






**Empowering local
action: A place
based approach
to circular
transformation**



**Round up
from WCEF
Accelerator**

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Zero Waste Scotland

zerowastescotland.org.uk

Zero Waste Scotland exists to lead Scotland to use products and resources responsibly, focusing on where we can have the greatest impact on climate change.

Using evidence and insight, our goal is to inform policy, and motivate individuals and businesses to embrace the environmental, economic, and social benefits of a circular economy.

Introduction

In April 2024 Zero Waste Scotland hosted an accelerator session at the [World Circular Economy Forum 2024](#).

We showcased the work we have been doing with cities, regions, and local communities in Scotland, who are at the forefront of the green transition, translating national circular economy ambitions into tangible action on the ground.

Our research shows that adopting a circular economic model at the local level can deliver many benefits in terms of addressing the climate and nature emergency, creating new jobs and upskilling opportunities to combating social inequalities.

Despite innovation and creativity in this domain, we know that local governments are still facing many challenges including; financial constraints, lack of enabling policy/ regulation, capacity and technical knowledge gaps, and siloed governance structures, all of which can hinder the full potential of local ambitions.

In this document you will explore several case-studies which were presented at our event which explore how cities around the world are overcoming these challenges and driving circular transformation from the bottom-up.





Policy & regulation

How can local government use **planning frameworks, building standards and procurement** to enable the circular economy?

Dordogne Region, France



The Dordogne Departmental Council effectively utilised procurement tools to establish a sustainable food system within schools as part of its [100% Organic, Local, and Homemade School Food Project](#).

Through strategic procurement practices, the council designed tenders tailored to the Department's objectives, while allowing schools to maintain control of the food they procured. They developed a tool to estimate food needs accurately, aligning procurement with local production and preventing food waste. And incentives were provided to schools for purchasing local and organic products from short supply chains, reinforcing sustainable procurement practices.

Between 2018 and 2019, the first pilot school was implemented in Belves, showing the viability of the project and becoming "France's first certified 100% Organic School" in only 6 months and with an extra cost of only 0,10 € per meal.



Policy & regulation continued

London, United Kingdom

Under the London Plan, development proposals that are referred to the Mayor's office are required to submit a [Circular Economy Statement](#), which must demonstrate how a development will incorporate Circular Economy measures into all aspects of the design, construction and operation process.

This helps to ensure that applicants seeking planning permission for relevant schemes:



- consider strategies to facilitate the transition towards a circular built environment
- report against numerical targets that will facilitate monitoring of waste and recycling
- recognise opportunities to benefit from greater efficiencies that can help to save resources, materials and money.

Malmo, Sweden



The City of Malmo, Sweden's third largest city, has been actively implementing [sustainable procurement](#) over several years.

With over 26,000 staff, the spend on furniture within municipal offices is significant. The city has worked to embed circular principles when procuring furniture, through the following interventions:

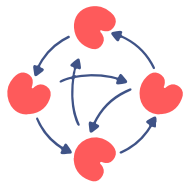
- Initially developed high standards and specification for new furniture purchases, particularly in relation to minimising hazardous chemicals.
- Later they developed services, tools and internal marketplaces that support the reuse and maintenance of furniture within the organisation.
- In 2018 Malmö decided to pilot the use a framework contract, working with local SMEs to supply reused or refurbished furniture.
- A 'priority list' and guidelines were developed instructing staff to look to reuse internally first, then to try procuring second-hand externally, with buying new as a last resort.
- The city estimates that buying reused will allow 20-30% in savings and that over time, quantities purchased using this framework will increase.



Governance

Are there **innovative governance frameworks** that can be leveraged to improve ways of working? How can we **embed leadership on circular economy** across cities and regions?

Friesland Region, Netherlands



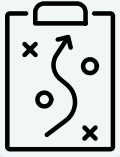
**CIRCULAIR
FRIESLAND**

In 2016 in the region of Friesland in the Netherlands, several business leaders came together to establish an association with the aims of fostering a circular economic model for their region.

Since then, this peer-to-peer network has grown and the association has over 180 members and now includes local government, educational institutions (all levels) and has fostered strong working relationships with other regional and national organisations.

[Circular Friesland](#) have set the ambition for 55% reduction in CO2 emissions and 55% reduction in primary raw materials by 2030, and established priority sectors in construction, water technologies, plastics, agriculture, mobility and tourism where they are working actively with value chains to identify opportunities for circular innovations.

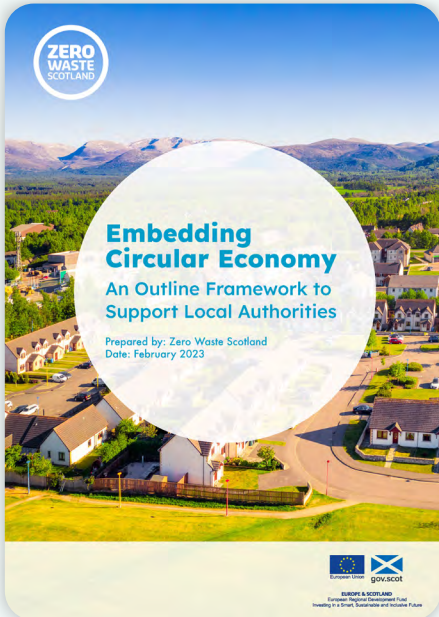
The association also works closely with academic institutions to engage on research projects and innovation challenges on circular economy topics. And are working at all educational levels to teach the next generation about circular economy and its benefits.



