

# Final Report on Circular Resource Management: Insights from the Thematic Working Group of the Circular Cities and Regions Initiative

Brussels, December 2025



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## List of acronyms

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CCRI	Circular Cities and Regions Initiative
CSS	Circular Systemic Solutions
EPR	Extended Producer Responsibility
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
TWG	Thematic Working Group

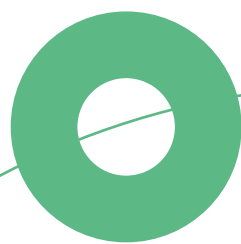
## About this Report - Informing, Inspiring, and Enabling Circular Actions

Cities and regions are increasingly seeking practical ways to manage resources sustainably—but navigating regulatory hurdles, operational challenges, and emerging circular economy practices can be complex. This report captures the insights and lessons from the Circular Cities and Regions Initiative (CCRI) Thematic Working Group on Circular Resource Management (TWG CRM) over three years, from January 2023 to October 2025.

The TWG CRM focused on hands-on strategies for circular public procurement, textile management, and reuse and repair initiatives. Through peer exchanges, collaborative problem-solving, and shared learning, participating cities and regions explored what works—and what doesn't—when implementing circular resource practices on the ground.

This report brings together good practices, thematic insights, and key barriers and enablers identified during the process. It also offers forward-looking policy recommendations and practical guidance for strengthening peer learning and supporting future initiatives.

Designed for local and regional authorities, policymakers, waste management organisations, business support bodies, and other circular economy stakeholders, the report provides inspiration, concrete examples, and strategic perspectives to help cities and regions accelerate their transition toward more circular, resource-efficient futures.



# 1. Chapter I: Looking back

## – Achievements of the TWG

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### 1.1. Introduction / About the support provided by the TWG to their Members

#### 1.1.1. Scope and mission of the TWG CRM

The TWG CRM was established to help cities and regions strengthen their capacity to manage resources more efficiently and advance circularity through practical, actionable strategies. Its mission was to create a collaborative environment where members could address regulatory, operational, and behavioural challenges linked to resource use, while exploring systemic solutions that deliver long-term impact.

Through curated matchmaking, knowledge exchange, and peer learning, the TWG CRM aimed to connect local priorities with EU-level frameworks, enabling members to share good practices, identify synergies, and co-develop solutions. By fostering collaboration among CCRI Stakeholders and external actors, the group sought to accelerate systemic change, reduce resource depletion, and embed circular principles into everyday governance and operations.

#### 1.1.2. Thematic focus areas

The diversity of interest within the group required setting the focus by prioritising each member's most pressing challenge. This was done early in the process to allow for more in-depth exploration of the selected topics in the subsequent meetings.

Based on the members information gathered through various resources, three focus areas were identified and validated. These were not always the Circular Systemic Solutions (CSS), which were formally the focus of CCRI, but also included 'interest' areas where members identified as a possible pathway to circularity in their territory. These focus areas were:

- **Supporting reuse & repair initiatives** (both targeting consumers and B2B).
- **Public procurement** as a pathway of engaging the businesses.
- **Building administrative capacity and managing waste streams** (particularly textiles).

These themes served as 'pathways' to all other cross-cutting issues that were of interest to members (e.g. access to finance, regulatory instruments, stakeholder engagement and mapping material flows and scaling up pilot projects). Through these connections, the idea was to build an understanding of circular economy as a holistic practice. Another objective was to create links between the members and guests that attended the meetings over the course of the project. These links are long-lasting since they can continue beyond the CCRI first phase.

