



DELIVERABLE 1.2

Final Report on Community Building and Events

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CircEULAR

Developing circular pathways for an EU low-carbon transition

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Executive Summary

This deliverable documents the stakeholder engagement and community-building activities undertaken within CircEULAR between Months 11 and 48 and reflects on their contribution to the project's research, pathway development and policy objectives. Its purpose is not simply to report the activities completed, but to demonstrate how stakeholder engagement functioned as a core component of the project, supporting pathway development, research validation, knowledge exchange, network building and policy dialogue.

Building on the framework set out in Deliverable 1.1, the engagement approach drew on sustainability transitions, participatory governance and futures studies literature to position stakeholders as co-producers of knowledge rather than passive recipients of findings. While planned as a largely linear sequence of visioning and transition workshops, implementation evolved into a more iterative model, with pathway development and refinement distributed across multiple activities and a need to be responsive to the differing needs of research work overtime.

A defining feature of CircEULAR's approach was the decision to embed stakeholder engagement within the research process from the outset rather than treating it as a dissemination activity undertaken after results had been produced. Stakeholders were engaged at multiple stages of the project through different channels. This enabled researchers to draw on external expertise throughout the development of narratives, pathways, modelling assumptions and policy reflections, while creating ongoing opportunities for dialogue between researchers, policymakers, businesses and practitioners. The approach was also intentionally reciprocal: stakeholders contributed knowledge, implementation experience and critical perspectives while gaining access to emerging findings, opportunities for exchange and direct interaction with researchers and other experts working on similar challenges. This approach improved the quality of the research conducted within CircEULAR as well as its policy relevance.

Over the course of the project, stakeholder engagement made important contributions to the development and refinement of CircEULAR's analytical work. Stakeholders helped identify barriers and enabling conditions for circular economy transitions, challenge parameters, implications and assumptions underpinning pathways and models, input into the narratives developed, provide practical examples of circular economy implementation, contextualise findings and strengthen the policy relevance of CircEULAR's findings.

The project also established and maintained a large stakeholder network, including a database of more than 900 contacts and a Community of Interest comprising 206 members from 24 different countries. Stakeholder engagement fostered continued dialogue between research, policy, industry and civil society actors via several forms including scoping interviews, 11 in-person expert workshops (e.g., in Brussels, Groningen, and Berlin), 6 online pathway validation sessions, bilateral exchanges, policy discussions and strategic event partnership, continuous network and community development activities, etc.

Thinking specifically of policy actors as a stakeholder group and recognising that effective policy engagement requires sustained interaction rather than one-off consultation, CircEULAR embedded policy dialogue throughout the project. Policy actors were engaged through workshops, webinars, bilateral exchanges, partnership activities and dedicated policy events, ensuring that policy perspectives informed the development of narratives, pathways and modelling activities as they evolved. This ongoing dialogue provided a forum to discuss emerging findings and their policy implications, culminating in the final policy event in May 2026. Key messages from these exchanges will be incorporated into the five policy briefs (Deliverable 1.4) covering research



findings from EU model alignment, circularity-to-climate pathways, demand-side enablers and barriers, rebound effects, and urban planning applications.

Several substantive messages emerged consistently across the engagement activities. Stakeholders emphasised that circular economy transitions are fundamentally systemic and require coordinated changes across policy, governance, infrastructure, business models and consumer practices. Discussions repeatedly highlighted the importance of implementation conditions, policy coherence, standards, workforce skills and citizen and consumer behavioural factors. Stakeholders also drew attention to trade-offs, rebound effects and regional differences, stressing that circular economy strategies must be assessed alongside broader climate, economic and social objectives. Across many activities, participants emphasised that successful transitions depend not only on technological innovation but also on governance arrangements, institutional capacity and public acceptance.

Stakeholder engagement delivered tangible value across the CircEular project. It improved the robustness and external validation of research by testing assumptions and validating emerging findings; strengthened the relevance of pathways and modelling activities by incorporating practical and policy perspectives; and enhanced the policy applicability of project outputs through continuous dialogue with decision-makers and practitioners. Beyond this, stakeholder engagement helped build social capital both within the consortium and across the wider stakeholder community. It created new connections, strengthened existing relationships and fostered ongoing exchanges between researchers, policymakers, industry representatives and civil society actors. In doing so, stakeholder engagement strengthened links between research, policy and practice while increasing the visibility, accessibility and potential uptake of CircEular's findings and laid the foundation for possible future collaboration across actors.

The experience of CircEular also highlights several factors that contributed to the effectiveness of the stakeholder engagement process. In particular, stakeholders and consortium partners valued the integration of engagement within ongoing research activities, the reciprocal nature of exchanges and the combination of structured and flexible engagement mechanisms. At the same time, reflections identified opportunities for improvement, notably the need to strengthen the timely communication and integration of stakeholder insights across parallel research activities and work packages. Overall, the project demonstrates how stakeholder engagement can support more robust, contextualised and policy-relevant research while strengthening dialogue and collaboration between research, policy and practice communities.

Keywords

Stakeholder engagement, pathways validation, community of practice, policy dialogue, backcasting, narratives



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Abbreviations

CircEULAR	Developing circular pathways for an EU low-carbon transition
AI	Artificial Intelligence
AI4UP	Artificial Intelligence for Urban Planning
CMCC	Euro-Mediterranean Center on Climate Change
DG	Directorate-General
DG-CLIMA	Directorate-General Climate Action
DG-EMPL	Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion
DG-ENV	Directorate-General Environment
EEA	European Environment Agency
EMPA	Swiss Federal Laboratories for Materials Science and Technology
EPR	Extended Producer Responsibility
EU	European Union
EuRIC	European Recycling Industries' Confederation (EuRIC) now Recycling Europe
IAM(s)	Integrated Assessment Model(s)
IIASA	International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis
INEGI	National Institute of Statistic and Geography
JRC	Joint Research Council
LMU	Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München
NGOs	Non-governmental organisations
NTNU	Norwegian University of Science and Technology
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PESTLE	Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and Environmental
PIK	The Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research
PROs	Producer Responsibility Organisations
RUG	University of Groningen
SAS	Story and Simulation
T6	T6 Ecosystems
UN	United Nations
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
WP	Work Package



Final report on community building and events

1. Introduction

This deliverable reports on the stakeholder engagement and community-building activities undertaken under Task 1.2 to support policy dialogue, pathway co-design and research validation, while also summarising related outreach activities. This introduction has two sub-sections. Firstly, sub-section 1.1 outlines the main aims of this deliverable and contextualises it with other CircEULAR activities. Secondly, sub-section 1.2 provides the structure of the deliverable helping the reader navigate the document more easily.

1.1 Deliverable purpose

Stakeholder engagement is an integral component of the CircEULAR project, supporting the development of circular economy pathways that are informed by the perspectives, expertise and needs of policymakers, businesses, researchers, civil society organisations and other relevant actors. Building on the stakeholder engagement framework established in Deliverable 1.1, stakeholder engagement activities were designed to facilitate dialogue, support knowledge exchange and ensure that project outputs remain grounded in practical realities and policy needs throughout the project lifecycle.

As said, this deliverable reports on the implementation of Task 1.2: Policy Dialogue Events and Community Building, undertaken between Months 11 and 48 of the project. As outlined in the Description of Action, the task aimed to establish and maintain an active stakeholder community around the project while supporting policy dialogue and pathway development through the application of participatory and backcasting-based approaches. Through a combination of interviews, workshops, pathway validation sessions, policy dialogues, outreach activities and bilateral engagements, stakeholders contributed to the co-design, refinement and validation of future circular economy pathways across the project's thematic areas.

As outlined in Deliverable 1.1, stakeholder engagement was designed to fulfil several complementary functions within the project. These included providing access to knowledge and information from relevant stakeholder communities, supporting the co-design and refinement of pathways and future visions, facilitating engagement with policy processes, strengthening access to networks and communities of practice, and validating emerging research findings and project outputs. While coordinated through WP1, these functions support activities across all work packages and all research partners within the consortium, helping to ensure that results remain relevant, credible and responsive to stakeholder priorities, implementation realities and research scope.

Stakeholder engagement was implemented alongside the project's communication and dissemination activities, but with a distinct purpose. Communication and dissemination activities focused primarily on increasing the visibility of the project, sharing outputs and promoting results among target audiences. Stakeholder engagement, by contrast, emphasised structured dialogue, collaboration and mutual learning. Through iterative engagement processes, stakeholders were not only informed about project developments but actively contributed to shaping research activities, challenging assumptions, validating findings and strengthening policy recommendations. In this sense, stakeholder engagement functioned as an integral component of the project's knowledge creation process rather than solely as a mechanism for outreach.



The activities documented in this report build directly on the framework established in Deliverable 1.1 but also reflect the evolution and expansion of the engagement programme over the course of the project. As project needs developed, the stakeholder engagement process expanded beyond the originally envisaged activities to include a wider range of interactions, partnerships and opportunities for exchange. The purpose of this deliverable is therefore to document the stakeholder engagement activities undertaken throughout the project and to reflect on the ways in which stakeholder contributions informed the development of CircEULAR's pathways, research outputs and policy recommendations.

It should be noted that the findings presented in this report represent a synthesis of the key messages emerging from the stakeholder engagement activities undertaken throughout the project. They draw on detailed internal reports and briefing notes prepared after each activity, which documented stakeholder discussions, identified principal insights and highlighted issues requiring further consideration. These reports were subsequently shared and discussed via dedicated presentations and meetings with the consortium research partners. This was done to ensure that stakeholder perspectives could be considered within ongoing research, modelling and policy activities in a more structured manner. Although in many cases the full reports remain internal project documents, summary findings were communicated back to stakeholders through dedicated feedback and dissemination materials, helping to maintain transparency and support ongoing dialogue with the stakeholder community.

1.2 Deliverable structure

This deliverable is organised into four further chapters:

- *Chapter 2 Approach to stakeholder engagement*, outlines the overall methodology used for CircEULAR's stakeholder engagement activities building on the plan developed in [D1.1 CircEULAR stakeholder dialogue protocols and methods](#);
- *Chapter 3 Stakeholder engagement activities*, presents the stakeholder engagement initiatives carried out during the project and summarises the key insights generated;
- *Chapter 4 Key lessons learned and conclusions*, reflects on what worked particularly well and identifies areas of improvement related to the stakeholder engagement process; and
- *Chapter 5 Outreach events overview* provides a list of CircEULAR's dissemination and communication events.



2. Approach to stakeholder engagement

This chapter outlines the stakeholder engagement approach adopted within CircEULAR. It first presents the theoretical and methodological foundations of the engagement strategy, before discussing its implementation and evolution during the project. The chapter concludes with an overview of the stakeholder engagement activities undertaken under Task 1.2.

2.1 Theoretical underpinnings

The stakeholder engagement approach adopted within CircEULAR builds on established literature in sustainability transitions, participatory governance and futures studies, as outlined in Deliverable 1.1 (Thuermer, Passani, 2023). The approach is founded on the recognition that complex societal challenges, such as the transition towards a circular and climate-neutral economy, cannot be addressed through technical expertise alone. Rather, they require the integration of diverse forms of knowledge, expertise and experience from actors operating across policy, industry, research and civil society. Stakeholder engagement therefore serves not only as a means of communicating research findings, but also as a mechanism for generating knowledge, testing assumptions and strengthening the relevance and legitimacy of research outputs.

Within sustainability research, stakeholder engagement has been shown to generate benefits for both researchers and stakeholders. Engaging stakeholders throughout the research process can improve the practical applicability of research findings and increase the likelihood that they inform decision-making processes (Bracken et al., 2015). Engagement with policy stakeholders, in particular, can support the translation of research into policy and practice. Similarly, Fazey et al. (2018) argue that iterative engagement processes facilitate learning and improve decision-making by bringing together different forms of expertise and experience. These perspectives move beyond traditional models of knowledge transfer, in which researchers generate evidence that is subsequently communicated to stakeholders, towards more interactive approaches that recognise the value of continuous dialogue and exchange throughout the research process.

