



Financing local circular economy initiatives

Brussels, 10th of May

DECISO

hoop

ACR+

European
Circular Economy
Stakeholder Platform

Financing local circular economy initiatives

On the 10th of May, cities, companies, and other stakeholders gathered at the EESC for a workshop on “Financing local circular economy initiatives”. The workshop was a joint initiative of the Horizon Europe projects [HOOP](#) and [DECISO](#) which aim at developing financing schemes for circular economy initiatives by local public authorities and other project promoters. The workshop contributed to this objective by bringing together experts on different financing tools with project promoters affiliated to HOOP and DECISO. The workshop was organised by the Association of Cities and Regions for Sustainable Resource Management (ACR+) and Bax and Company, in cooperation with the ECESP.

The workshop started with three panel discussions on public funds, public procurement strategies and private investment opportunities. Later, nine project promoters presented their initiatives. Two break-out sessions followed by informal networking enabled them to exchange experiences and meet potential investors.

The first thematic panel focused on **securing funding for circular initiatives**. The keynote speaker Pia Nieminen from the European Investment Bank explained the EIB’s risk-sharing lending instruments. She also underlined the necessity to increase funding by 2030 to achieve the decarbonisation goals and the Green Deal; and highlighted the importance of blending the funding and using a portfolio approach. Subsequently, Tjerk Wardenaar from EGEN and Francesco Niglia from KoysLab explained how different project parameters match different funding opportunities, such as the stage of a project, the sector and the size. Finally, Anna Brussa from Climate KIC highlighted the importance of knowledge exchange and connectedness.

The second thematic session was about the importance and approaches to **circular procurement**. Helena O’Rourke from ICLEI recommended that those in charge of public procurement in an organisation should talk to other departments. Furthermore, cities should start changing their methodology with small procurements and meet the market halfway, not applying too strict criteria in the beginning.

Alexandra Vandevyvere from Circular Flanders mentioned that the EU project Procirc has developed a guide for procurement departments on circular procurement methodology. Sabine Hermann and Stephanie Kessler illustrated how the City of Hamburg has been implementing circular procurement. Panellists agreed that the first step for change is the shift of mindset through training, monitoring, and reporting.

The third thematic session was about bridging financing gaps in cities and regions with private investment. Guy de Sevaux from Invest Netherlands gave a keynote speech on circular venture development and circular financing and Invest Netherland's role in both. Ananya Manna from the European Circular Bioeconomy Fund explained how project promoters could bridge the growth-stage funding gap. Sara Bedin from the PCP Academy explained how public authorities could support circular economy initiatives and start-ups with pre-commercial public procurement. This could help overcome certain barriers to innovations such as high initial costs of technology transfer. Carlos Corominas Creus from Grow Venture Partners highlighted the gap between research and its market uptake through innovations. Grow Venture Partners support overcoming this gap in the tech industry. Filippo Giglio explained how Officinae Verdi acts as a financial advisor in smart cities projects and how they help finding investment solutions and apply a methodology on how to involve actors and stakeholders.

The afternoon was filled with matchmaking and networking activities. Project promoters, investors and experts exchanged experienced barriers and opportunities, and how they could collaborate in future.

Overall, the event demonstrated the enthusiasm and commitment of various stakeholders in driving the circular economy agenda forward. The discussions highlighted the need for collaboration, funding, and innovative approaches for overcoming barriers and accelerating the transition to a circular economy. With this fruitful exchange of knowledge and experience, the event catalysed future circular initiatives and emphasised the importance of public-private partnerships in achieving sustainable and circular solutions.



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Agenda

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| 9:00 | Registration | |
| 9:30 | Welcome & opening remarks | Johanna Reiland – Bax & Company Elena Fries-Tersch – ACR+ Anders Ladefoged – EESC Vessela Stoyanova Monteleone – DG REA |
| 9:50 | HOOP and DECISO at a glance | Elisa Gambuzzi – CETENMA Patrizia Grifoni – Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche |

Session 1: Securing funding for circular initiatives (room: JDE63)

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| 10:00 | Keynote speech | Pia Nieminen – European Investment Bank |
| 10:15 | Panel | Chair: Francesco Lembo – ACR+ Francesco Niglia – KOYS Lab Anna Brussa – Climate-KIC Pia Nieminen – European Investment Bank Tjerk Wardenaar – EGEN |

Session 2: Attracting circular solutions – the power of public procurement (room: JDE63)

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| 10:55 | Keynote speech | Samira Boussetta – DG GROW |
| 11:10 | Panel | Chair: Camilla Sandberg – Bax & Company Helena O'Rourke – ICLEI Samira Boussetta – DG GROW Alexandra Vandevyvere – Circular Flanders Sabine Herrmann, Stephanie Keßler – City of Hamburg |
| 11:45 | Networking coffee break | |

Session 3: Bridging financing gaps in cities and regions with private investments (room: JDE63)

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| 12:00 | Keynote speech | Guy de Sevaux – Invest-NL |
| 12:15 | Panel | Chair: Jorge Rodrigues de Almeida – RdA Ananya Mannan – European Circular Bioeconomy Fund Sara Bedin – PCP Academy Guy de Sevaux – Invest-NL Carlos Corominas Creus – Grow Venture Partners Filippo Giglio – Officinae Verdi |

13:00 **Lunch**

Pitching & Networking (room: Atrium 6)

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| 14:00 | Circular Pitches |
| 15:00 | Coffee break |
| 15:15 | Matchmaking & Networking |
| 17:00 | Closing remarks Cocktails |