### 1.1.3. Approach and methodology

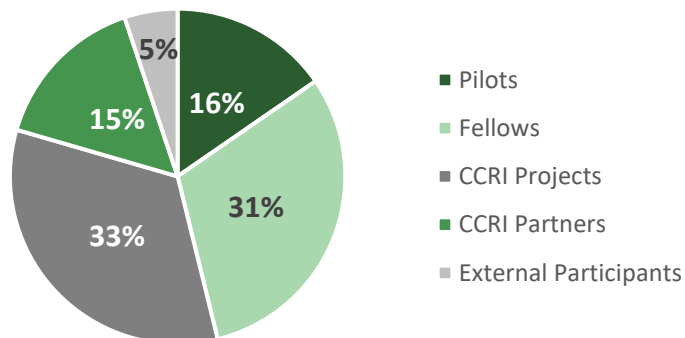
A curated matchmaking approach was adopted to help members identify synergies and share good practices across topics such as circular public procurement, textile management, and reuse and repair initiatives. This method aimed to create mutual benefits and streamline efforts among Pilots, Fellows, CCRI Projects, and other institutions.

A central tool was a matchmaking directory capturing members’ challenges, initiatives, and offers, which made potential collaborations visible and actionable. Based on these synergies, follow-up actions, shared resources, and provided opportunities for cooperation were facilitated. Discussions also addressed cross-cutting issues such as circularity gap analysis and project development assistance, fostering mutual learning and practical problem-solving.

An important feature of the approach was linking local discussions to EU-level policy and support structures. Members received updates on consultations and funding opportunities, helping cities and regions connect with initiatives such as the European City Facility and Smart Cities Marketplace. Combining curated matchmaking, knowledge sharing, and policy alignment strengthened collaboration and advanced circular resource management across diverse regional contexts.

### 1.1.4. Composition of the TWG members

The TWG CRM brought together a relatively large group with 35+ participants representing CCRI Pilots, Fellows, Projects, Partners, and external stakeholders (see figure below). The membership reflected diversity from North to South of Europe, representing both small and large territories, varied population sizes, and cities and regions with diverse priorities and areas of interest. This mix brought a wide range of perspectives on circular resource management challenges and opportunities, enabling mutual learning and collaboration across different contexts.



## 1.2. Achievements of the CCRI Thematic Working Groups

### 1.2.1. Key actions and support activities

**Creation of a community of exchange:** Practical and tested solutions were presented to the members, helping the knowledge transfer, mutual learning and cooperation between the members and beyond. Discussion content and presentation were prepared with the aim of maximising the impact therefore supporting replicability. The focus on the practical elements made mutual learning possible and replication more effective.

**Transmission of learnings from concrete projects:** Examples from within the group or external guests were presented. Members learned about practical tools and methods that they can now apply in their own context. This included practical discussions on implementing reuse/repair initiatives which led to better understanding of the challenges of such processes such as collection of items, repairs and storage. Cross-cutting issues were also discussed such as material flow mapping and project development assistance, connecting the members to important actors and introducing them to on-going activities to which they can build on or participate to.

**Creation of match-making tables combining multiple functions:** These tables were updated and distributed to the members regularly, which helped them to develop their CSS and make other connections in the future. The included the following:

- An overview of all relevant good practices/initiatives that the members are working on.
- Useful external sources.
- A first point of connection between those who are facing similar challenges and those who are working on a solution to tackle a similar challenge.
- Identification of challenges to which no solutions have been found and that can be addressed by changes at higher levels of governance.

### 1.2.2. Results and impacts

**Creation of concrete synergies:** Experience-sharing between members led to new cooperation opportunities. For example, a member presented their work on reusable cups and was then approached by another member who wanted to learn from their experience. This conversation is still ongoing and will lead to further collaboration in the future.

**Creating pathways for collaboration:** Various members invited peers to learn from their experience on several projects and initiatives they have been working on, creating open-ended channel and new contacts between these territories.

**Facilitating links beyond CCRI:** Some members were connected on the topic of public procurement and others are now working together on an EU-funded project which is directly linked to their CSS.

**Establishing long-term cooperation on textiles:** This highly-interested smaller group continues to explore (when opportunities arise) ways of collaboration (for instance when there is Horizon call on a relevant topic) on the topics that were identified during the meeting (e.g. repair directories, sorting & recycling plants, door-to-door collection of textiles, valorising the collected textiles).

