

RESS RELEASE

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Could design-driven innovation be adopted in waste management?

A free-to-pick-up zone and a second-hand shop in a waste recycling centre? Welcome to the Municipality of Kolding, Denmark. Under the municipality's slogan "Garbage is only waste when the imagination runs out", partners of the Interreg Europe SMART WASTE project spent two days rethinking their local challenges and develop associated innovative solutions to improve their waste management system by bringing changes to their specific policy.

Kolding, Denmark – For several years already, the Municipality of Kolding has developed a specific design approach to be used to create and implement its public policies. Seeing the benefits of design-driven innovation when applied to waste management, the Municipality of Kolding hosted, on 23-24 January 2020, a meeting of the Interreg Europe SMART WASTE project to share with its fellow partners how design-thinking may be applied to problem-solving deadlocks. During these two days, Kolding's Waste Management Plan 2014-2024 was under scrutiny. The Municipality explained how it will improve its plan, thanks to SMART WASTE. For this, a first workshop on the assessment of the programme has already been conducted with local stakeholders, under the slogan "Garbage is only waste when the imagination runs out".

SMART WASTE partners could fully grasp the meaning of this slogan during a visit to Kolding Municipality's recycling facility. Going from direct reuse, to upcycling, and to waste-to-energy, the facility is open 24/7 and offers the possibility for citizens to leave and take items like dishes, books or wood pieces for free. Other initiatives, such as a second-hand shop and the [Skatkammeret](#) - a platform allowing businesses to bring the materials they want to get rid of but are still suitable for use, and making it available for free to schools and museums for educational purposes - are installed in the recycling centre.

Thanks to this meeting, partners could compare their different situations, using not only the examples given by Kolding but also concrete cases from their territories. While three partners - the Resources Recovery Regional Agency (ARRR), the specialised agency of ACR+ member Tuscany Region, the Klaipeda Regional Waste Management Centre (KRWMC), and the Bulgarian Association of Municipal Environmental Experts (BAMEE) - exchanged on policy instruments at national and regional level, the others - meaning the Municipality of Kolding and the Municipality of Apeldoorn, a member of the ACR+ member Cleantech Region - discussed their local policy instruments, with inputs from ACR+.

These discussions will help partners evaluating, in the coming months, the policy instruments that they are aiming to improve in the framework of SMART WASTE. An important step, achieved in Kolding, was to share their evaluation methodologies and the challenges faced when preparing them, including feedbacks received during the respective regional stakeholder group meetings.

What to expect for the next semester?

In the upcoming six months, get prepared to hear more about SMART WASTE as partners will participate in public events held in their territories. Partners will also use these months to identify and share their first Good Practice for innovative waste management practices with the consortium. These Good Practices, to be collected throughout the first three years of the project, will constitute a base for partners to get inspired and bring improvements to their local waste management systems. The events and Good Practices will be published on the SMART WASTE [website](#). To stay informed about the latest development of the project, you are warmly invited to [subscribe](#) to the mailing list.

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For more information:

Clémence Pricken

cp@acrplus.org | +32(0)22346506

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*The Interreg Europe SMART WASTE project - Innovation in Waste Management Policies – aims at **evaluating to what extent current policies have promoted successful innovation in waste management** (both in terms of new approaches and new technologies) and at **proposing solutions to address policy weaknesses**. Find out more information about the project on www.interregeurope.eu/smartwaste*