Capacity building

How can we successfully **build technical circular economy expertise** within local government, moving beyond traditional waste/resource management and **educate on how circular economy** fits into the wider net-zero and economic development plans?

Aberdeenshire, Scotland



Zero Waste Scotland has developed a framework to help guide local authorities and municipalities on their circularity journeys.

The framework is designed to be action-oriented, helping local authorities at the beginning of their circularity journey to identify how to get started.

It helps to develop the understanding that circular economy requires system-wide change and demonstrates the need to involve all departments / wide range of stakeholders. By presenting a wide range of areas for action it helps local governments move beyond internal operations to driving the transition at city/regional level.

The framework was piloted by Aberdeenshire Council with support from Zero Waste Scotland. A support plan was drawn up which reviewed progress against the foundation actions and a selection of priority projects / actions identified by the council. The pilot led to a feasibility study looking at how reuse provision could be improved and the development of a circular economy-focused post within the economic development team.



Citizen engagement

How can **citizens be engaged in the transition** to a circular economy? How can we align circular solutions with the **needs of local communities?**

Florence, Italy



The City of Florence in Italy has piloted a tool called the [Lifestyle Test](#), developed by SITRA, which is accessible via an app. This test prompts citizens to answer questions about their lifestyle, generating a sustainability impact report based on their responses. Citizens receive personalised action plans with recommendations to reduce their environmental footprint. If certain actions seem unfeasible, citizens can provide reasons, citing barriers such as cost or infrastructure limitations.

By piloting this app and collecting data from citizens, Florence aims to pinpoint the primary obstacles hindering sustainable living. Armed with this information, the city can then focus on developing necessary infrastructure or disseminating relevant resources and information.



Finance

What opportunities are there for local/regional governments to **access finance/funding to progress the circular economy**? How can **public-private partnerships help to improve access to funding**?

Ljubljana, Slovenia

UNECE PPP and infrastructure award 2023
Database of case studies*



7th edition of the
UNECE International PPP Forum
3-5 MAY 2023 | ATHENS | GREECE



*A total of 70 case studies were received by the UNECE secretariat for the UNECE PPP and infrastructure award 2023 organized at the 7th edition of the UNECE International PPP Forum (Athens, Greece, 3-5 May 2023) and 49 were added to the UNECE database of case study material. The case studies are being published as received directly from the contributors and were self-assessed using the UNECE PPP and infrastructure Evaluation and Rating System (PIERS): An Evaluation Methodology for the SDGs. The UNECE database contains case studies from all over the world that aspire to meet the UNECE five PPP desirable outcomes for the SDGs. The secretariat is grateful for the valuable contribution of Mr. Pedro Neves, PPP practitioner and university professor and researcher.

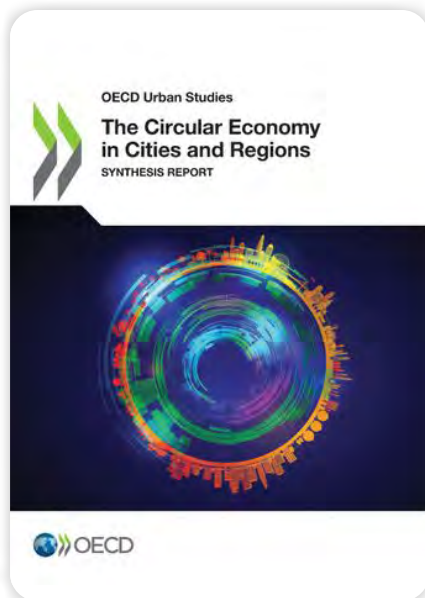
The City of Ljubljana in Slovenia utilised an [Energy Performance – Public Private Partnership](#) model to retrofit over 100 public buildings, such as schools, kindergartens, libraries, and utilities, enhancing energy efficiency and living standards for local residents.

Due to budget constraints and lack of expertise, the city opted for the EPC model. In an EPC arrangement, an external Energy Service Company (ESCO) initiates a project that will deliver energy efficiency or renewable energy and uses the stream of income from the cost savings to repay the costs of the initial investment. This approach allowed the city to renovate buildings without upfront costs, reducing energy consumption and improving affordability.

Call to action

If you want to learn more about the circular economy in cities and regions – deep dive into the following reports:

[OECD Circular Economy in Cities and Regions Synthesis Report](#)



[CCD Report 2024](#)



If you're a local government representative – why not consider signing your city up to [Circular Cities Declaration](#).