## 1.3. Enablers and obstacles

### 1.3.1. Development of the repair & reuse culture

**Overview:** Many of the members were working on multiple aspects of reuse & repair initiatives. These included but were not limited to: setting up and operating second hand-shops and logistical issues related to those, promoting repair culture among the citizens, creating a repair directory and assessing current status of reuse & repair initiatives within the territory.

**Obstacles:** One of the biggest challenges was the low economic feasibility of second-hand shops. Sorting, testing, repairing and pricing items, as well as managing storage and logistics, are resource-intensive tasks. Usually, the shops rely on full time workers, even if they are supported by volunteers. Further, such centres do not pursue profit and aim at being accessible to the large public, so they do not ask for high prices for items. Therefore, the income is generally too low to be self-sustaining and cover all the expenses mentioned above.

Another significant barrier at the local level is the influx of low-value items flooding the market, while consumers are becoming increasingly demanding about product quality (especially for electronics). This creates major challenges for the reuse sector, disturbing the balance between supply and demand and further exacerbating the negative financial outlook. Although policy can help, this issue can be considered as a structural challenge that is beyond the competence of cities and regions.

**Enablers:** Members shared their experience providing insights on how to address these challenges. These included learnings from cities working on repair cafes and increasing visibility of repair culture, examples of multi-stakeholder collaboration in the process of collecting, sorting and refurbishing second hand household items, and initiatives to revalorise used items. Additionally, several concrete solutions were shared with the participants, providing tips on addressing the key barriers. These included the use of ‘auctions’ to gauge the value of items and apply it to other similar ones, selling online instead of in physical stores, launching pop-up stores during periods where people buy more (e.g., Christmas) using unused public buildings to host such stores.

### 1.3.2. Public procurement and circular markets

**Overview:** Circular Public Procurement is considered to be a promising way of sending the right signals to the market and to transform the administrations from within. There is a lot of interest in this topic, but many challenges remain.

**Obstacles:** Implementing circular public procurement remains a challenge for many members. Indeed, if they are somewhat used to ‘sustainable’ procurement, very few have accomplished a ‘fully circular’ tendering process. One of the most important barriers to circular public procurement for the members is to take the first steps and start a process of change within the administration. Because organisational change usually takes a trial-and-error approach and leadership, circular procurement was found difficult to apply to tendering, a process highly regulated. Further complicating the whole picture is the lack of consistency in both supply and demand. This creates a negative feedback loop where supply does not come because there is no demand, while demand is restrained because there is no supply.

**Enablers:** Practical insights from CCRI Projects and Pilots that experimented with circular public procurement were shared with the members. This gave the opportunity for members to ask precise

questions and find answers to the specific challenges they encounter. In parallel, members connected with an external initiative called [C-Prone](#). This initiative defines itself as ‘work on circular public procurement by the administrations for the administrations’ and is a collaborative platform for cities and regions working on this topic. Members have been invited to join this process and several attended meeting and/or connected with it. The initiative is a long-term, promising process so these connections can be further developed in the future.

Additionally, replication pathways and practical tools were explained. One of these, the ‘[Procurement Transformation Canvas](#)’, directly usable by the public administrations, was presented by practitioners who used the tool previously in their administration. This provided a first introduction to something applicable by any member wishing to draw up a ‘change management action plan’ and a step-by-step guidance for replication. Other good practices were presented including circular public procurement initiatives focusing on practical aspects of tendering second-hand products for public administration. This provided important insights on prior market engagement, strategic decisions, risks involved and how to manage them.

### 1.3.3. Circular textile value chains

**Overview:** Textiles is a high impact sector and therefore an important item on the circular economy agenda. All members were interested in this topic as it has become even more relevant with the separate collection obligation of textiles stemming from the recent EU legislation. Members explored various initiatives relevant for CSS addressing different dimensions of this topic, particularly focusing on Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) and its governance as well as collection, sorting and recycling issues.

