 2030. It contains circular economy objectives and a series of strategic orientations for the period 2020-2030.

"Spain Circular 2030", the Spanish Circular Economy Strategy, has been approved by the Council of Ministers, laying the foundations to promote a new model of production and



consumption in which the value of products, materials and resources are kept in the economy for as long as possible, in which waste generation is minimized and those that cannot be avoided are used to the greatest extent possible.

The Strategy establishes strategic guidelines in the form of a decalogue and sets a series of quantitative objectives to be achieved by the year 2030.

Eight main lines of action are established on which the policies and instruments of the Circular Economy Strategy and its corresponding action plans will be focused. Five of them are related to closing the circle: production, consumption, waste management, secondary raw materials and water reuse. The following are three cross-cutting lines of action: Awareness and participation, Research, innovation and competitiveness, and Employment and training.

The strategy:

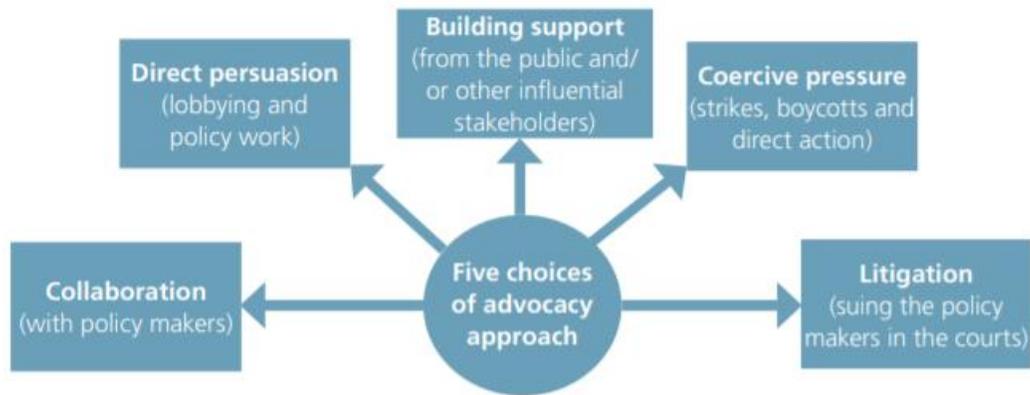
- ✓ sets up a series of objectives for 2020-2030 which will, inter alia, allow a 30% reduction in the national consumption of resources and a 15% reduction in waste generation (as compared to 2010);
- ✓ contributes to Spain's efforts to transition to a sustainable, decarbonized, source-efficient and competitive economy;
- ✓ takes the form of successive three-year action plans providing for concrete measures to deliver on a circular economy.

The document is available in English here:

https://circulareconomy.europa.eu/platform/sites/default/files/espana_circular_2030_executive_summary_en.pdf

Conclusions

In order for advocacy campaigns for CE to be effective and impactful and some elements are crucial. There are different advocacy approaches as seen below and are therefore different kinds of risks to be taken and efforts to be made:



7

Figure 7

Generally, though steps to be followed when designing a campaign for CE according to the *Southern Voices on Climate Change*⁸ are:

1. **Start with a plan:** Planning Advocacy sets out a simple framework and process for advocacy planning that will help you to keep focused, make informed choices and maximise your chance of success.
2. **Develop your messages:** Framing the Debate helps you to focus, frame and deliver your messages so that they influence the perceptions and behaviours of your audiences.
3. **Form (or strengthen) your networks.** You might choose to work on your own, but often you will be doing advocacy together with other civil society organisations.
4. **Lobby the decision makers:** Influencing Decision Makers helps you to navigate your way around the corridors of power, plan your engagement with government policy makers and legislators, and conduct effective lobbying meetings.
5. **Build support from the public.** Not all advocacy has to involve communicating with the public, but in most cases building popular support is needed for the objectives to put pressure on the policy makers, as well as to change public behaviours.
6. **Engage with the media.** Getting positive coverage in the media can be a great asset to a campaign.
7. **Ensure local voices are heard.** It is important that policy makers hear the voices of those who are most vulnerable to the effects of climate change.

The CICLO project consortium believes that for the CE Skills to be developed, pressure must be put on the national Ministries of Environment, Education, Finance and Labor. Networks working

⁷ Ian Chandler, The Pressure Group Consultancy, <https://thepressuregroup.org/>

⁸ More <https://www.southernvoices.net/en/#>



together and signing support letters for each other's local efforts, can bring a huge impact and change to the national CE Skills development policies and strategies. The *power of many* coordinated actions can lead policy makers to decide together with civil society how to move on, co-design legislation with public consultations and more.

This initiative should not be about raising awareness but about **taking action**. The planet is overheating, and this is the ultimate argument for action today. We must act now to secure our planet's, our self's and future generations' survival.



Figure 8 Photo by Markus Spiske