A central theme within the stakeholder engagement literature is the concept of knowledge co-production. Klenk et al. (2015) describe a spectrum of engagement approaches ranging from relatively limited forms of interaction focused on information exchange and networking to more intensive forms of collaboration and co-production. At the higher end of this spectrum, stakeholders are treated as active contributors to knowledge creation rather than passive recipients of research findings. Such approaches seek to reduce traditional distinctions between knowledge producers and knowledge users while recognising the value of stakeholder expertise in identifying challenges, evaluating solutions and shaping research outcomes. Co-productive approaches are particularly relevant in sustainability transitions research, where complex challenges require collaboration across disciplines, sectors and governance levels.

The importance of meaningful participation is further emphasised by Mielke et al. (2016), who distinguish between different forms of stakeholder engagement ranging from technocratic approaches, where stakeholders primarily provide information, to democratic approaches centred on collaborative knowledge generation and problem-solving. Building on this work, Mielke et al. (2017) argue that democratic and participatory forms of engagement are increasingly regarded as best practice within sustainability science because they create opportunities for mutual learning and enable stakeholders to actively contribute to framing challenges, developing solutions and evaluating alternative pathways. These insights informed the overall philosophy of stakeholder engagement within CircEULAR, which sought to move beyond one-way consultation towards more collaborative forms of interaction wherever possible.



The literature also highlights that stakeholder engagement should be understood as a dynamic process rather than a fixed set of activities. Different forms and intensities of engagement may be appropriate at different stages of a project depending on the objectives pursued, the stakeholders involved and the types of knowledge sought. Schneider and Buser (2018) argue that engagement strategies should be tailored to the nature of the challenge being addressed, the degree of stakeholder diversity and the desired outcomes of the engagement process. This perspective is particularly relevant within sustainability transitions research, where stakeholder needs, project outputs and opportunities for engagement often evolve over time. As a result, effective stakeholder engagement requires flexibility, adaptation and responsiveness to emerging insights and changing circumstances. This is well reflected in CircEular's approach where we started from an initial plan of 6 workshops (two rounds of 3 workshops) and ended up with 17 workshops including both in-person, capitalising on consortium meeting locations, and online.

Alongside stakeholder engagement theory, CircEular also draws on literature from futures and scenario studies. Participatory futures approaches recognise that long-term sustainability transitions are characterised by uncertainty and require exploration of multiple possible development pathways. Rather than seeking to predict the future, scenario approaches provide structured methods for considering alternative futures and identifying actions that may contribute to desirable outcomes. Importantly, participatory approaches to scenario development enable stakeholders to contribute their knowledge, experiences and aspirations to the construction of future visions, helping to strengthen both the relevance and legitimacy of resulting pathways (Davies et al., 2012).

These theoretical foundations informed the stakeholder engagement framework and process here described. Stakeholder engagement served both as a research methodology and as a mechanism for enhancing the impact, credibility and practical relevance of CircEular's outputs.

2.2 Evolution of the approach

The stakeholder engagement activities implemented under Task 1.2 remained closely aligned with the approach and objectives established in Deliverable 1.1. The key functions envisaged for stakeholder engagement, namely supporting iterative knowledge exchange, informing ongoing pathway development, facilitating policy engagement, providing access to relevant and diverse stakeholder networks and validating research approaches outputs, continued to guide the design and implementation of activities.

However, as anticipated in D1.1, the engagement programme evolved in response to emerging research needs, stakeholder feedback and the requirements of different work packages. These developments consisted in a methodological refinement of the stakeholder engagement strategy, reflecting the adaptive and iterative principles upon which the approach was originally based.

The main refinement concerned the sequencing and format of the transition workshops. D1.1 envisaged a relatively linear process in which stakeholder visioning workshops would be followed by dedicated transition workshops applying participatory backcasting methods to develop pathways towards the co-created future visions. In practice, while the visioning component was implemented as planned, the subsequent transition phase evolved into a more iterative process over three in-person workshops and six online sessions. This better aligned with the needs and timing of the pathway development.

This refinement also strengthened the role of stakeholder engagement as a support function for the wider project. While D1.1 anticipated targeted support for research work packages, implementation showed that different work packages required different types of stakeholder input at different points



in the research process. As a result, engagement activities became more responsive and demand-driven, supporting pathway development, model assumption and parameter refinement, policy contextualisation and narrative drafting. This was consistent with the role of WP1 as a flexible service provider to the wider project, as established in D1.1.

A second methodological refinement concerned the approach to policy dialogue. D1.1 envisaged policy engagement as a distinct strand of activities, including dedicated policy dialogue events towards the later stages of the project. In practice, policy stakeholders were engaged from the scoping phase onwards and were invited to contribute at key moments of pathway development, validation and policy reflection. This enabled policy perspectives to inform the project continuously rather than being concentrated only at the end of the engagement process. The policy dialogue culminated in the final event on the 28th of May 2026, in Brussels with a plenary session and a high-level policy panel with participation from DG ENV, DG CLIMA, DG EMPL and OECD, and three breakout groups bringing together policy professionals including policy makers officers, researchers, advisers, data managers and analysts. The event showcased key findings and policy recommendations from CircEular, [CIRCOMOD](#) and [CO2NSTRUCT](#).

A third refinement concerned stakeholder continuity and network building. D1.1 anticipated the development of a stakeholder network around the project, but implementation showed that continuity did not require the same stakeholders to participate in every activity. Different engagement activities required different stakeholder profiles, depending on the relevant focus area, research question or policy issue. Continuity was therefore maintained through a broader Community of Interest, supported by newsletters, surveys, bilateral exchanges and ongoing communications. This allowed stakeholders to remain connected to the project and to engage at points where their expertise was most relevant. Furthermore, the stakeholder mapping was not confined to only the early part of the project but extended and expanded steadily throughout the project.

These refinements resulted in a stakeholder engagement process that was more iterative, integrated and responsive than originally envisaged. Rather than following a strictly linear sequence of visioning workshops, transition workshops and policy dialogues, engagement evolved into a continuous process in which policy dialogue occurred throughout the project, pathway validation was undertaken iteratively, engagement activities were tailored to the needs of specific research questions and work packages, and continuity was maintained through a broader stakeholder network. These developments remained fully consistent with the adaptive and participatory principles established in Deliverable 1.1 while strengthening the project's ability to respond to stakeholder needs and emerging research requirements.

2.3 The role of backcasting

A distinguishing feature of the CircEULAR stakeholder engagement approach was the use of backcasting to explore and develop transition pathways. Backcasting is a normative, goal-oriented approach to strategic planning that begins by defining a desirable future (Figure 1 – Step A) and then works backwards to identify the actions, policies, institutional changes and behavioural shifts required to achieve that future (Figure 1 – Steps C)(Dreborg, 1996; Bibri, 2018). Unlike forecasting approaches, which extrapolate current trends to estimate likely future outcomes, backcasting starts from a preferred future state and works back to today's current state (Figure 1 – Step B). The last step is a prioritisation exercise based on the actions identified by stakeholders taking into account the main goals and timeline (Figure 1 – Step D). This makes it particularly well suited to sustainability challenges where current trajectories are widely recognised as insufficient to achieve long-term environmental and societal objectives. In the backcasting exercises carried out in Berlin (see sub-section 3.4.3), the discussion and prioritisation reflected on the climate goals to 2050, the time horizon for each action, initiative or policy (short, medium or long), which stakeholders could implement it and which domain it linked to.

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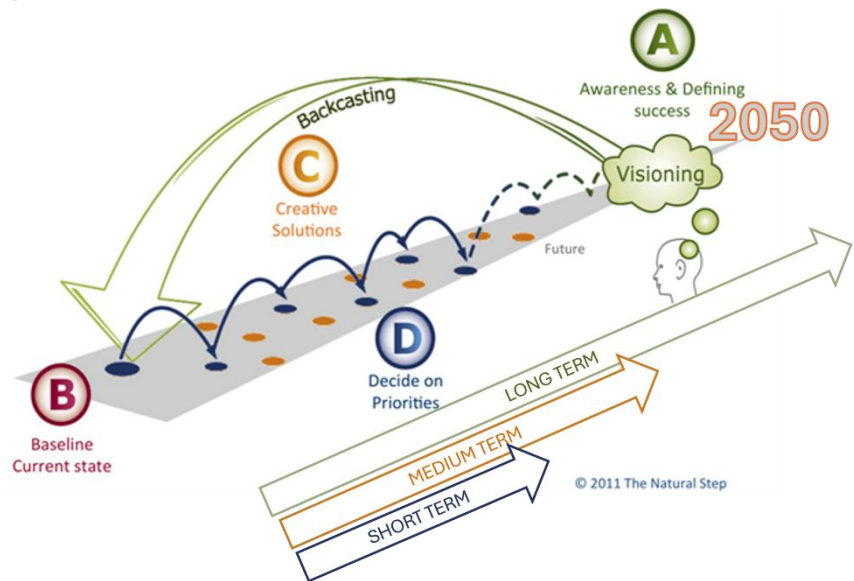


Figure 1 Backcasting approach (The Natural Step 2011)

The literature identifies several advantages of backcasting for sustainability transitions research. First, it encourages participants to move beyond incremental improvements and consider the systemic transformations required to achieve ambitious sustainability goals (Bibri, 2018). As noted by Holmberg and Robert (2000), backcasting is particularly valuable when sustainability objectives require transformative rather than incremental change, as it enables present-day decisions to be guided by long-term sustainability principles rather than existing trends. Second, it provides a structured mechanism for linking long-term visions to short- and medium-term actions, helping to identify milestones, enabling conditions and potential barriers to implementation. Third, it is particularly effective in situations characterised by uncertainty, where future outcomes depend not only on technological developments but also on social, economic, political and behavioural change (Gold, 2023; UNDP, 2022). By focusing on desirable futures rather than feasible futures, backcasting creates space for strategic thinking and collective reflection about alternative development pathways.

Participatory forms of backcasting have become increasingly prominent within sustainability and futures research because they provide opportunities for stakeholders to contribute directly to the development of future visions and transition pathways. Rather than relying solely on expert analysis, participatory backcasting incorporates the perspectives, experiences and aspirations of diverse stakeholder groups, helping to ensure that future pathways are grounded in practical realities and reflect a broad range of societal interests (Davies et al., 2012; Davies and Doyle, 2015). This emphasis on dialogue and participation aligns with the rationale for stakeholder



engagement adopted within CircEular, namely, to create opportunities for stakeholders to inform, challenge and validate emerging project outputs and transition pathways.

Backcasting is also closely linked to broader participatory scenario methodologies. Alcamo's (2008) Story and Simulation (SAS) approach highlights the value of combining qualitative stakeholder narratives with more formal analytical approaches to scenario development. By integrating stakeholder perspectives into the construction of future pathways, such approaches help bridge the gap between exploratory futures thinking and evidence-based policy analysis. This is particularly relevant in the context of sustainability transitions, where social, technological, economic and governance dimensions interact in complex and uncertain ways.

The selection of backcasting as a methodology within CircEular was motivated by the nature of the challenges being addressed. The transition towards a circular economy requires significant changes in production and consumption systems, business models, governance arrangements and societal practices. Such transformations cannot be adequately explored through approaches that simply extrapolate existing trends. Instead, they require methods capable of identifying desirable future states and exploring the pathways needed to achieve them. Backcasting therefore provided a valuable framework through which stakeholders could collectively reflect on future circular economy visions and consider the technological, social, behavioural and policy changes necessary to realise them.

Within CircEular, backcasting also served an important integrative function. It provided a common framework through which stakeholder engagement activities could be linked to pathway development, policy reflection and research validation across multiple work packages. By connecting discussions of desirable futures with consideration of the changes required to achieve them, the approach created opportunities for stakeholders to contribute perspectives on potential transition pathways, implementation challenges and enabling conditions. In this way, backcasting helped structure dialogue between stakeholders and researchers while supporting wider project discussions on future circular economy transitions.



3. Stakeholder engagement activities

This chapter provides a structured account of the stakeholder engagement activities undertaken under Task 1.2. To facilitate the reading across activities, each section examines four dimensions:

- Purpose and format,
- Stakeholder groups engaged,
- Principal insights generated, and
- Contribution to CircEULAR's approach and outputs.

The level of detail varies according to the scale and nature of the activity, with more extensive treatment given to the in-person expert workshops and online pathway validation sessions. Collectively, these activities demonstrate how the stakeholder engagement framework outlined in Chapter 2 was implemented in practice and contributed to pathway development, research validation, policy dialogue, knowledge exchange and network building.