**Obstacles:** Managing textile flows is challenging across the entire waste management value chain. Some of these are similar to the reuse & repair issues discussed above. Specifically focusing on textiles, the barriers include designing a suitable collection infrastructure while ensuring the materials collected remain intact. There are barriers to sorting as well, since there is a delicate balance to be struck between the impact on social economy sector and ‘effectiveness’ through for instance, automation. Additionally, reusing and recycling are increasingly difficult due to low-quality items and composite materials that are hard to recycle.

**Enablers:** These barriers are common to all members. In order to learn from few solutions that seems to be successful, experts and practitioners were invited to share insights with the members. Practical issues around solutions were explored including textile collection methods and advantages/disadvantages of each method, sorting technologies, how to protect social economy actors, and strategic initiatives in the form of market dialogues and commitments. Discussions also included EPR system for textiles which is quite new for the vast majority of the members. Members’ activities, needs and potential collaboration venues were discussed and summarised in a document shared with the participants. This opened a direct communication channel between the members on specific topics that they can refer to when looking for collaborations.

## 1.4. Inspiring success stories

The solutions below were introduced to facilitate knowledge transfer from the members who have carried out these actions to those who are interested in replicating. These exchanges contributed to capacity building of all members, even if they do not have a defined CSS focusing on one of the topics.

### 1.4.1. A practical approach to reuse & repair centres and sustainable business models for second-hand stores

**Challenge:** Long-term financial sustainability is a challenge for second hand stores; especially for those run by public authorities on a not-for-profit basis. The operations that underpin a reuse & repair centre are multi-faceted and diverse, from sorting what still has value from the rest to repairs, from correct pricing to storage. These are costly and require a mixture of qualified and unqualified staff. Other challenges, mainly structural, only exacerbates the issue: consumer expectations are increasing while overall quality is going down.

**Solution:** Despite facing similar challenges, a particular second-hand store, [Halle 2](#) in Munich seems to be growing strong since its establishment over 20 years ago, responding to some of these barriers in innovative ways. Halle 2 is a municipal company, run by the waste operator, with no separate legal personality. It acquires revenues from its own operations, as well as fees and project fundings. It is 50% self-financing. Although this number might seem low, Halle 2 serves an important purpose in the circular economy policy of the city, especially for the waste prevention targets and promoting reuse culture. Therefore, it has an added value that needs to be taken into account, which goes beyond the annual financial performance. Further, among similar examples, it can be considered well-established given its long presence in the city. It is considered a ‘reuse hub’ active on a wide range of activities such as repair cafes and auctions where citizens can meet and learn about repairs, socialise around sustainability issues, creating communities. It is in dynamic contact with different stakeholders: citizens as donors, but also other organisations which support its operations such as pre-sorting, shipping, testing, erasing data, transporting and providing warranties for relevant items.

**Impact:** Halle 2 successfully contributes to the waste prevention targets of the city of Munich and promotes awareness among the citizens about the importance of reuse. Since data is available on its operations, it can measure its development over the years. As of 2022, around 3 100 people were visiting its stores every month, leading to sales worth EUR 60 000 every month with 170 000 items sold every year. This avoids 500 ton of waste from being discarded every year and saves 2 800 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> perhaps more importantly, it serves as a demonstrator of the importance of such stores for overall circular economy progress of the city.

#### What others can learn?

- **Halle 2 can be replicated across different territories under the right conditions: the legal personality of the entity is merged with the municipality.** This helps with the ‘framing’ of its existence and underpins its importance not just as a business entity but also for strategic waste reduction ambitions of the city. This liberates the decision-making process from only focusing on ‘making the ends meet’. At the same time, cities interested in this solution are warned about the

most challenging aspects, including difficulties in increasing reuse rate, logistic issues and achieving cost recovery as explained above.

