

SUBTRACT

Interreg Europe

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Making the point

SUBTRACT is closing with great satisfaction the first phase of a project that has seen a lively and fruitful collaboration between partners that each brought to the table achievements but also challenges both of which turned out to complement each other within the consortium in a most productive way. The guiding idea to put at the centre of the common work the economic viability of reuse centres as small and medium enterprises provided a clear focus and gave way to a stimulating discussion and exchange of experience. In a nutshell: to get started reuse centres need financial support, be it public or private. For the running costs, once they are going, the sale of goods and the remuneration of services (social and environmental) should yield the lion's share. Only in this way reuse centres enter as full members into the circular economy development. The economic sustainability of reuse centres brings into the picture the social and environmental contributions of reuse centres. Creating jobs for vulnerable persons in the whole chain of reuse holds the promise of giving people back their dignity and self-esteem while qualifying them for re-entering the regular labour market. With its guidelines "[Making Reuse Centres Successful and Sustainable Enterprises](#)" SUBTRACT sums up in an encompassing manner the insights which the discussions and exchange of experience among partners have brought. Phase 2 will show, what elements of the exciting knowledge acquired in the project so far, the partners will be able to put into practice in their territories. The conditions certainly are favourable be it for the excellent results produced in phase 1, be it for the historical moment in which the awareness is spreading fast, albeit still among a minority, that less is more and closing the circle in the logic of the next economy.

Giuseppe Rossi, Director of AURI - Umbrian Regional Waste and Water Agency



European Union
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4th Interregional Seminar in Catalonia

From 15 to 18 November 2020, Catalonia hosted the leading European event on circular economy that attracted experts from Europe and all over the world.

This fifth edition of the [Circular Economy Hotspot](#) was a unique opportunity to showcase entrepreneurial initiatives, R&D& I projects, government strategies and successful collaborations that are transforming and circularizing Catalonia's economy.

The last interregional seminar of the SUBTRACT project was organized in Catalonia, at the same time as the Circular Economy Hotspot from 17 to 19 November 2021.

It was a success of participation, as it was attended by thirty-four people including regional staff members and members of the regional stakeholder groups from Umbria (Italy), Nova Gorica (Slovenia), Umeå (Sweden), Helsinki (Finland), Styria (Austria) and the host, Catalonia (Spain).

There were organized visits of successful practices that are carried out in the region by members of the Catalan stakeholders group:

1. Nau vila Besòs. The organization Andròmines manages this warehouse where the collaborative economy is promoted, creating synergies between the entities of the district, sharing, optimizing the resources of the entities and having an impact of reuse.
2. Millor que Nou. The Barcelona Metropolitan Area manages this strategic project with the aim of avoiding waste generation, in which various practices related to reuse are offered to citizens free of charge.
3. Encants de Viladecans. This strategic action takes place in the urban waste collection centre of the town of Viladecans and is managed by the organization Solidança. The building has three areas, recovery, citizen services and shop, and is complemented by annexed areas where environmental and social actions have been implemented.
4. Biblioteca de les coses (Library of things). This community initiative is managed by the organization Rezero and is the first space in Spain for borrowing objects (donated by people in the neighborhood) and organizing workshops and activities.

Flagship representations: Subtract selected among the projects

The collection of "flagship" projects was created at the beginning of 2021 in order to structure and strengthen the contribution of European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) to territorial development policies and from the difficulty encountered in finding information on the results of projects funded in the 2014-2020 period. The aim of the model for collecting these projects is to highlight the best results emerging in the 2014-2020 programming cycle on the basis of two criteria: relevance and sustainability. The in-depth analysis of the projects was focused, in fact, on the results actually achieved, tangible and documentable with specific reference to the solution of a problem and the real improvement of the initial situation, with particular attention to the needs expressed by the beneficiaries in the territories in which the project was developed. Then, results and outputs declared by each project were analysed, creating an aggregation by "intervention theme". The aggregation was carried out first of all within each geographical area and consequently over the entire Italian territory. As a final output, groups of flagship projects with a common theme were created, with the aim of creating within each group a targeted and productive comparison capable of triggering real and effective collaboration in view of the next programming period. SUBTRACT was also selected as one of the interregional projects in the innovative entrepreneurship thematic area.

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I progetti FARO

La raccolta delle progettualità "faro", ovvero di maggiore impatto territoriale, per strutturare e rafforzare il contributo della Cooperazione Territoriale Europea (CTE) alle politiche di sviluppo territoriale.



Project topics news

Presentation of the Protocol for Reuse in Catalonia

On 24 November 2021 in Barcelona, the public presentation of the protocol took place to guarantee the right of consumers to buy without single-use packaging (Protocol for reuse) in supermarkets, supermarket chains or in affiliated shops. A protocol led by the Foundation for Waste Prevention and Responsible Consumption-Rezero (member of the Catalan Stakeholder group of the SUBTRACT project), with the support of the Waste Agency of Catalonia (ARC) that has achieved the consensus of the Generalitat (Regional government of Catalonia) and the distribution sector. In this way, the director of the ARC, present at the event, stated that "Catalonia is once again a pioneer, launching innovative, ground-breaking proposals that will change the way we consume and will be reinforced in the Law on the prevention and waste management and the efficient use of resources in Catalonia".