Figure 2 illustrates the distinct but complementary functions of CircEULAR's stakeholder engagement. **Pathway development and research validation constituted the core functions** of stakeholder engagement and are therefore represented by the largest elements in the figure. **Knowledge exchange and network building acted as enabling functions**, supporting the framing and contextualisation of research findings, facilitating access to expertise, and fostering dialogue across stakeholder communities. **Policy dialogue constituted a cross-cutting function** that was embedded throughout the engagement process. The arrows highlight the iterative and adaptive nature of the engagement process and the mutually reinforcing relationships between its different functions. As the activities described in this chapter demonstrate, engagement did not follow a linear sequence, with individual activities often contributing to multiple functions simultaneously.



Figure 2 Core functions of CircEULAR's stakeholder engagement

3.1 Overview of activities completed

Following Mielke et al. (2016), CircEULAR's engagement approach can be understood as sitting between neoliberal-rational and democratic forms of stakeholder engagement. Throughout the project, stakeholder engagement was conceived as a process of joint, reciprocal exchange rather than an extractive, one-way consultation. Stakeholders contributed knowledge, perspectives, practical experience and critical reflections, while in turn gaining access to project findings, analytical insights and opportunities for cross-sectoral discussion.

Figure 3 provides an overview of the stakeholder engagement activities. At its core are the five functions of stakeholder engagement, which define the purpose and role of stakeholder engagement in CircEULAR. To facilitate understanding and reporting, activities were grouped under six main mechanisms:



- scoping interviews,
- network and community development,
- in-person expert workshops,
- online pathway validation sessions,
- bilateral exchanges and event partnerships, and
- policy interaction.

Each mechanism comprised a series of specific activities, representing the concrete interactions through which stakeholder input was generated, exchanged and validated. Supporting these activities were three cross-cutting processes - stakeholder mapping and engagement, community building and engagement, and policy engagement - which operated throughout the project in a cross-cutting manner helping connect, sustain and strengthen engagement.

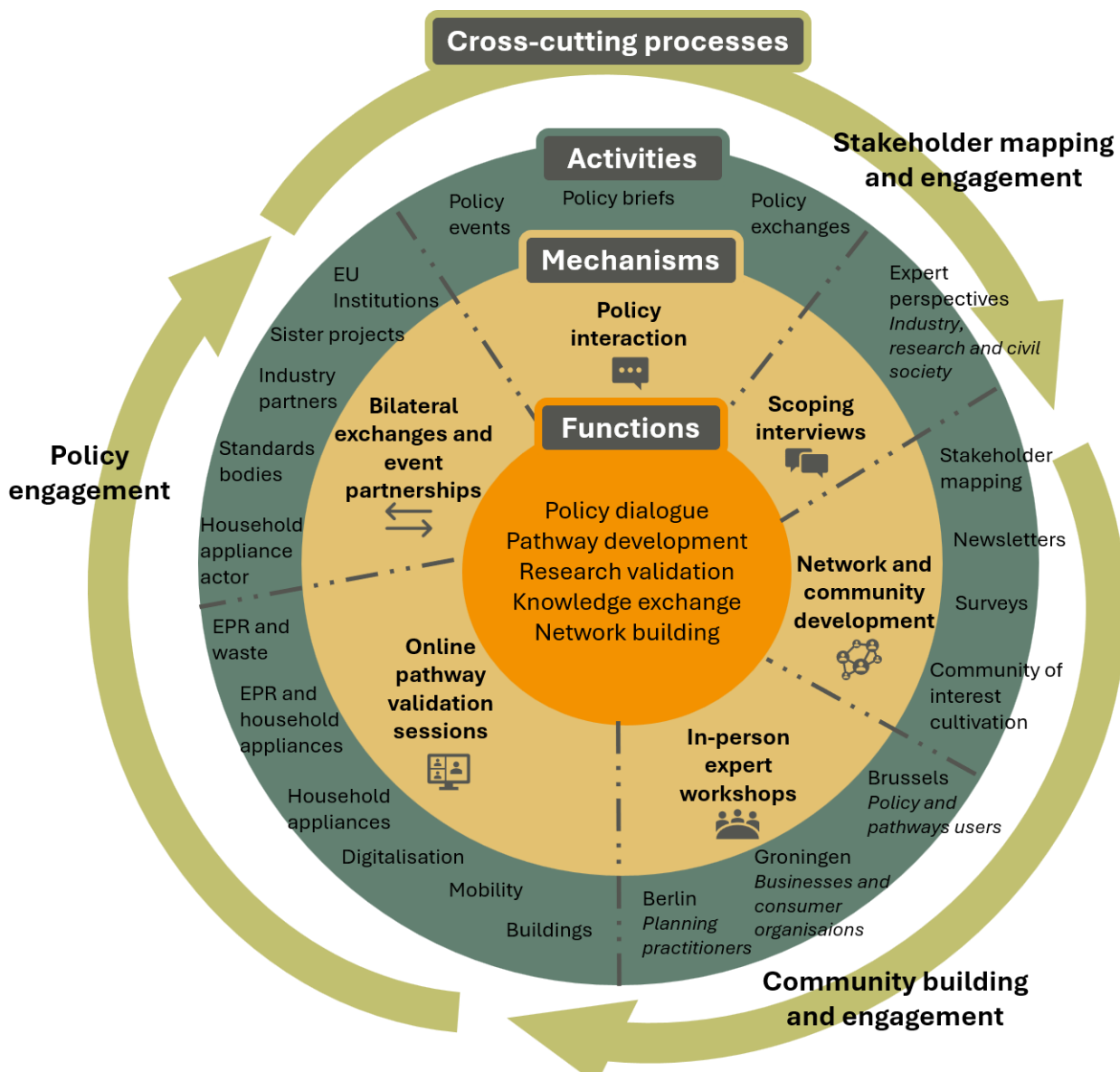


Figure 3 Architecture of CircEULAR's stakeholder engagement



3.2 Scoping interviews

Purpose and format

The scoping interviews were designed to gather early expert perspectives on circular economy transitions and to inform the development of subsequent CircEULAR engagement and research activities. Their purpose was fourfold:

- to identify factors enabling or hindering the adoption of circular strategies;
- to provide groundwork for the expert workshop held in Brussels in March 2024 (see Section 3.4.1);
- to raise awareness of the project and support the development of a Community of Interest;
- and to gather qualitative insights relevant to narrative development, empirical research, tool development and modelling parameters.

In total, 16 interviews and expert discussions were conducted between January and March 2024. The interviews were semi-structured, conducted online, and lasted between 45 and 60 minutes. A common topic guide was used to provide consistency across interviews while allowing sufficient flexibility for participants to elaborate on issues specific to their sector, organisation or area of expertise. Discussions covered four main themes: links between the interviewee's organisation or sector and circularity; barriers to circular business models and circular strategies; enabling conditions for circularity in theory and practice; and future visions for how circularity could affect their sector or field. Interviewees were also invited to suggest additional contacts, thereby supporting the project's snowball mapping approach and widening the pool of potential stakeholders for later engagement activities.

Stakeholder groups engaged

The interviews engaged experts working across the project's main thematic domains of mobility, buildings and digitalisation, as well as circularity more generally. The 16 interviewees were made up of:

- 4 males, 12 females;
- 4 CircEULAR Advisory board members, 5 circularity specialists (including remanufacturing, energy and tax experts) 3 building specialists, 3 mobility specialists (2 cycling, 1 automotive) and 1 digitalisation specialist (waste management field);
- 8 industry representatives (including 4 with policy remits), 5 research/policy partners and 3 civil society agents; and
- 7 with an international outlook, 4 with an EU scope and 5 with a national perspective (Sweden, Germany and Netherlands).

This composition allowed CircEULAR to capture both cross-cutting and sector-specific perspectives. Industry participants provided insight into the practical and commercial conditions affecting circular business models, including cost structures, supply chains, regulation and market incentives. Research and policy actors contributed system-level reflections on circularity, climate mitigation, governance and modelling assumptions. Civil society representatives provided perspectives on citizens, consumers, demand, social value and the wider societal conditions required for circular transitions. This diversity was important because the interviews were not intended to represent a single stakeholder group, but to provide an early evidence base across the different forms of expertise relevant to CircEULAR's pathway development and stakeholder engagement work.

Principal insights

The interviews generated substantive insights on the conditions required to advance circular economy transitions across the buildings, mobility and digitalisation domains. A first cross-cutting finding concerned the interconnected nature of circularity. Interviewees repeatedly emphasised that circular economy transitions cut across policy domains, sectors, supply chains, production



cycles and assessment frameworks. Circularity was not presented as a discrete environmental issue, but as a systems challenge requiring stronger integration between climate, industrial, economic, social and environmental agendas cutting across multiple DGs. This was reflected in calls for more joined-up policymaking, more coherent assessment methodologies, and clearer links between circular economy and climate policy objectives.

A second insight concerned the barriers that constrain the uptake of circular strategies. Across interviews, recurring challenges included the economic viability of circular business models, limited access to finance for circular start-ups, regulatory uncertainty, fragmented governance, lack of common definitions, supply-chain complexity, skills gaps, and difficulties linked to standards and certification. Interviewees repeatedly stressed that circular strategies need to make economic sense if they are to move beyond niche applications. The current tax system was identified as a particular structural challenge, as labour-intensive activities such as repair, refurbishment, remanufacturing and spare-parts recovery can be disadvantaged when labour is taxed more heavily than resource use or pollution.

A third set of insights related to enabling conditions. Regulation was discussed both as a barrier and as a potential accelerator of circularity. Interviewees pointed to the importance of clearer regulatory frameworks, greater coherence between EU and national regulation, and improved transparency through instruments such as Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) and Digital Product Passports. These instruments were seen as potentially important for making supply-chain interdependencies more visible and supporting more informed decision-making. Interviewees also emphasised the role of collaboration across value chains, consumer and citizen demand, and the need to frame circularity through processes and systems rather than individual products.

The interviews also generated important reflections on future visions of circularity. Interviewees emphasised the need for a positive and credible narrative around circular futures, rather than one framed primarily around restriction or reduced consumption. Future visions focused on connecting agendas, extending product life, strengthening circular business models, developing local but scalable solutions, and recognising the role of digital tools and product information in enabling transparency. Circularity was frequently linked to broader objectives, including climate neutrality, industrial resilience, social wellbeing and the development of more localised and resource-efficient economies.

Collectively, the interviews highlighted the systemic nature of circular economy transitions and the need to address economic, regulatory, social and governance dimensions in an integrated manner. They also underscored the importance of developing coherent and compelling narratives of circular futures that are both technically feasible and socially desirable.

Beyond these thematic insights, the interviews generated a substantial body of practical knowledge. Interviewees suggested relevant literature, policy resources, industry reports and analytical frameworks, alongside numerous examples of circular business models and initiatives, including repair and refurbishment services, product-as-a-service models, circular construction initiatives, material recovery schemes, reuse platforms and collaborative circular economy hubs.

Contribution to CircEular

The scoping interviews provided early qualitative evidence on the barriers, enabling conditions and future visions associated with circular economy transitions. The findings helped shape subsequent engagement activities by identifying themes requiring further exploration, including economic viability, policy coherence, standards and certification, transparency, social justice, consumer demand and the framing of circular futures. They also informed the preparation of the Brussels expert workshop (the first in-person engagement activity which took place in March 2024 in



Brussels), ensuring that discussions were grounded in current policy, industry and civil society perspectives.

In addition to generating insights on circular economy transitions, interviewees provided references, analytical resources, practical examples and specific recommendations relevant to narrative development, empirical research and modelling activities. These included considerations relating to economic growth assumptions, user and product perspectives, social justice, implementation timescales and the role of SMEs in circular transitions. Together, these contributions expanded the project's evidence base and helped strengthen the analytical foundations of subsequent research activities.

The interviews also played an important role in knowledge exchange and network building. They raised awareness of CircEULAR among relevant stakeholder groups, generated additional contacts through snowball mapping, and contributed to the establishment of the project's Community of Interest. At the same time, stakeholders shared practical examples of circular business models, initiatives and emerging practices, illustrating how circularity is being implemented across different sectors and contexts. These examples informed project research and modelling activities and contributed to the development of [the Circular ReBoundary's best practice repository](#). More broadly, the interviews demonstrated the value of stakeholder engagement as a mechanism for exchanging knowledge, identifying expertise, validating emerging assumptions and translating stakeholder perspectives into tangible project outputs.