- **Think about a good and realistic vision / concept which motivates the staff.** It helps to have ‘motivated’ employees who are convinced about the importance of the cause (in this case, reuse). Politicians and the city council need to be onboard, as they will be the ones taking important strategic decisions. In addition, a clear vision helps with the implementation on the ground, making it realistic and active.
- **The balance between rent costs and location accessibility to the larger public is very important.** Financially speaking, an approach that works is to have a bigger store outside the city (thus reducing the storage and rent costs) but this can make it less accessible. To compensate, several pop-up stores across the city can be envisaged. These can be strategically timed (for instance around Christmas time). Another approach could be to use physical spaces that belong to the municipality to reduce these costs. Other dynamic solutions deployed are auctions to gauge the optimal value of the items sold and actively engaging citizens around events such as repair cafes.

### 1.4.2. Managing post-consumer textiles with a holistic vision

**Challenge:** Textile is a high-impact, complicated value-chain with many obstacles to circularity. Textiles have become items of fast production and consumption while their quality have declined considerably. Consumer culture has shifted from repairs to ‘buy new and discard the old’. Most of the time, repairs are more expensive than buying new. While social economy actors managed to support the sorting and reselling of second-hand items in the last decades, they are now facing existential challenges. Extremely low-quality items are flooding their collection systems. Competition from new, highly disruptive actors such as online second-hand platforms for higher quality items undermine their business model. At the recycling stage, composite fibres are difficult to recycle and upscaling efforts for recycling and sorting show limited success.

**Solution:** In the face of these intertwined challenges, several territories are moving towards a holistic strategy. They are building a future-oriented vision combining different tools. One such example is the [Textile Strategy of Metropolitan Region of Amsterdam](#). It is the region’s systemic solution for a paradigm shift in the textile sector with the aim of achieving 70% circularity by 2030. Part of the ‘Green Deal process’ in the Netherlands, the strategy combines many dimensions such as working for a cultural shift for both businesses and citizens, creating market dialogues and commitments and addressing technical barriers such as sorting and large-scale recycling. It prioritises eco-system building over individual solutions, adopting a multi-actor approach. One of its focused initiatives is the [Denim Deal](#), a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) initiated by the Dutch government. It aims to build an ecosystem around post-consumer recycled cotton for denim production. It tackles many facets of the issue such as the sorting and recycling plants. It combines different tools to ensure a holistic approach, from a fully functioning automated sorting plant to vouchers for low-income citizens ([City Pass](#)) enabling them to get one item repaired for free. It is an example of multi-actor approach, bringing many relevant stakeholders, such as local authorities, waste processors, textile manufacturers, spinners and waivers.

**Impact:** By building on a common definition and vision, the Denim Deal ensured its own continuity. Involving local and global brands and make them commit to certain goals built trust among the stakeholders and opened lasting communication channels between them and the public authorities. As a PPP, it became an important component of the Textile Strategy. Its membership has grown in the years since it was set up and well exceeded its initial goals of producing three million pairs of jeans

using at least 20% recycled cotton with 12 million produced. It brought together 54 partners and recently has become a global initiative, reaching beyond the Netherlands. The textile strategy delivered many other successful sub-initiatives such as the [Circular Hotel Linen](#) reducing the environmental impact of textile use from hotel industry and [United Repair Centre](#) which started as a project to provide B2B repair and re-commerce solutions for clothing and accessories and became an [independent business](#).

### What others can learn?

- **Transferability potential requiring limited investment.** While all the actions included in the strategy may seem challenging at first, the concept of ‘eco-system building’ itself does not require much initial investment to implement. In a similar fashion to market dialogues, the process can be started with limited resources. Several steps such as stakeholder mapping to identify industrial partners and creating a common vision are relatively easier to replicate. Other initiatives such as repair bonuses can also be replicated in relatively short time.
- **A successful replication should adopt an approach that combines different levels of ambition and detail** including education (training skilled labor who can repair textiles), financial investment for automated sorting facilities and many other activities. Nothing is too small to contribute.
- **A common vision** regarding what circularity means across different stakeholders is a powerful starting point.
- **Cities and regions starting a similar journey are advised to have long-term planning for the staff** (regardless of the department they are working for) who will work on the initiative all the way. It takes time and effort to build eco-systems and sustain them. This creates a vulnerability for continuity and ownership. Having a stable team in place for the long haul helps with this challenge.

