



TOOLS FOR MEASURING THE CIRCULAR TRANSITION – WORKSHOP REPORT

Taking place in JDE63 of the EESC during the second session of workshops, over 80 people attended the workshop looking at circular economy strategies across Europe – much more than expected through the registrations process!

The objective of the workshop was to identify qualitative and quantitative indicators that stakeholders could use to measure their circular transition. In addition, the workshop sought to draw out what factors would make indicators useful instruments, and whether they require targets in order to be effective.

Success Stories

The workshop was led and opened by Michal Len of RREUSE, who introduced Tamara Veldboer of Circle Economy. This kickstarted the discussion on [measuring the circularity gap](#) – just how circular were we? A paltry 9% is the answer, but this can grow through addressing the gap, and creating circular value. How then, to measure this and to measure the value? One answer could come from Ecopreneur's Circularity Check, presented by Arthur ten Wolde.

The [Circularity Check](#) is a system designed and produced by Ecopreneur in partnership with MVO Netherland and WeSustain Enterprise Sustainability. It provides for a life cycle approach, with 5 indicators and 60 questions, to determine the circularity of a product or service. A third pilot has just been completed, and the system has close to 200 users to date, with the pilot version still available freely online.

With the availability of tools growing, [how are these being implemented](#) and used on the ground? Luc Alaerts from the Flanders Policy Research Centre gave in indication. With funding of €2.5million secured to increase the knowledge base, the Policy Research Centre has been able to provide a circular economy monitor for Flanders, along with case studies, policy advice and academic publications. There may be three different levels to monitoring – macro, meso and micro indicators – all of which can help to provide feedback on policy impact. At a micro level, these can be for specific products and services; for the meso level, indicators focus more on systems to fulfil societal need; and at a macro level, indicators should give the effects on the region. The mobility system in Flanders provided an example, with indicators including average distance each car travels per year, number of people per vehicle, number of end-of-life cars collected at official recycling sites, and the percentage of reused and recycled mass from these vehicles.



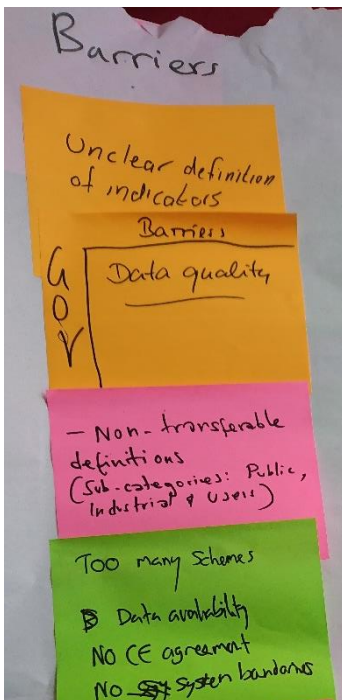
Hakon Jentoft of the Urban Agenda Partnership for Circular Economy rounded up the presentations with a discussion on developing city indicators for a circular economy. What followed then were break-out sessions where the success factors that are needed, and barriers that exist, to the greater use of indicators and measurement tools were discussed in more detail by participants.

Some of the success factors identified to help the measurement of circularity include:

- Easily accessible data that can be communicated clearly
- An agreed vision with clearly defined targets, for example, on material decoupling
- A legal framework to support the harmonisation for collection of information and reporting
- Data should be simple and cheap to collect – a standardisation of metrics across countries would reduce effort
- The approach should not be in silos – there needs cohesion and future-proofing



New Challenges



The City of Oslo provided a very prescient wrap-up of their challenges – where we are going is unknown, what to monitor is unknown, and practical solutions are needed rather than a search for the ideal monitoring system.

During the break-out sessions, participants of the workshop were also asked to outline the barriers that arise with the monitoring and measurement of circularity. Some examples of barriers can be seen in the photo from the workshop to the ← to the left. Feedback from the other break-out groups include:

- Lack of data on materials
- The complexity of the task, and conflicting goals
- The issue of confidentiality
- How to collect data from 3rd countries, such as for electronic equipment?
- How to collect data from micro companies, such as repair services?
- The need to address the tension between the "right" answer, which may be expensive, and the need to be indicative
- The lack of connection between plans and policies with those that have indicators for monitoring
- How to address the reporting burden for businesses?
- How to find new sources of funding?

What's Next?

- **RREUSE** is collaborating with the consultancy **Social Circular Economy** on measuring the wider impacts of social enterprises active in re-use, repair and recycling for society, to be published in the near future.
- **Urban Agenda** will develop its draft indicator set into a toolkit for use by local authorities, and collaborate with **ESPON** and the **OECD** to help cities use these suggested measures.
- While **Ecopreneur** has completed the pilot of its Circularity Check on March 1st, the checklist remains open for use. Together with **MVO Nederland** and **WeSustain**, Ecopreneur is investigating how to roll out further.
- The **EESC** had requested that all workshop leaders for this year's European Circular Economy Stakeholder conference would provide their input to what they felt would be useful indicators for the circular economy, linking this to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. This is part of an ongoing body of work around the inclusion of civil society in the monitoring and measurement of the SDG indicators.

Want to keep the conversation going? Contribute your good practice on circulareconomy.europa.eu, join the online forum or drop us a line: CEStakeholderEU@eesc.europa.eu