3.3 Network and community development

Purpose and format

Stakeholder mapping, and network and community building constituted a continuous and cross-cutting engagement process operating throughout the project. Unlike time-bound activities such as interviews, workshops or validation sessions, it focused on establishing, expanding and maintaining relationships with stakeholders relevant to CircEULAR's research, engagement and policy objectives. The mechanism combined two complementary strands of activity: network building and Community of Interest cultivation.

The network-building strand focused on the systematic identification, mapping and categorisation of stakeholders from across policy, research, industry and civil society. Building on stakeholder mapping undertaken during the early stages of the project, CircEULAR developed and maintained a stakeholder database containing more than 900 contacts (as of June 2026). Stakeholders were classified according to a range of characteristics, including gender, geographical scope, thematic focus area and relevance to CircEULAR's stakeholder engagement functions (pathway development, research validation, knowledge exchange, network building and policy dialogue). The database subsequently served as a stakeholder management and tracking tool, supporting the targeted recruitment of participants, monitoring engagement across activities and helping ensure diversity of perspectives throughout the stakeholder engagement programme.

The second strand focused on the development and cultivation of CircEULAR's Community of Interest. Through regular newsletters, surveys, feedback questionnaires post event, event invitations and project updates, the Community of Interest provided a mechanism for maintaining ongoing dialogue with stakeholders between major engagement activities. Members were kept informed of project progress, invited to contribute to workshops, validation exercises and surveys, and provided opportunities to engage with emerging research findings, modelling outputs and project resources. This ensured that stakeholder engagement was not limited to individual events but instead operated as a continuous process through which stakeholders could remain connected to the project and contribute feedback throughout its lifecycle.



Throughout the lifetime of the project, we conducted four surveys with subsets of the CircEULAR community:

- Feedback form to attendees of first in-person workshop – March to April 2024 (12 responses)
- Survey on Circular ReBoundary tool development - June 2025 (5 responses)
- Survey on housing and mobility circular futures - December 2025 to February 2026 (21 responses)
- Live internal Menti poll to consortium meeting attendees on stakeholder engagement – June 8th, 2026 (20 responses)

Table 1 Composition of CircEULAR's networks

Stakeholder groups engaged

The table to the right provides an overview of the composition of CircEULAR's stakeholder database and Community of Interest. At the time of writing, the stakeholder database contained 924 contacts drawn from policy, research, industry and civil society organisations, while 206 stakeholders had elected to join the Community of Interest from 24 different countries. The database and Community of Interest both demonstrated broad representation across stakeholder groups and thematic areas, with particularly strong participation from industry stakeholders and actors working on cross-cutting circular economy issues. The Community of Interest exhibited a slightly greater representation of civil society stakeholders and a more balanced gender distribution than the wider stakeholder database. These networks provided access to a diverse pool of expertise spanning the project's core thematic domains of buildings, mobility, digitalisation and circular economy.

Stakeholder characteristics	Database	Community of Interest
Total	924	206
Primary stakeholder type		
Policy	33% (302)	30% (62)
Research	20% (185)	19% (40)
Industry	38% (350)	37% (76)
Civil society	9% (87)	14% (28)
Primary focus area		
Buildings	26% (241)	28% (57)
Circularity	45% (412)	45% (93)
Digitalisation	11% (100)	11% (23)
Mobility	18% (164)	13% (27)
CircEULAR Advisory Board	1% (7)	3% (6)
Gender		
Female	44% (411)	51% (105)
Male	55% (506)	49% (101)
Not classified	1% (7)	-

Principal insights

The network and community development activities generated insights primarily relating to the management and operation of stakeholder engagement rather than the substantive content of circular economy transitions. One of the clearest lessons was the value of maintaining an alive and continuously updated stakeholder database. The ability to track stakeholder characteristics, expertise, engagement history and relevance to different engagement functions enabled a more strategic and responsive approach to recruitment across all stakeholder engagement activities. This approach helped to ensure that engagement activities involved participants with relevant expertise while maintaining diversity across stakeholder groups.

The activities also highlighted the importance of sustained engagement beyond individual events. The Community of Interest provided a mechanism for maintaining relationships with stakeholders throughout the project lifecycle, enabling participants to remain informed of project developments and creating opportunities for ongoing dialogue and participation. The Community of Interest provided a mechanism for sustaining stakeholder engagement between project activities and maintaining a more active network of participants throughout the project lifecycle via mini surveys.

Although survey responses were often based on small sample sizes, they provided valuable qualitative feedback into CircEULAR's engagement activities, outputs/tools and research direction.



Survey findings were not treated as representative evidence, but as targeted stakeholder feedback used to refine project processes and outputs. This feedback informed the structure and balance of subsequent workshops, supported the design and user experience of online engagement tools, and provided opportunities to sense-check and validate emerging findings, including the outputs of backcasting exercises on mobility and housing futures. More broadly, these activities demonstrated the value of iterative engagement processes that enable stakeholder perspectives to be incorporated between major project activities.

Contribution to CircEular

Network and community development played a foundational role across CircEular's wider stakeholder engagement programme. The stakeholder database provided the infrastructure through which participants could be identified, recruited and tracked across engagement activities, while the Community of Interest created a sustained channel for communication, consultation and dissemination. Together, these mechanisms helped ensure that engagement activities were attended by stakeholders with relevant expertise and that participation could be maintained over time.

The database and Community of Interest also strengthened the project's capacity for pathway development, research validation, knowledge exchange, network building and policy dialogue. They facilitated the dissemination of project outputs, supported the recruitment of participants for interviews, workshops, surveys and policy activities, and enabled stakeholder feedback to be incorporated into research and engagement processes.

More broadly, the network and community development activities transformed stakeholder engagement from a series of discrete interactions into an ongoing process of relationship building, feedback and knowledge exchange.

3.4 In-person expert workshops

In-person expert workshops represented one of CircEular's primary stakeholder engagement mechanisms, providing structured opportunities for interactive dialogue, collective reflection and knowledge exchange. We organised 11 in-person workshops:

- Brussels, the 14th of March 2024 – three breakouts: buildings, mobility and digitalisation.
- Groningen, the 17th of September 2024 – two breakouts: consumer and business
- Berlin, the 23rd of September 2025 – two breakouts: housing and mobility, and a parallel session on data in urban planning
- Brussels, the 28th of May 2026 – three breakout groups: construction ecosystem, service-focused measures in mobility and housing, and system-wide enablers (reported in sub-section 3.7)

The workshops formed a progressive sequence of engagement activities that evolved alongside the project and supported both pathway development and research validation. Each workshop addressed a different stage of the process: the first Brussels workshop focused on testing and refining emerging circular economy narratives as well as actions, practices and strategies proposed; the Groningen workshop explored practical examples and implementation perspectives from businesses and consumer organisations; and the Berlin workshop used backcasting methods to examine how desirable mobility and housing futures could be achieved in practice. The last Brussels workshop was the final event which specifically targeted policy representatives and presented emerging findings across all three focus areas (buildings and household appliances, mobility and digitalisation). The focus was on key messages stemming from the pathways and policy recommendations. This was a joint final conference organised with sister projects [CIRCOMOD](#) and [CO2NSTRUCT](#). Together, the workshops created spaces for discussion,



deliberation and co-production, bringing together policy, research, industry and civil society actors to contribute expertise, challenge assumptions and inform the project's evolving research and pathway development activities.

3.4.1 Brussels – Policy and pathways users

Purpose and format

The first Brussels workshop held on March 14th, 2024, was the first in-person expert workshop organised under Task 1.2 and was designed to test, refine and validate CircEULAR's emerging narratives of circular economy transitions. Building on the findings of the scoping interviews, the workshop sought to gather stakeholder perspectives on the opportunities, challenges and assumptions associated with alternative circular futures and to identify areas requiring further consideration within the project's research and modelling activities. The workshop was jointly hosted with the Horizon Europe project [PRISMA](#), creating opportunities for exchange across the two projects and expanding the diversity of perspectives represented.

The workshop adopted a visioning approach, bringing together stakeholders from policy, research, industry and civil society to discuss desirable circular futures and the practices, policies and societal changes required to achieve them. Discussions were structured around [PESTLE](#)-inspired prompts (political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental factors) and future visioning approaches informed by the work of Bibri (2018) and Bibri and Krogstie (2019). At the time of the workshop, the project had developed three exploratory narratives - Narrow, Slow and Close - which provided a basis for discussion and reflection. Participants were invited to consider the implications of these narratives across CircEULAR's thematic domains (namely buildings and household appliances, mobility and digitalisation) and to identify opportunities, challenges, trade-offs and areas requiring further development.

Through three facilitated group discussions each covering one focus area (buildings and household services, digitalisation and mobility) and plenary exchanges, participants were encouraged to challenge assumptions, reflect on the desirability and plausibility of different futures, and explore the implications of alternative transition pathways. By bringing together diverse stakeholder perspectives at an early stage of the project, the workshop provided an opportunity to subject the emerging narratives to external scrutiny and validation while generating insights that informed subsequent narrative refinement, scenario development and pathway work. Below a couple of photos of the event.



Stakeholder groups engaged

The main type of stakeholder targeted was policy representatives working both in the public sector and industry and other practitioners who make use of pathways. The intention was to achieve a balanced quadruple-helix representation. In total, 29 external stakeholders attended: 7 with interest in mobility, 13 in buildings and 9 in digitalisation.

Out of the 29 attendees, 12 were male and 17 were female. In addition, 10 researchers (2



attending remotely) and 3 facilitators contributed on the day. The workshop generated the establishment of a community of interest which the project team nurtured and built on as the project progressed. The make-up of the three breakout groups is illustrated in the table below.

Table 2 Participants in first Brussels workshop

Breakout	Participants	Key stakeholder types
Buildings and household services	13	Industry, EU policy, sector associations, policy and research organisations
Mobility	7	Industry, umbrella associations, research, NGOs/ civil society
Digitalisation	9	Industry, umbrella associations, repair organisations, EU policy, local and national government, NGOs/ civil society

Principal insights

The workshop generated a range of insights relating to the opportunities, challenges and conditions required to support circular economy transitions. Across all breakout groups, participants emphasised that circularity should be understood as a systemic transition requiring coordinated changes across policy, business models, infrastructure, governance arrangements and consumer practices. Discussions highlighted the importance of moving beyond technological solutions alone and recognising the institutional, behavioural and cultural dimensions of transition processes.

Principal insights generated

The workshop generated a range of practical insights regarding the assumptions, barriers and enabling conditions associated with the Narrow, Slow and Close pathways across buildings, mobility and digitalisation. Stakeholders were generally supportive of the proposed pathway framework but identified several areas where additional nuance, contextualisation and consideration of implementation realities would strengthen the analysis.

Across all three sectors, participants highlighted that many circular economy strategies depend on the availability of repair services, refurbishment capabilities, reverse logistics systems and access to secondary materials. In several discussions, stakeholders noted that the success of circular practices often depends less on technological feasibility than on whether the necessary supporting infrastructure, supply chains and skilled workforce are in place. This was particularly evident in discussions around building refurbishment, repair and reuse systems, battery second-life applications and the maintenance of digital equipment.

There was a call also for greater transparency, more standards and better information. Participants highlighted the importance of product passports, harmonised standards, certification schemes and improved life-cycle assessment methodologies to support more informed decision-making by businesses, consumers and policymakers. Discussions emphasised that increasing circularity requires not only access to secondary materials and circular products, but also greater confidence in their quality, provenance and environmental performance. Improved information flows were therefore identified as an important enabler across all three pathways.

Participants repeatedly challenged assumptions that circular interventions automatically generate positive outcomes, highlighting the need to consider competing objectives, unintended consequences and rebound effects. Examples included tensions between product lifetime extension and energy efficiency improvements, the environmental implications of different construction materials, trade-offs between reuse and recycling strategies, and the potential for digitalisation to both enable circularity and increase energy and material demand. Stakeholders therefore stressed the importance of assessing circular economy measures within a broader systems perspective rather than evaluating interventions in isolation.