## 1.5. Recommendations to policymakers

### 1.5.1. Promoting reuse & repair within the territory (including textiles)

#### Recommendation 1. Consider introducing a repair bonus for citizens.

In most cases, **repairs are costlier than buying new**. This is a key point in consumer behaviour and creates the biggest obstacle to opting for reuse. **Tax deductions** for repairs are an efficient way of countering this, but they are mostly outside of the local and regional competence. In such cases, a repair bonus can be introduced in the form of a voucher which can be used by the citizens for repairs.

#### Recommendation 2. Consider the availability and the visibility of the repair service.

Both supply and demand need to be addressed. This means a voucher will not work on its own if there are no repair services available at an accessible distance. To tackle this widely mentioned challenge, **local and regional authorities can create training and educational programs**. Further, **repair directories** showing the repair services available in the city can be considered to make the existing repairers visible to the citizens.

### Recommendation 3. Make a case for reuse.

Communication around buying second-hand would benefit **from stressing the strongest aspects of these items against new ones**: for textiles it is the uniqueness and higher quality. For electronics, bicycles and others, a similar point can be made with more emphasis on the sustainability dimension.

### Recommendation 4. Mobile services are a viable option.

There might be areas without any repair service, decreasing the level of attractiveness for the citizens. To counter this, municipalities can facilitate a **'mobile service' in coordination with repair professionals**. This mobile service (for instance a repair-truck) can go around at planned dates and provide repairs and raise awareness in different neighbourhoods. This method can be used for textiles and small electronic equipment or bikes that can be easily repaired.

### Recommendation 5. Combine different activities to increase visibility.

Repair cafes and other community **events such as festivals, concerts can be combined to attract a greater number of people**. This way, a repair stand will be visible to many more citizens who are not there specifically for the repairs. Further, **similarly themed events** can be combined such as 'second-hand fashion shows' or cloth-swaps to create awareness about the reuse as a 'lifestyle concept' rather than an isolated issue.

### Recommendation 6. Boost reuse & repair initiatives by linking them to wider policy goals.

There are cases where bike repairs have been integrated into the sustainable mobility strategy of the city. In another example, thinking about a reuse centre in terms of waste prevention helps to build a more compelling case.

### Recommendation 7. Items collection is important and determines the success in subsequent stages.

How the used items are collected from the citizens and similar sources is an important strategic choice, which will have repercussions for the long-term. Once in place, it is difficult to change them without creating major disturbance to the operations. Options such as **door-to-door collection or bring-back points have their advantages and disadvantages depending on the context**. For instance, door-to-door collection can be more convenient but could also encourage theft. In order to identify the most suitable option, several factors need to be taken into account. The collection systems should be designed in consultation with stakeholders and based on studies on citizen behaviour.

### Recommendation 8. Use municipality assets to tackle logistical issues.

Municipalities have assets in their territory such as buildings and land which can be used to respond to some of the logistical issues. These spaces can be provided free of charge or at reduced cost to be used as storage or sale points. Further, municipal operators running second-hand shops can opt for alternative solutions such as online sales and pop-up stores to reduce costs.

### Recommendation 9. Make use of legal instruments.

Reassuring the consumers about the quality of second-hand items is vital, especially when it comes to electronics. There are **legal frameworks such as the CENELEC Standards** which serve this purpose. They can be used by the second-hand shops to alleviate the consumer hesitation about electronic devices, increasing sales.

**Recommendation 10. Consider building collaborations to face challenges together.**

Municipalities have a **wide range of potential collaborators** they can rely upon. For instance, social economy actors have been an indispensable cornerstone of collecting, sorting, repairing second-hand items donated by the citizens. They are also valuable in providing social benefits through creating jobs or can be integrated into educational training programs. **Private actors can provide skill, technology and expertise as well technical support.** For instance, in the case of large electronic appliances, they can offer, free of charge, their diagnostic tools to the actors at the sorting facility. This significantly accelerates the process of testing the appliances, reducing staff and storage costs. Other actors can support transport, storage and staffing processes while creating social benefits.