Social enterprises and the circular economy together to make re-use a win-win practice

With the release of the [Social Economy Action Plan](#), Europe aims to restore a positive trend in employment rates by adopting a social economy strategy that also offers opportunities to the last and excluded.

According to our advisory partner [RReuse](#) - an international network representing social enterprises active in the field of reuse, repair and recycling - equitable and environmentally sustainable economic growth will be possible thanks to the circular economy which, according to the estimates of the Circular Economy Action Plan, has grown by 5% in terms of jobs between 2012 and 2018. "The impact of the social economy is an important ingredient of the Green Deal", says Ruth Paserman, Director of Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, European Commission. "Good practices of repair and reuse are at the heart of the social economy, but they need to be more widespread with the help of targeted incentives and policies".

Based on the annual survey among the 27 members of Rreuse for the year 2019, the data collected indicate that on average a social enterprise creates 70 jobs for every 1,000 tonnes collected for reuse. New centres specialising in repairing and reusing products can prevent so much waste and create jobs, but policies are still limited to mere promises. The prospects for a social economy in synergy with the circular economy are still relegated to the national level, but not yet to the European level. According to Rreuse president Matthias Neitsch, there is a lot of talk about a sharing economy in the car sector, but alternative businesses linked to reuse in other sectors are not yet recognised as social enterprises that benefit the community. "The most sustainable product is the one you already have", says Neitsch, proudly revealing the network's motto. "We need to produce less but use the products better and for longer. We need more cooperation between waste management facilities and the growing repair chain".

EU Social Economy Action Plan

On 9 December 2021, the European Commission presented the [European Social Economy Action Plan](#) aimed at developing the growth potential of social enterprises, cooperatives, foundations and non-profit associations and increasing their contribution to the green and digital transitions. The Plan is accompanied by two operational documents. In particular, the first provides an [analysis of the possibilities and opportunities for the social economy](#) in Europe, the second outlines [scenarios for the green and digital transition of the economic ecosystem](#). The document also presents [funding opportunities](#) available to support the social economy.

The Plan comprises 38 concrete actions to be implemented between 2021 and 2030 and intervenes in three specific areas:

1. Creating the right conditions for the social economy to succeed
2. Providing opportunities for social economy organisations to start and expand their activities.
3. Ensuring the recognition of the social economy and its potential

The Plan aims to make the social economy more visible and to improve the recognition of its work and potential. The Commission wishes to gather public views on the transition path through an [EU survey](#) open until 28 February 2022.



In closing

Networking activities

The emphasis of the European Union on the circular economy as the new paradigm for a sustainable future shows up in the many projects that currently are being financed to look at a wide variety of opportunities and problems when stepping out of the dominant logic of linear economy. While dedicating interest and energy to the viability of Reuse Centres as Small and Medium Enterprises SUBTRACT will perform throughout the project duration international networking activities to exploit potential synergies with other pertinent EU projects, organizations and networks that in a wide sense are working on reuse and more in general on making a circular economy become real. The projects with whom we are networking:

- **BIOREGIO** (Interreg Europe)
Regional circular economy models and best available technologies for biological streams | [website](#)
- **CITYCIRCLE** (Interreg Central Europe)
Circular economy hubs in peripheral urban centres in Central Europe | [website](#)
- **COLOR CIRCLE** (Interreg Europe)
COncnecting and empowering LOcal authorities with Research capacities to unlock the full potential of CIRCular economy | [website](#)
- **GRESS** (Interreg Europe)
GREen Startup Support | [website](#)
- **REDUCES** (Interreg Europe)
REthinking Sustainable Development in European Regions by Using Circular Economy Business ModelS | [website](#)
- **RESOURCEFUL CITIES** (URBACT)
Spaces for circular co-creation and action | [website](#)
- **SinCE-AFC** (Interreg Europe)
Enchancing the Entrepreneurship of SMEs in Circular Economy of the Agri-Food Chain | [website](#)
- **SMART WASTE** (Interreg Europe)
Innovation in Waste Management Policies | [website](#)



Partners



Umbrian Regional
Waste and Water Agency (IT)



Office of the Regional Government of Styria
Directorate 14 – Water Management,
Resources and Sustainability (AT)



Reuse and Recycling European
Union Social Enterprises (BE)



Waste Agency
of Catalonia (ES)



**Kierrätys-
keskus**

Helsinki Metropolitan Area Reuse
Center Ltd (FI)



Water and waste
competence in the north (SE)



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Regijska razvojna agencija d.o.o. Nova Gorica
Regional development agency of northern primorska L.t.d. Nova Gorica

Regional Development Agency
of Northern Primorska Ltd. Nova Gorica (SI)

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