

Welcome to the workshop

CONSUMERS INSIGHTS FOR THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY

European Economic and Social Committee, JDE60 7 March 2019, 09:30 – 10:50

Objective

- Launch the Consumer Insight Action Panel to frame key circular economy challenges related to textiles, plastics and electronics with potential for consumer behaviour-based solutions
- Explore how promising practices to tackle these challenges from a consumer behavioural insight perspective can improve policymaking and take-up of circular business models

Lead

Michael Kuhndt@MiKuWtCSCP - Collaborating Centre on Sustainable Consumption and Production@scp_centr

Schedule

Welcome by the Leader

Introducing the Consumer Insight Action Panel

Markus Terho

Sitra - Finnish Innovation Fund @SitraFund

Breakout groups discussing specific challenges:

- Packaging in plastics
- Premature obsolescence in electronics
- Fast fashion in textiles

Jeroen van Laer

Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers, European Commission

@EU_Justice

@JPSchweitzer1

European Environmental Bureau (EEB)

@Green_Europe

Lars Fogh Mortensen

European Environment Agency (EEA) @EUEnvironment

Daniel Montalvo

European Environment Agency (EEA) @EUEnvironment

Reporting back & wrap-up by the Leader

Key questions

- How can consumer behaviour insights improve policymaking underpinning the circular economy? Where are current best practices developing and what opportunities and benefits does the application of behavioural knowledge provide?
- What challenges can we address from a behavioural perspective? **Do sectoral collaborations, e.g. within the textiles sector, enable reframing challenges in the direction of opportunities** to which we can apply behavioural insight?
- How can we measure the benefits of behaviour-based solutions? What indicators does this require, how can these be developed and by whom?
- Can behavioural insights support policy coherence and contribute to achieving SDG 12 (sustainable production and consumption)?





Setting the scene

EU policies and decision makers have already clearly recognised the importance of understanding and integrating consumer knowledge and behavioural insights into the circular economy transition: "The choices made by millions of consumers can support or hamper the circular economy. These choices are shaped by the information to which consumers have access, the range and prices of existing products, and the regulatory framework" (European Commission 2015, Circular Economy Action Plan).

Despite the importance of consumer insights, there is little research on behaviour change with specific regard to the circular economy, and the need to consider behavioural and consumption aspects is still largely overlooked within the circular economy transition (Muranko et al., 2018). Strategies, actual efforts and expected benefits mostly focus on the production side of circular economy. Misconceptions and assumptions about consumers still prevail, without a sound evidence base about what consumers really think and do when it comes to circular economy strategies, and what role behavioural knowledge and consumers themselves have.

This workshop will address these issues by building on the *stakeholder meeting on consumer insights into the circular economy*, held on October 25th 2018, co-organised by the *CSCP* and the *European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)* as a workplan activity of the *European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform*. At that meeting participants concluded that policymakers and researchers must build on consumer insights to develop a realistic perception of human behaviour, moving beyond assumptions of rationality and integrating this know-how into circular economy strategies in Europe. They also highlighted the need to explore 'prosumerism', build living labs to test behavioural-based solutions, and gather existing knowledge to develop guidelines that could provide practical tools for applying consumer behaviour insights in practice. Given that this workshop will tackle sectoral challenges in plastics (packaging), textiles (fast fashion) and electronics (premature obsolescence) from a behavioural perspective, participants can follow up directly on those conclusions and set the ground for the Consumer Insight Action Panel to shape further dialogue and innovation in mainstreaming behavioural knowledge into circular economy policy.

Coming up

- A summary report highlighting key identified challenges and success stories will be published on the ECESP website and sent to all conference participants
- **Presentations** will be published on the **conference webpage** upon authors' consent
- The Consumer Insight Action Panel will begin its activities and develop trials for behavioural-based solutions.

About the workshop lead



Michael Kuhndt is the Founder and Executive Director of the **Collaborating Centre on Sustainable Consumption and Production (CSCP)** and has more than 20 years of experience in the fields of international co-operation, development and sustainability. Michael has managed programs for numerous multinational companies, ministries, European and UN organisations in the fields of: strategy development for sustainable supply chains & circular economy, development / set up for an approach for sustainable consumption, upscaling of sustainable business models, triple bottom line innovation, sustainable finance and policy strategies based on a multi-stakeholder approach.



The *Collaborating Centre for Sustainable Consumption and Production* was created as an international non-profit 'think tank' and 'do tank' in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme and the Wuppertal Institute for Climate, Environment and Energy. Since 2005, the CSCP works to enable and mainstream a good life for all. In the circular economy realm, alongside the Consumer Insight Action Panel, the CSCP also leads the *R2Pi project* - Transition from Linear 2 Circular: Policy and Innovation in supporting business leaders and policy makers with innovating Circular Business Models and improving Circular Policies.

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