**Recommendation 11. Protect and nurture these local and regional collaborators.**

With new modes of production, distribution and consumption, local actors who have been working on circular economy initiatives are facing additional challenges. This is the case for textile sorting facilities, second-hand shops or local repair shops for electronics, all of which are under increased pressure from global private sector actors. For instance, the latter are now facing competition from the ‘professionalised repair services embedded in the corporate ecosystem which provide repair services to their own customers. The directories listing repair shops should take this into account and make sure they are not excluded. In another example, the current context is favouring automation of sorting facilities for textiles. It is important that **policies are designed at local level to make sure that social actors have the capacity (finance, technical and human) to use these new technologies without jeopardising their social objectives.** Designing policy initiatives through consultations with social actors will protect them, making the local and regional level more resilient in the long-term.

### 1.5.2. Circular public procurement and the mind shift in the public administration

**Recommendation 12. Know your context.**

A good starting point to introduce circular products and services is to **develop an understand of where you can make the biggest difference (economic, environmental and social impact).** It also requires a good understanding of the market, what is available and by whom and for how long. A good starting point can be a ‘**spending analysis**’ to see what type of items the administration is spending money on and the potential impact of each spending category.

**Recommendation 13. Make a case for circular public procurement as a stronger enabler of economic and environmental resilience.**

Encouraging circular public procurement should be seen as a way to support overarching goals of the administration, such as supporting local businesses and creating employment. This way, it can be used to create jobs, initiative innovation, promote creative spaces and delivering environmental gains, all at once.

**Recommendation 14. Explore your options thoroughly.**

Getting informed about what is legally and practically possible is very important. Practitioners recommend **thinking about different types of tendering and contracts in terms of ensuring the public authorities keep a level of control on the process.** Different services & products might require different approaches which should also be taking into account.

**Recommendation 15. Organisational change takes time.**

When it comes to circular public procurement, it is unrealistic to expect that things will change overnight. Organisational change takes time, and trial and error will be mostly necessary. Transformational process should take this into account from the beginning and prioritise to **'start somewhere and learn by doing'** rather than waiting for the perfect conditions.

**Recommendation 16. Find champions to start the process.**

To start the process within the administration, it is recommended to start with **a person or smaller group of staff who are motivated** to take things forward and who will own the process. Using the tools shared above, they can identify the current behaviour and the desired behaviour as well as an action plan to achieve it. These champions would ideally be in touch with different departments avoid silos and to create real momentum.

