

LET'S GO CIRCULAR!

Paving the way for a circular transition of cities

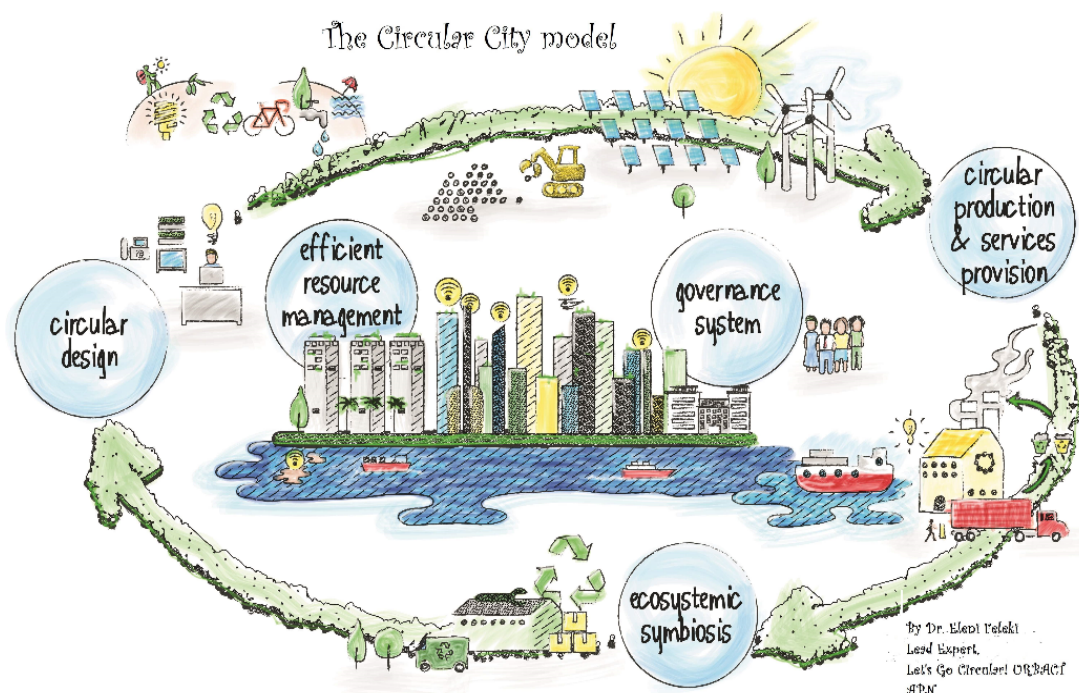
CIRCULAR CITIES CALL FOR MORE SUPPORT FROM THE EU

We address this position paper to the European Parliament and Commission. The paper depicts policy recommendations on circular economy, resulting from the discussions among ten European local authorities that participate under the lead of the City of Munich in the Action Planning Network 'LET'S GO CIRCULAR! Paving the way for a circular transition of cities', funded by the URBACT IV programme. We particularly call for appropriate legal frameworks and standardization, support through investment and funding, and the promotion of Europe-wide cooperation. The importance of a circular transition and the role of cities should be taken into consideration in the post 2027 funding period and highlighted in the next Multi Annual Financial Framework of the European Union.

THE ROLE OF CITIES IN A CIRCULAR ECONOMY

According to the International Resource Panel (IRP), the main cause of global climate change is the increase in the consumption of raw materials. This necessitates a shift towards resource efficiency, getting the most value out of the materials that we use and reducing waste. Resource efficiency is an important component of the European Commission's climate strategy, as highlighted in publications on the European Green Deal and legislative documents of the current EU funding period 2021 to 2027.

The declared goal is a so-called circular economy – in the best case a holistic ecosystem, based on reduced consumption and working in closed cycles. According to Worldbank, cities generate up to 80% of all economic growth (2020), while pursuing ambitious climate goals. Therefore, municipalities have the transformation task of boosting circular economy and being a role model. However, municipalities reach limits when installing and financing circular economy measures – and call for support.



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A CALL FOR MORE SUPPORT FROM THE EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS

We call on the European Parliament and the European Commission to strengthen their support of European municipalities as follows:

- Facilitate the efforts of local authorities by creating appropriate **legal frameworks** both at EU and Member State level. This will unlock the potential to introduce new technical standards providing new opportunities for large scale application of research results. If need be, the signatories declare willing to present the existing barriers and to shed light to potential legislative changes.
- Place greater focus on the financing of circular economy measures at local level as one of the most important issues. **Investment decisions** in system-serving and new technologies as well as infrastructure must be encouraged through state aid and competition law relief so that circular economy measures are no longer made more difficult or delayed by state aid law.
- Maintain and massively expand the existing **funding programmes** for municipalities when implementing circular economy strategies in the post 2027 funding period. To support municipalities, appropriate financing programmes must be set up both at the EU level and in the member states.
- Set up an easy-to-use **communication and information tool for municipalities** where they can exchange experiences, funding opportunities, and best practice examples. The existing Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform could serve as a model for this.
- **Standardize procurement** guidelines both at the EU level and in the Member States in such a way that municipal procurements are made easier in the spirit of circular economy.
- Support the municipalities' efforts through the financial **participation of manufacturers and distributors**. At the same time, the potential of extended producer responsibility for waste prevention should be fully exploited by extending the 'right to repair' through the introduction of a manufacturer-financed EU-wide repair bonus.
- Support **inter-municipal cooperation** as a suitable and tried-and-tested form of organization at the European level. This includes improving the competition and tax law framework.

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THE URBACT IV NETWORK "LET'S GO CIRCULAR!"

In 2023, the URBACT network LET'S GO CIRCULAR! was launched by the City of Munich, aiming to pave the way for a sustainable, just, and productive transition of Europe's cities towards a functioning circular economy. Ten partner cities along with their local stakeholders develop integrated approaches for urban areas, addressing all issues relevant for a holistic strategy of circular city ecosystems and promoting innovative solutions in a variety of sectors:

- textile industry
- construction
- water cycles
- electronic devices
- food
- plastics
- sustainable tourism and more.

The network partners constantly prove that municipalities play an important role to facilitate, enable, and serve circular economy. Procurement systems give them an important leverage as potential enablers of sustainable and circular products.

Municipalities have direct connections to citizens and local businesses. Thus, the network fosters the exchange of ideas and development of strategies for implementing circular economy measures focussing on the following themes: governance; education, information, capacity building for circular consumption patterns; development of methodologies and tools; fostering innovation and entrepreneurship; infrastructure.

Our partners strive to become a guiding light enabling the extension of product life cycles, promoting reuse, improving the use of recyclable materials, disposing of non-recyclables, and massively reducing the amount of waste.

The LET'S GO CIRCULAR! partner cities are: Munich (DE, Lead Partner), Cluj-Napoca (RO), Corfu (GR), Granada (ES), Guimarães (PT), Lisbon (PT), Malmö (SE), Riga (LV), Oulu (FL) and Tirana (AL).

CONTACT AND INFO

For deeper insights and project updates please visit:

<https://urbact.eu/networks/lets-go-circular>

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/let-s-go-circular/>

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Assigned URBACT Lead Expert: Eleni Feleki

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SIGNATORIES

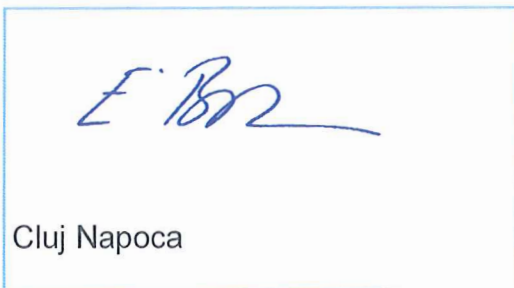
City of Munich



City of Munich

Dieter Reiter
Oberbürgermeister

Cluj Napoca



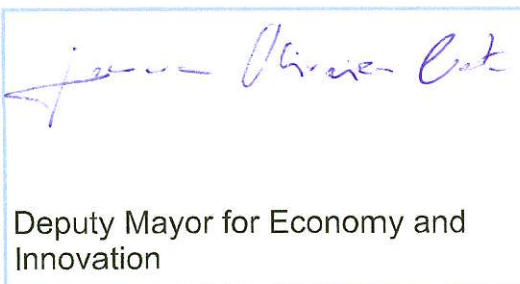
Cluj Napoca

City of Riga



Name, Position
VILNIS KIRSIS

City of Lisbon



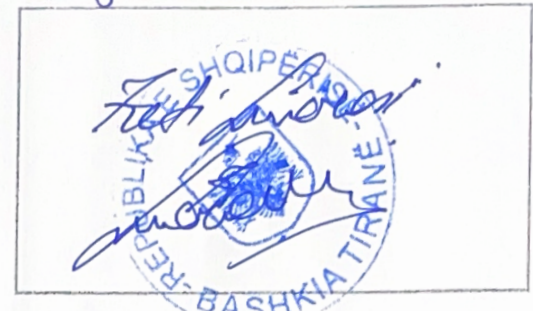
Deputy Mayor for Economy and
Innovation

City of Oulu



City of Oulu ARI ALATOSSAVA

City of Tirana



City of Guimarães

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MESQUITA DE FREITAS
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Câmara Municipal de Guimarães
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