Finally, discussions highlighted the importance of policy design and place-based implementation. Participants emphasised that the feasibility of circular practices often varies significantly across urban, suburban and rural contexts due to differences in infrastructure availability, mobility patterns, housing stock and access to services. Stakeholders also identified public procurement, product standards, repair incentives, Extended Producer Responsibility schemes and support for secondary materials markets as important enabling measures. At the same time, participants cautioned that poorly designed incentives can create unintended consequences, highlighting the need for policy coherence and careful consideration of how regulatory interventions interact with business models and consumer behaviour.

The discussions revealed a strong interest in the relationship between circularity and broader societal objectives. Participants emphasised the importance of aligning circular economy policies with social goals, including affordability, accessibility and social justice. Questions of consumer behaviour, lifestyle change and public acceptance featured prominently across discussions, reflecting a shared view that successful transitions will depend not only on technological innovation and regulation but also on changes in social norms, values and everyday practices.

Contribution to CircEular

The Brussels workshop made a significant contribution to CircEular's narrative, scenario and pathway development activities. By subjecting the project's emerging narratives to stakeholder scrutiny, the workshop provided an opportunity to test their plausibility, desirability and policy relevance. Participants identified assumptions requiring clarification, highlighted potential trade-offs and implementation challenges, and suggested areas where the narratives could be strengthened or refined.

The workshop also provided an important bridge between the scoping interview phase and subsequent pathway development activities. The discussions helped validate themes emerging from the interviews while identifying new questions and areas for exploration. The resulting insights informed the further development of CircEular's narratives and future scenarios and provided foundation for later stakeholder engagement activities, including the Groningen and Berlin workshops and the online pathway validation sessions. This first workshop enabled the CircEular consortium to better plan for the next stakeholder engagement activities demonstrating the full potential of this type of exchange.

Beyond its contribution to specific project outputs, the workshop facilitated knowledge exchange and dialogue between stakeholders from policy, research, industry and civil society. In doing so, it strengthened CircEular's, at the time, emerging Community of Interest and established a basis for continued stakeholder participation throughout the project lifecycle.

3.4.2 Groningen – Businesses and consumer organisations

Purpose and format

The Groningen workshop, held on 17 September 2024, focused on the practical implementation of circular economy principles from business and consumer perspectives. Whereas the Brussels workshop concentrated on testing and refining CircEular's emerging narratives, the Groningen workshop sought to explore how circularity is currently being pursued in practice, the barriers encountered by organisations attempting to implement circular approaches, and the conditions required to accelerate wider uptake. The workshop was jointly organised with the sister Horizon Europe project [CIRCOMOD](#) broadening the pool of stakeholders participating in the discussions.

The workshop adopted an interactive format combining plenary presentations, facilitated breakout discussions and feedback sessions. Discussions were structured around two complementary perspectives: a business-focused breakout group examining organisational and market dimensions



of circularity, and a consumer-focused breakout group exploring behavioural, societal and governance dimensions. Participants were also invited to provide feedback on what later became the [Circular ReBoundary](#) learning journey, enabling the project team to gather stakeholder perspectives on its purpose, usability and potential application.

By focusing on practical experiences rather than future visions, the workshop provided a valuable opportunity to examine how circular economy principles are translated into real-world actions and where significant implementation challenges remain. The discussions generated insights into business practices, consumer behaviour, governance arrangements and emerging opportunities for supporting more circular forms of production and consumption. Below a couple of photos of the event.



Stakeholder groups engaged

The primary stakeholder groups targeted were businesses, business support organisations, consumer-facing organisations and public authorities with direct experience of implementing, enabling or influencing circular economy practices. The workshop was designed to bring together complementary business and consumer perspectives, enabling discussion of both supply-side and demand-side dimensions of circular economy transitions.

In total, 24 external stakeholders attended including 9 industry representatives, 6 civil society organisations, 6 policy officers and 3 researchers. Out of the 24 attendees, 16 were male and 8 were female. Two attendees did not stay for the breakout group discussions.

Table 3 Participants in Groningen workshop

Breakout group	Participants	Key stakeholder types
Business-focused	18	Local and national government, business support organisations, businesses implementing or interested in implementing circular practices, researchers
Consumer-focused	17	Researchers, local and national government, civil society organisations and consumer-facing businesses

Principal insights

Similar to what emerged in Brussels, a consistent message emerging from both Groningen breakout groups was that circular economy transitions must be understood as systemic rather than isolated challenges. Participants repeatedly emphasised that standalone solutions are unlikely to deliver transformative change and that progress depends on coordinated action across policy, business models, product design, infrastructure, consumer behaviour and governance systems. Discussions highlighted the importance of adopting ecosystem-wide perspectives and recognising the interdependencies between different actors within circular value chains.

Participants identified several barriers limiting the wider uptake of circular practices. Businesses highlighted weak economic incentives for circularity, noting that the use of virgin materials often remains cheaper and less complex than repair, reuse or recycling activities. Regulatory frameworks were viewed as both an important enabler and a potential constraint, with participants



calling for clearer legislation, stronger producer responsibility, more supportive public procurement practices and reforms to waste classifications that currently hinder material reuse and recovery. Product design emerged as a recurring theme, with stakeholders emphasising the need to move towards design approaches that prioritise repairability, reuse and refurbishment. Across both groups, participants also stressed the importance of cultural and behavioural change. Several contributors argued that circular transitions require shifts in values, norms and consumption practices alongside technological innovation and regulatory intervention. Consumer-focused discussions highlighted the limitations of information provision alone, suggesting that stronger structural interventions may be required to support circular practices (e.g. reducing consumption, repairing, purchasing a service rather than a product, consuming more circular products, keeping a product for longer). Participants also emphasised the importance of affordability, public acceptance and effective communication in ensuring that circular alternatives become attractive and accessible to wider audiences, mentions of linking such alternatives to benefits of wellbeing were also voiced.

Contribution to CircEular

The Groningen workshop contributed to CircEular's research validation activities by grounding discussions of circular economy transitions in practical experience. Whereas earlier engagement activities focused primarily on future visions and narrative development, the workshop provided insights into how circularity is currently being implemented by businesses, public authorities and civil society organisations, as well as the barriers and enabling conditions shaping adoption. This offered useful contextualisation for the consumer and employee survey carried out in CircEular. These discussions helped ensure that subsequent pathway development activities remained connected to implementation realities and stakeholder experience.

The workshop also generated a substantial body of practical knowledge that expanded the project's evidence base. Participants shared examples of circular business models, organisational practices, governance approaches and support mechanisms, alongside references to relevant networks, platforms and resources. These contributions provided concrete illustrations of circularity in practice and helped identify examples that could inform subsequent project activities and outputs.

A further contribution of the workshop was the feedback generated on what would later become the [Circular ReBoundary](#) learning journey. Participants provided detailed reflections on its purpose, scope, target audience and practical application, emphasising the need for a clearly defined user group and a focused objective. Stakeholders also identified existing tools, resources and examples that could inform future development and highlighted the importance of incorporating both best practices and lessons learned. To support further refinement, a small subset of participants (n=9) volunteered to provide additional feedback through a follow-up online survey. This explored perceptions of the tool's branding, visual design, learning journey, content and practical applicability, as well as participants' understanding of rebound effects and willingness to adopt mitigating actions. Together, the workshop discussions and survey responses (of the nine, five replied) helped sense-check and inform the design, structure and communication approach of the Circular ReBoundary learning journey, ensuring that its development was shaped by the perspectives and needs of potential users.

Beyond specific outputs, the workshop facilitated knowledge exchange between businesses, consumer-facing organisations, policy actors and researchers, strengthening links between stakeholders working on different aspects of circular economy transitions. In doing so, it reinforced CircEular's wider objectives of supporting knowledge exchange, network building and policy dialogue on pathways towards a more circular economy.

3.4.3 Berlin – Planning practitioners

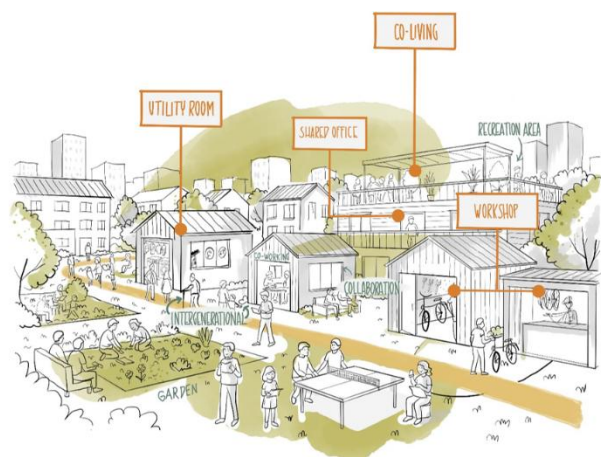
Purpose and format

The Berlin workshop held on September 23rd, 2025, was seen as a follow-up to the visioning workshop conducted on March 14th, 2024 in Brussels where reactions and feedback were gathered on the narratives as well as the actions, practices and strategies proposed across the three focus areas: digitalisation, mobility and buildings drawing mainly from the modelling work. The backcasting exercise conducted in Berlin built upon findings from the biographical interviews and the Circular Consumption Survey (Grealis, Rau, 2025), enabling discussions about how to transition from current practices to the proposed future visions. The focus shifted from exploring desirable circular futures to identifying pathways for achieving them, identifying the actions, enabling conditions and governance arrangements required to translate these visions into actional transition pathways (Hines et al., 2019). Building on the earlier narrative development and visioning exercises, the workshop employed a participatory backcasting approach in which participants worked backwards from desirable future states through what changes and creative solutions are required to realise them given today's baseline. The approach drew on established applications of backcasting within sustainability transitions, smart city planning and urban mobility research (Bibri, 2018; Tight, 2010) and was adapted to CircEULAR's pathway and narrative development objectives.

The workshop was organised around two thematic backcasting sessions on housing and mobility with digitalisation featuring as an enabler in both discussions around practices. A separate session on using data and AI in urban planning was also organised. Participants were introduced to a set of six futures in total, three for housing: communing, relocation and modular and three for mobility: car sharing, car shedding and multimodal. They are briefly explained below; these vignettes were also shared with participants. The development and design of these scenarios was led by LMU in collaboration with T6 Ecosystems. The scenarios were informed by the 80 biographical interviews ([Deliverable 4.2: Guide for Circular Consumption Biographical Interviews](#)) as well as the 5,651 strong consumption survey ([Deliverable 4.4: WP4 Interim Report – Preliminary Results from the Circular Consumption Survey](#)) both designed and coordinated by LMU. These future scenarios had been turned into a visual board through the support of an expert graphic designer.

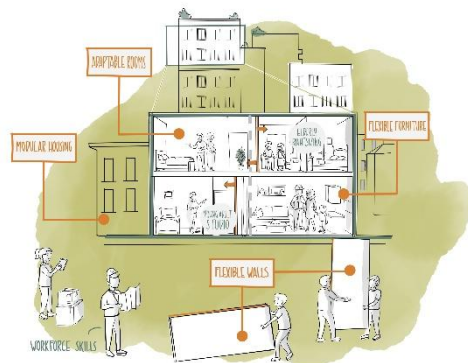
The three futures presented in the housing discussion were:

A communing scenario where the number of shared spaces in the housing stock increases, meaning a move away from private individualized spaces and towards more common areas such as shared gardens, utility rooms, offices, workshops and recreational spaces. Different levels of intensity of communing would be available to suit a variety of situations, acknowledging differing needs across one's lifetime (e.g. higher levels of communing during early and late adult life vis-à-vis increased privacy during the 'middle years').

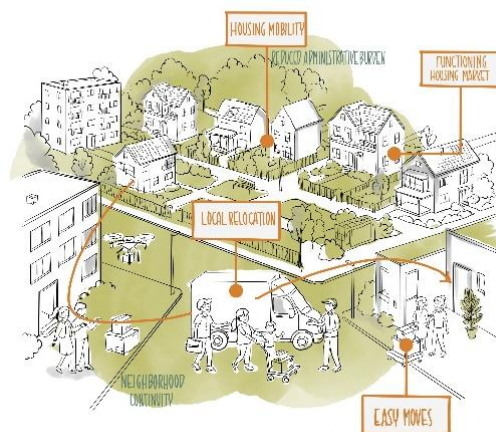




In the **modular scenario**, the emphasis is on adapting the existing housing stock to create a wider range of private housing options for various household sizes and suitable housing for individuals at different life stages. There are large-scale capacity, skills and knowledge among the workforce to adapt residential spaces and create more modular style flexible housing where spaces can be adapted and changed depending on changing needs.