**Recommendation 17. Consider market dialogues to unblock the paradox.**

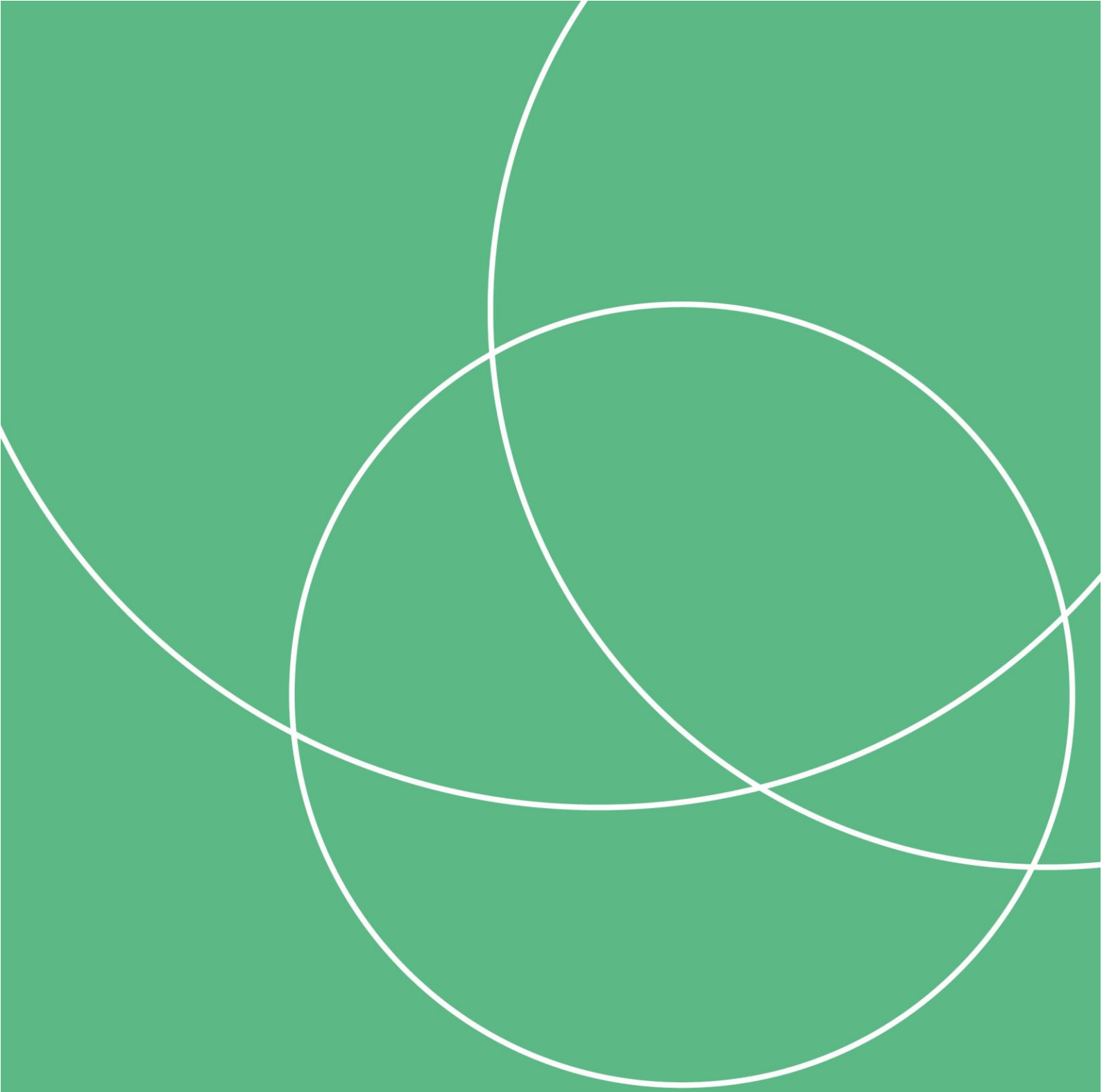
Circular public procurement is a complex process full of double binds: if the tender requirements are too easy, circularity impact cannot be guaranteed. If they are too ambitious, no company will apply for it. **The supply and demand rarely match in a stable, consistent way:** it is a big risk for companies to produce circular products without the demand, but it is impossible to buy circular products if there are none available on the market. **Market dialogues (or market engagement)** are a potential solution because they rely on 'anticipatory' discussion with the suppliers, providing them with signals without the actual commitment on both sides. A specific application is pre-tendering which includes signalling from the buyer its intentions and needs for a future public tendering. It relies upon solutions discussed in a transparent way, building trust and innovation from all parties involved.

**Recommendation 18. Beware of the risks.**

Market dialogues are not magic bullets and might carry some risks. Deciding too early on a solution could create lock-in effects. Transparency and legal scope are important to avoid subsequent issues such as unsuccessful applicants challenging the decisions for being 'unfair' competition. This could create mistrust for the future indicatives, harming the nascent markets considerably.

**Recommendation 19. Make use of available support structures.**

There are **several support mechanisms in the EU** that help public administrations with sustainable and circular public procurement. Although they have great potential, they are not well-known among the practitioners. These include for instance, the [Public Buyers Community Platform](#) and the plethora of tools from the European Commission on [Green Public Procurement](#). These platforms can help navigating legal structures, connect with peers, get advice and pool resources together for impact.



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