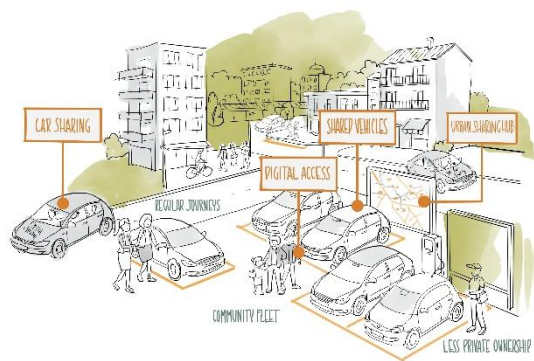


In the **relocation scenario**, the emphasis is on a properly functioning housing market where individuals and families can easily right-size to more suitable accommodation in their local area. This future takes advantage of the existing stock as it is but depends on a fully functioning rental/housing market with very little physical and administrative costs and barriers to movement. The housing stock is sufficiently diverse to accommodate this large increase in housing mobility, with individuals being able to move several times throughout their life course as their households expand and contract in size while remaining within their local area if desired.



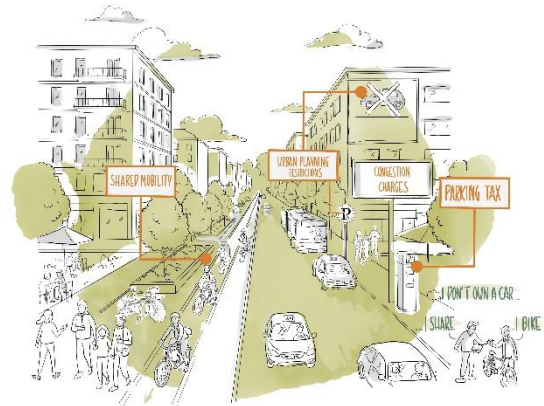
The three futures presented in the mobility discussion were:

In this **car sharing scenario** the emphasis is on large-scale penetration of car sharing concepts. In this future, car sharing modestly reduces the overall demand for new vehicles and makes more use of the existing stock, reducing the number of idle hours for vehicles. Sharing schemes are optimised to facilitate the substitution of privately owned individual motorised transport for regular journeys rather than occasional and/or additional use.

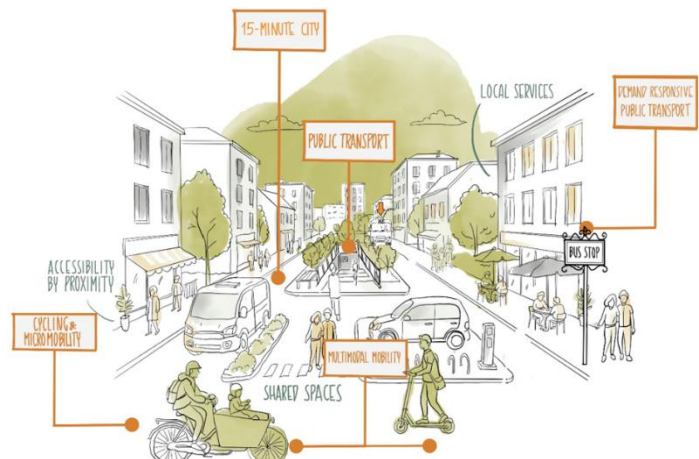




In this **car shedding scenario**, the emphasis is on a large-scale reduction in private vehicle ownership. In this future, all available options to reduce car ownership levels are taken. Market disincentives such as increased vehicle taxation, increased parking charges and congestion charges are implemented as well as changes to planning laws and restrictions on the allocation of parking spaces for urban residences. Efforts are also made to shorten the time span of private car ownership across the life course. The younger population is disincentivized from private ownership and the older population is incentivized to either reduce the number of vehicles in the household or abandon ownership altogether.



This scenario imagines a **multimodal mobility future**, with emphasis on staying local. Demand for private mobility is greatly reduced. The concept of a 15-minute city is central, enabling citizens to navigate the city for the majority of their needs within 15 minutes by foot, bicycle or high-frequency public transportation.² The share of the urban environment devoted to private vehicles is dramatically reduced and the majority of remaining road space is dedicated to more circular mobility practices such as walking and cycling, micro mobility and traditional and demand-responsive public transport.



Following facilitated discussion and voting exercises, participants selected their preferred futures (commoning for housing and multimodal mobility for mobility) and then worked backwards to identify the actions, enabling conditions, governance arrangements and stakeholders required to achieve them by 2050. Discussions were structured around a **PESTLE** (See Section 2.3) framework and considered implementation pathways across short-, medium- and long-term time horizons, enabling participants to reflect on both immediate actions and longer-term systemic transformations.

Alongside the housing and mobility sessions, a parallel workshop explored the role of data, geospatial analysis and artificial intelligence in low-carbon urban planning. Drawing on work associated with the AI4UP initiative and PIK's urban modelling activities, discussions examined challenges relating to data availability, interoperability and uptake, as well as opportunities for AI-enabled analysis to support urban sustainability transitions. Below a couple of photos of the event.



Stakeholder groups engaged

The main target stakeholder group for this workshop was practitioners working in planning. More specifically, city/spatial planners, urban planners, transport/mobility planners, architects, surveyors, housing teams at local and regional authorities as well as civil society and policy representatives working in planning be that housing, mobility or infrastructure.

In total 25 attendees participated: 14 male and 11 female, and 13 from planning policy and implementation, 3 research, 5 industry, and 4 civil society. The breakdown of the total figure is represented in the table below.

Table 4 Participants in Berlin workshop

Breakout group	Participants	Key stakeholder types
Housing backcasting	11	City planning administration, civil society, housing practitioners, urban planners, researchers
Mobility backcasting	8	Transportation planners, researchers, urban planners
Data and AI in urban planning	6	City urban development administration, researchers, digital urban planners

Principal insights from workshop

The Berlin workshop generated insights into both the desirability of alternative circular futures and the practical conditions required to achieve them. Across both breakout groups, participants gravitated towards the most integrated and systemic scenarios presented.

In the housing session, stakeholders selected the **commoning scenario** as the preferred vision, viewing it as a holistic approach that combined resource efficiency with wider social, environmental and community benefits. Participants highlighted its potential to strengthen social cohesion, facilitate resource sharing, improve climate resilience and create stronger links between housing, mobility, recreation and public services. The scenario was frequently described as a "meta-scenario" because elements of both the modular and relocation visions could be incorporated within it.

In the mobility session, participants selected the multimodal mobility scenario, valuing its integration of car-sharing and car-shedding approaches within a broader rethinking of urban space, accessibility and mobility systems. Stakeholders particularly highlighted its positive framing, links to the 15-minute city concept and potential to generate environmental, social and spatial co-benefits.

The subsequent backcasting exercises focused on identifying the actions, enabling conditions and governance arrangements required to realise these futures. Despite addressing different sectors,



both groups identified remarkably similar transition requirements. Participants emphasised the need for integrated planning, stronger coordination across policy domains, supportive regulatory frameworks, dedicated funding mechanisms and long-term political commitment. Discussions repeatedly highlighted the importance of moving beyond sector-specific interventions towards more joined-up approaches linking housing, mobility, urban development and wider sustainability objectives. Across both groups, stakeholders stressed that circular futures cannot be delivered through individual behaviour change alone but require coordinated action by public authorities, businesses, civil society organisations and local communities. The importance of multifunctional use of space, adaptive reuse of existing assets, neighbourhood-level experimentation and stronger social infrastructure emerged as recurring themes.

More specifically, the housing discussions highlighted the importance of developing and scaling successful examples of commoning, supported by enabling governance arrangements, dedicated financing mechanisms and regulatory reform. Participants emphasised that community-based approaches should not be viewed as niche alternatives but as viable models capable of supporting more resilient, resource-efficient and socially connected forms of living. The mobility discussions similarly emphasised integrated spatial planning, multifunctional urban hubs, adaptive reuse of existing infrastructure and stronger links between mobility systems, service provision and urban design. Participants highlighted the need to balance digital and physical infrastructure, ensuring that technological innovation supports rather than replaces social interaction, accessibility and community wellbeing. Across both groups, stakeholders stressed the importance of pragmatic implementation strategies capable of delivering incremental progress while maintaining alignment with longer-term transformation objectives.

Principal insights from backcasting workshop survey

Given that the futures had been tested with planning practitioners based in Berlin, we reached out to our Community of Interest via an online form with the aim of sense-checking and validating the feedback gathered in Berlin and understanding whether the proposed creative solutions and mitigating actions would be relevant for other stakeholders in other countries. Therefore, the workshop findings were subsequently tested through a follow-up online survey completed by 21 respondents from December 2025 to February 2026. Respondents represented policy, research, industry and civil society organisations and reflected a broad geographical spread, including Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy, Portugal, the United Kingdom, the United States and China. The survey was designed to assess perceptions of the desirability and feasibility of the selected visions, explore the transferability and relevance of the proposed actions across different geographical contexts and identify important measures or considerations that may have been overlooked during the workshop discussions in Berlin.

Feedback on the commoning housing vision was broadly positive. Respondents generally regarded the vision as a desirable long-term direction for housing systems, particularly because of its potential to strengthen social cohesion, improve resource efficiency and make better use of existing housing stock. While implementation was recognised as challenging, participants considered many of the underlying principles relevant across different geographical settings. Governance and political commitment, neighbourhood revitalisation, financing mechanisms and the development and scaling of successful examples were consistently viewed as critical enabling conditions. At the same time, respondents identified several issues that warranted greater attention. These included affordability and housing justice considerations, mechanisms to support downsizing and right-sizing across different life stages, legal reforms capable of enabling more flexible and cooperative forms of tenure, and the need for stronger public engagement and communication strategies. Several respondents also emphasised the importance of community facilitation, conflict resolution and long-term governance arrangements, noting that successful



commoning depends not only on physical design but also on the social infrastructure required to sustain collective living.

Feedback on the multimodal mobility vision was similarly supportive. Respondents viewed the vision as relevant across a wide range of contexts and appreciated its integration of mobility, spatial planning and wider urban development objectives. Consistent with the workshop discussions, survey responses reinforced the importance of integrated spatial planning, coordinated policy frameworks and sustained political commitment. Participants also emphasised that multimodal mobility should not be understood solely as a transport issue but as part of a broader transformation in the organisation and use of urban space. Additional measures identified through the survey included the need for stronger communication and narrative-building around multimodal mobility, greater investment in education and behavioural change, and more systematic monitoring and evaluation of transition measures. Several respondents stressed the importance of ensuring that multimodal approaches remain relevant beyond dense urban centres, with particular attention to suburban, peri-urban and rural contexts. Others highlighted the continuing importance of public transport provision, institutional coordination and political leadership, arguing that technical solutions alone will be insufficient unless accompanied by efforts to overcome organisational silos, vested interests and public resistance to change.

Taken together, the workshop discussions and survey responses reinforced a common conclusion across both focus areas: desirable circular futures are achievable only through coordinated action across multiple policy domains, supported by credible governance, place-sensitive planning, sustained political commitment and active stakeholder participation. The survey provided an additional layer of validation for the pathways identified through the backcasting exercise while demonstrating that many of the priorities identified in Berlin resonated across a wide range of organisational and geographical contexts.

Contribution to CircEular

The Berlin workshop made an important contribution to the narratives and contextualization of CircEular's pathway development by translating future visions into concrete transition pathways through stakeholder discussion. Through the backcasting exercises, stakeholders identified the actions, enabling conditions, governance arrangements and stakeholder interventions required to achieve desirable housing and mobility futures, helping to transform high-level narratives into more operational and policy-relevant pathways.

The workshop also fulfilled a significant research validation function. By bringing together policy-makers, researchers and practitioners, it provided an opportunity to test the plausibility and completeness of pathways emerging from CircEular's empirical research and modelling activities. Stakeholders challenged assumptions, identified implementation barriers and highlighted additional enabling conditions, helping to ensure that pathway development remained grounded in practical experience. A particular strength of the workshop was its ability to bridge research, policy and practice. The backcasting sessions connected findings from consumer surveys, biographical interviews and modelling activities with the knowledge and experience of stakeholders working directly on housing and mobility transitions. Similarly, the parallel session on data and artificial intelligence created a forum for dialogue between researchers, planners and policy-makers on the opportunities and limitations of emerging analytical tools. Together, these activities helped ensure that project outputs remained both scientifically robust and practically relevant.

The follow-up survey strengthened this validation process by testing the transferability of the workshop findings across different organisational and geographical contexts. The responses broadly reinforced the relevance of the selected visions and pathways while identifying additional



considerations relating to governance, communication and implementation, providing further confidence in the robustness of the resulting outputs.

Beyond its direct contribution to pathway development and research validation, the workshop strengthened CircEULAR's stakeholder network and facilitated knowledge exchange across policy, research, industry and civil society. In doing so, it reinforced the project's wider objectives of supporting dialogue, collaborative learning and the co-production of knowledge on pathways towards a more circular European economy.

3.5 Preliminary pathways online sessions

Purpose and format

We organised six online pathway validation sessions with the aim of supporting the development and refinement of CircEULAR's emerging pathways and modelling activities. Whereas the in-person workshops focused on visioning, deliberation and pathway co-development, the webinars provided a structured mechanism for testing assumptions, implications, parameters and examining the feasibility, plausibility and policy relevance of the initial pathways. Their primary purpose was to subject the developing pathways to external scrutiny before final integration and refinement.

An initial four online sessions covered buildings, mobility, digitalisation, and household appliances in Spring 2025. Two additional sessions specifically linking circular practices and Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) were arranged in Summer 2025, focusing on household appliances and one on waste. Each session followed a similar format comprising an introduction to CircEULAR's conceptual framework and pathway development process, one or more thematic presentations from project researchers, and facilitated discussion focusing on assumptions, parameters, feasibility, implementation challenges, policy implications, and potential omissions. The sessions, therefore, functioned as an iterative feedback mechanism through which stakeholder expertise could be incorporated, often exchanges continued bilaterally after the sessions as well.

Stakeholder groups engaged

The online pathway validation sessions targeted stakeholders with direct expertise relevant to the development, interpretation and application of pathways and models. Unlike other engagement activities that sought broad stakeholder representation, these sessions primarily engaged researchers, modellers, policy analysts and sectoral experts capable of providing informed feedback on assumptions, implications, parameters, feasibility and implementation challenges.

Participants included researchers from universities, research institutes, and related Horizon Europe projects (e.g. [CO2NSTRUCT](#), [CIRCOMOD](#)), alongside experts from the European Commission, Joint Research Centre (JRC), OECD and other organisations that develop, use or apply modelling and pathway evidence. The sessions also involved industry representatives and technical experts with detailed knowledge of the sectors being modelled, including buildings, mobility, digitalisation, household appliances and waste.

Given the research validation focus of these sessions, the organisations represented are listed in table below. Collectively, they brought together 53 (21 female, 32 male) pathway developers, pathway users and domain experts capable of scrutinising modelling assumptions, challenging analytical choices and assessing the feasibility and policy relevance of emerging pathways.



Table 5 Participation in preliminary pathways online sessions

Online session	Date	#	Key stakeholder types
Buildings	March 20 th 2025	10	World Green Building Council, DG CLIMA, DG ENV, DG AGRI, JRC, Public Waste Agency, Climate KIC, other horizon projects
Mobility	March 25 th 2025	10	Universities, research institutes, Eurostat, OECD, Material associations, JRC, NGOs, railway developers
Digitalisation	March 26 th 2025	9	European Data Centre Association, DG ENV, DG EMPL, mobile communication advocacy organisation, national data centres
Household appliances	April 1 st 2025	13	DG ENV, EEA, JRC, OECD, Zero Waste Europe, sectoral trade association, waste operator
EPR and household appliances	July 15 th AM	8	Sector-specific Producer Responsibility Organisations (PROs) – WEEE, consultancies
EPR and waste	July 15 th PM	3	Sector-specific Producer Responsibility Organisations (PROs), other waste compliance partners, EuRIC
Total number involved in preliminary pathways validation		53	

Principal insights

The online pathway validation sessions generated detailed feedback on the assumptions, implications, parameters and practices underpinning CircEular's emerging pathways across buildings, mobility, digitalisation, household appliances, waste and Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR).

The building-focused discussions highlighted the importance of respecting the circular economy hierarchy by prioritising more intensive use of existing building stock, refurbishment and lifetime extension before material substitution and new construction. Stakeholders explored trade-offs associated with wood-based construction, resource availability and embodied emissions, while also highlighting wider social dimensions, including affordable housing, space utilisation and the distributional implications of different transition pathways. Participants additionally stressed the importance of accounting for wider co-benefits of circular economy strategies, including employment creation and broader societal outcomes.

Within the mobility discussions, participants focused on the relationship between infrastructure, material stocks, vehicle lifetimes and transport demand. Stakeholders highlighted the need to better account for second-hand vehicle markets, ownership changes and regional differences in mobility systems. Significant discussion centred on material composition, recycled content, scrap quality and embodied emissions, with participants emphasising that circularity outcomes depend not only on recycling rates but also on material quality, market incentives and global supply chains. Questions were also raised regarding modal shifts, company car policies, social justice considerations and the role of market-based instruments in supporting transition pathways.

The digitalisation session generated a particularly detailed discussion on assumptions relating to data centre energy and material demand. Participants challenged assumptions underpinning projections of Power Usage Effectiveness (PUE), future growth in data centre activity and regional differences in digital infrastructure. Stakeholders also explored trade-offs between energy efficiency, material consumption, modularity, reuse, repurposing and recycling strategies, while drawing attention to issues relating to water use, critical materials, data availability and the wider enabling effects of digital technologies across the economy. Particular emphasis was placed on ensuring transparency around assumptions and uncertainty when modelling future digitalisation pathways.

The household appliances and waste session focused on assumptions relating to product lifetime extension, repair, reuse and material recovery pathways. Stakeholders highlighted the distinction between willingness to repair and actual repair behaviour, noting the importance of repair service



availability, cost and user practices in determining real-world outcomes. Participants questioned assumptions relating to recycling rates, bioplastic substitution and product lifetimes, while also exploring the interaction between circularity strategies, energy efficiency and material use. Significant discussion centred on rebound effects, social and behavioural dimensions of circularity, the provenance and destination of recycled materials, and how different practices should be categorised within the project's Narrow, Slow and Close framework. Stakeholders additionally stressed the importance of realistic implementation timescales and the potential for existing policy and market structures to constrain the uptake of circular practices.

The dedicated EPR sessions subsequently focused on the governance, implementation and practical operation of producer responsibility systems. Discussions explored the role of EPR schemes in supporting circular economy objectives, the challenges associated with material recovery and compliance systems, and the conditions required for EPR mechanisms to incentivise waste prevention, reuse and higher-value material recovery. Stakeholders also reflected on the interaction between regulatory frameworks, market incentives and operational realities, helping to strengthen CircEULAR's understanding of how governance mechanisms can enable or constrain circular transitions in practice.

Across all sessions, stakeholders repeatedly highlighted the importance of understanding trade-offs and unintended consequences within circular economy transitions. Whether discussing buildings, mobility, digitalisation or products, participants stressed that pathway development must account for interactions between material efficiency, energy demand, economic viability, consumer behaviour and policy implementation. The discussions also reinforced the need for transparent assumptions, stronger treatment of uncertainty and regional variation, and clearer definitions of circular economy practices across the project's analytical framework.

Contribution to CircEULAR

The online pathway validation sessions made a distinctive contribution to CircEULAR through their combined role in **research validation, research valorisation and research collaboration**. Unlike many stakeholder engagement activities, which focus primarily on gathering perspectives or raising awareness, these sessions were designed to directly support the development and refinement of the project's analytical outputs. By presenting preliminary pathways, modelling assumptions and emerging results to external experts, the webinars created a structured mechanism through which key assumptions, parameters and analytical choices could be scrutinised and improved before final integration.

The sessions fulfilled a particularly important **research validation** function. Participants were often researchers, modellers and policy analysts working with comparable datasets, methodologies or analytical frameworks. As a result, feedback frequently extended beyond general observations and included specific suggestions relating to model assumptions, implications, parameterisation, data sources, scenario design and the categorisation of circular economy practices. This enabled project partners to draw upon expertise beyond the consortium and helped ensure that pathway development remained grounded in both scientific evidence and practical implementation experience.

The webinars also supported **research valorisation** by creating opportunities for direct dialogue between those producing pathway evidence and those responsible for applying, interpreting or challenging such evidence in policy and practice. Participants from European institutions, research organisations, industry associations and specialised sectoral bodies were able to engage with emerging findings, helping to test their relevance and applicability while increasing awareness of the project's work. In this respect, the sessions created a valuable feedback loop between research production and research use.



A further contribution was the facilitation of **collaboration across research**, policy and practice communities. The sessions brought together researchers and modellers working on related topics, alongside policy actors and sectoral experts, creating opportunities to exchange methodologies, discuss analytical challenges and identify areas of complementarity. Several connections established through the webinars continued beyond the individual sessions through participation in CircEULAR's Community of Interest, attendance at subsequent engagement activities and involvement in the final conference. In some cases, relationships developed through these exchanges also contributed to ongoing research collaboration and academic publications.

Taken together, the online pathway validation sessions ensured that CircEULAR's analytical outputs benefited from rigorous external scrutiny while simultaneously strengthening the connections between research, policy and practice. They, therefore, represent one of the clearest examples within the project of stakeholder engagement functioning as a mechanism for improving research quality, supporting research uptake and fostering collaboration across communities of expertise. Notably, several research partners identified the preliminary pathway validation sessions as among the most valuable engagement activities undertaken within the project because they could see a direct and tangible link between stakeholder feedback, model refinement and pathway development.

3.6 Bilateral exchanges and event partnerships

Purpose and format

In addition to formal workshops, webinars and surveys, CircEULAR undertook a series of bilateral exchanges and strategic partnership activities throughout the project. These engagements were typically organised in response to specific research needs, emerging questions or opportunities for collaboration. They provided a flexible mechanism for accessing specialist expertise, obtaining targeted feedback and exploring issues requiring more detailed discussion than would be possible within larger stakeholder forums.

The format varied according to the purpose of the engagement and included five one-to-one exchanges with household appliance and mobility industry experts, building umbrella organisations, producer responsibility organisations and standardisation bodies,¹ alongside collaboration with external organisations on four jointly organised events with sister projects and the EEA.

While these activities contributed also to dissemination and network building, their primary value lay in their role as a two-way engagement mechanism. They enabled project partners to refine emerging thinking, test assumptions, sense-check narratives and ensure that research outputs remained grounded in sectoral and policy realities.

Stakeholder groups engaged

Bilateral exchanges involved stakeholders spanning research, industry, policy, standardisation and implementation communities. These included manufacturers and industry experts, producer responsibility organisations, researchers from related Horizon Europe projects, policy specialists from European institutions and agencies, and experts involved in standardisation activities. Engagement with policy contacts through bilateral exchanges formed one component of CircEULAR's wider and ongoing policy engagement process, which is discussed in Section 3.7.

Strategic partnerships organisations and projects whose activities complemented CircEULAR's objectives were established and nurtured. Examples included collaboration with the Horizon Europe projects [CIRCOMOD](#) and the EEA on a joint event exploring the contribution of circular

¹ These stakeholders are not named mainly due to reasons of commercial sensitivities.



economy strategies to climate neutrality (September 2024), as well as another joint event with PRISMA and Bruegel on long-term global implications of data centres for climate action (April 2026).

Principal insights

The bilateral exchanges generated highly targeted insights that complemented the broader findings emerging from workshops and webinars. Discussions with industry representatives highlighted practical challenges associated with reparability, product lifetime extension, energy efficiency trade-offs, secondary materials and end-of-life management. Stakeholders also drew attention to the importance of collection and sorting infrastructure, regulatory constraints and supply-chain considerations when implementing circular economy practices. These discussions provided several concrete inputs to pathway development and model assumptions. For example, industry experts highlighted a refrigerator prototype in which 95% of the plastic content was derived from bio-waste-based plastics. While demonstrating the technical feasibility of significantly reducing reliance on virgin fossil-based plastics, the discussion also highlighted ongoing challenges relating to the collection, sorting and end-of-life treatment of these materials, suggesting that widespread adoption would depend on corresponding developments in waste management and recycling infrastructure.

Engagement with producer responsibility organisations provided insights into the operation of Extended Producer Responsibility systems, the challenges associated with measuring reuse and secondary markets, and the importance of standardised definitions and metrics when assessing circular economy performance. These exchanges also highlighted several data gaps relating to product lifetimes, reuse rates and material flows.

Partnership activities generated broader reflections on the relationship between circular economy and climate objectives, the communication of modelling results to policy audiences, the need for common metrics and narratives across related initiatives, and emerging challenges associated with digitalisation, AI and data centre growth.

Contribution to CircEular

The sessions fulfilled a particularly important research validation function. Participants were often researchers, modellers and policy analysts working with comparable datasets, methodologies or analytical frameworks. As a result, feedback frequently extended beyond general observations and included specific suggestions relating to model assumptions, implications, parameterisation, data sources, scenario design and the categorisation of circular economy practices. This enabled project partners to draw upon expertise beyond the consortium and helped ensure that pathway development remained grounded in both scientific evidence and practical implementation experience. In several cases, stakeholder input resulted in direct changes to modelling assumptions. For example, discussions with industry experts on the technical feasibility and end-of-life challenges associated with bio-based plastics in household appliances (see above) informed revisions to the assumptions used to estimate the future share of bio-plastics in refrigerator production.

The bilateral exchanges and strategic partnerships complemented CircEular's more formal stakeholder engagement activities by providing access to specialist expertise and evidence that could be incorporated directly into pathway development, modelling activities, and project outputs. They enabled project partners to explore specific questions in greater depth, test assumptions and obtain targeted feedback on emerging findings.

These activities also played an important role in cultivating relationships with organisations operating at the interface of research, policy and practice. Many of these connections continued



beyond individual exchanges through participation in the Community of Interest, engagement in subsequent project activities and attendance at the final conference.

Taken together, the bilateral exchanges and strategic partnerships demonstrate the value of maintaining flexible engagement mechanisms alongside more structured stakeholder processes. They allowed CircEULAR to respond to emerging research needs, access specialist knowledge and strengthen the networks supporting the project's longer-term impact.

3.7 Policy dialogue

Purpose and format

Policy engagement formed a cross-cutting strand of CircEULAR's stakeholder engagement approach and was embedded throughout the project lifecycle, beginning during project conception and continuing alongside all major stakeholder engagement activities. Rather than constituting a single activity, policy dialogue was integrated across workshops, webinars, bilateral exchanges, strategic partnerships and dissemination activities. Indeed, different types of policymakers were invited to all stakeholder engagement activities, and the policy

implications of each research output or activity across the focus areas (buildings, mobility and digitalisation) were consistently addressed, keeping stakeholder dialogue grounded in policy relevance throughout. This ensured that policy perspectives could inform the development of the project's narratives, pathways, modelling activities and outputs, while simultaneously enabling emerging findings to be shared with policy audiences throughout the research process.

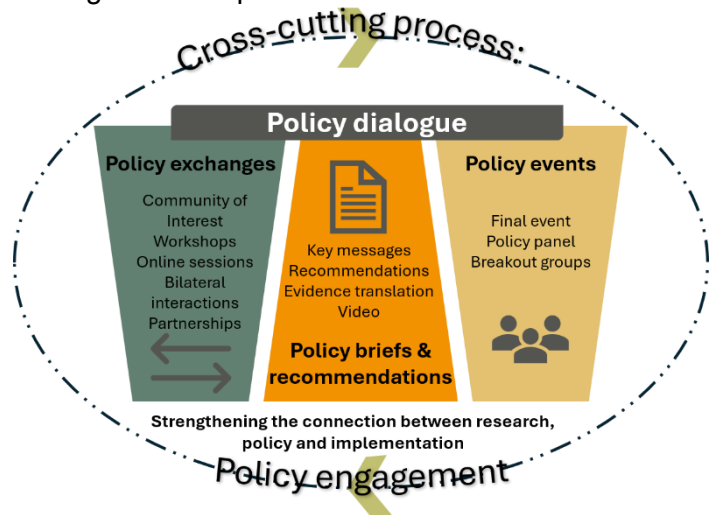


Figure 4 Main elements of CircEULAR's Policy dialogue

The policy dialogue strand consisted of three interconnected components: ongoing policy exchanges with stakeholders through the Community of Interest, workshops, webinars, bilateral discussions and partnership activities; dedicated policy-focused events, including the final conference (see photos below) and breakout discussions; and the development of policy briefs and recommendations designed to translate research findings into policy-relevant outputs (D1.3 CircEULAR policy recommendation to smooth circular economy for climate change mitigation). Figure 4 depicts the different elements of the policy dialogue in CircEULAR.

Stakeholder groups engaged

Policy engagement involved stakeholders from European institutions, EU agencies, national, regional, municipal and local authorities, policy-oriented research organisations and EU affairs officers in industry.

Many of these interactions formed part of a continuous dialogue with policy actors working across the circular economy, climate, buildings, mobility, digitalisation and resource efficiency domains. The breadth of engagement ensured that CircEULAR interacted with stakeholders involved in policy development, policy implementation, evidence generation and policy evaluation, reflecting the multiple roles that evidence plays within policymaking processes.

On 28 May 2026, CircEULAR, [CIRCOMOD](#) and [CO2NSTRUCT](#) brought together more than 160 participants (90 online, 72 in person) from policymakers, researchers, industry representatives and



civil society in Brussels for their final event: Modelling to Policy: Circular Economy Pathways Towards Net-Zero. Building on the event's original aim of connecting evidence-driven circular economy insights with policy priorities, the event created space for exchange across construction, mobility, housing, digitalisation, behaviour and rebound effects. Rather than simply presenting project results, the event invited participants to explore assumptions, question modelling choices and reflect on what circular economy pathways mean for real-world policy implementation.



Principal insights

Reflections emerging from CircEular's policy dialogue activities, especially the policy event held on May 28th, 2026 in Brussels, highlighted the importance of strengthening the connection between modelling evidence and policy implementation. Discussions repeatedly emphasised that while modelling can provide valuable insights into the potential contribution of circular economy strategies to climate mitigation, policymakers require a clear understanding of underlying assumptions, implementation conditions, trade-offs and uncertainties to translate analytical findings into effective action. Participants stressed that modelling results should therefore be interpreted not as predictions, but as evidence that can inform decision-making under conditions of uncertainty.

A second recurring theme concerned the breadth of circular economy interventions relevant to climate mitigation. Policy discussions often focus on waste management and recycling, yet the modelling evidence presented throughout CircEular (and sister projects [CIRCUMOD](#) and [CO2NSTRUCT](#)) highlighted the importance of a much wider range of measures, including sufficiency strategies, service-based approaches, lifetime extension, digitalisation and behavioural change. Participants reflected on the need to broaden policy conversations around circularity and to recognise the contribution of these interventions to reducing material demand, improving resource efficiency and supporting climate objectives.

We organised three breakout discussion dedicated respectively to construction ecosystem looking at material value chains, built assets and infrastructure; service-focused measures linked to mobility and housing; and system-wide enablers exploring digitalisation, behaviour, economic impacts and rebound effects. The discussions further showed the importance of understanding implementation realities. Participants emphasised that the effectiveness of circular economy measures depends not only on the interventions themselves but also on where, when and how they are implemented. Discussions highlighted the importance of data availability, policy sequencing, governance arrangements, skills development for professionals working in a more



circular society and the interaction between circular economy and climate policies. The sessions also highlighted the complementary insights generated by different modelling approaches and the value of bringing together multiple analytical perspectives when assessing circular economy transitions.

More specifically, the system-wide enabler breakout session at the policy event led by CircEular explored digitalisation, citizen behaviour, rebound effects and macroeconomic impacts as cross-cutting factors influencing circular economy transitions. A central discussion concerned the dual role of digitalisation. While participants recognised that digital technologies can support circular economy strategies through improved information flows, product tracking and resource optimisation, they also highlighted the environmental impacts associated with the infrastructure underpinning digitalisation. Particular attention was given to the energy, material and water demands of data centres. Participants stressed that increasing reliance on renewable electricity does not remove these wider impacts and highlighted the need for stronger synergies between digitalisation policy and climate policy. Discussions also raised questions regarding how the societal benefits of digital technologies should be assessed alongside their environmental footprint and whether existing policy frameworks adequately capture these trade-offs.

The discussion on citizen behaviour highlighted the importance of framing and targeting policy interventions appropriately. Participants suggested that policy approaches often focus on encouraging behavioural change amongst reluctant groups, whereas greater attention could be given to supporting and scaling practices already adopted by willing citizens. Examples included sharing, reuse and alternative consumption models. At the same time, stakeholders stressed that behavioural responses are strongly influenced by local social, cultural and infrastructural conditions, suggesting that policy measures should be sensitive to geographical and contextual differences rather than assuming uniform responses across Europe.

Rebound effects and macroeconomic impacts generated significant debate. Participants explored whether fiscal policy could play a larger role in incentivising desirable behaviours and internalising unintended consequences associated with circular economy measures. Discussions also challenged the assumption that all rebound effects should be viewed negatively. While some rebound effects may offset environmental gains, others may generate employment, innovation or wider welfare benefits. This highlighted the need for policy frameworks and modelling approaches capable of distinguishing between different types of rebound effects and assessing their broader social, economic and environmental implications. Participants also emphasised the importance of considering global spillover effects, noting that European circular economy policies can generate impacts beyond EU borders through international trade and global value chains.

More broadly, the discussions reinforced the need for continued dialogue between research and policy communities. Participants highlighted the importance of common metrics, clearer communication of evidence and stronger alignment between modelling activities and policy priorities. These reflections pointed to the need for mechanisms that can translate complex research findings into practical knowledge that supports policy development and implementation.

Contribution to CircEular

The policy dialogue strand ensured that policy considerations remained embedded throughout the project rather than being addressed only at the dissemination stage. By maintaining ongoing engagement with policy stakeholders, CircEular was able to test the relevance of emerging findings, understand evolving policy priorities and identify opportunities for future uptake of project outputs. It also provided a mechanism through which policy perspectives could inform pathway development, modelling activities and the interpretation of results.



A central output of this engagement process is the development of a series of policy briefs and recommendations under Deliverable 1.3 due at the end of August 2026 at project end. Taken together, the policy dialogue strand illustrates how stakeholder engagement within CircEULAR extended beyond consultation and dissemination. It provided an ongoing mechanism for linking research, policy and implementation communities, ensuring that policy perspectives informed the research process while simultaneously increasing the potential for project findings to contribute to future policy development and impact.



4. What worked well and conclusions

This chapter synthesises the key lessons emerging from CircEULAR's stakeholder engagement approach and activities. It reflects on what was distinctive about the project's approach, examines how stakeholder input contributed to research development and outputs, and identifies opportunities for improvement in future initiatives. In doing so, it highlights the role that stakeholder engagement can play in strengthening research quality, policy relevance and the co-production of knowledge.

4.1 What was distinctive about CircEULAR's stakeholder engagement?

To support reflection on the contribution of stakeholder engagement within CircEULAR, consortium research partners were asked to describe the stakeholder engagement activities in one word via a Menti livestream poll. Figure 5 presents a word cloud generated from these reflections, the larger When asked about how they used the findings from the stakeholder engagement activities many responses suggested to refine and reframe the focus of the analysis, for contextualisation and finding narrative hooks, to improve modelling and scenario assumptions, to harvest policy examples, to reframe results in a more policy relevant manner, to verify relevance of research and to better ground academic research in real terms as an informative reality check. The reflections highlighted three broad insights emerging from the project's stakeholder engagement approach.



Figure 5 Word Cloud: One word to describe the stakeholder engagement activities

Stakeholder engagement as part of research, not dissemination

Stakeholder engagement was embedded within CircEULAR's research design from the outset by design, reflecting the project's commitment to incorporating external perspectives throughout the research process rather than engaging stakeholders only once findings had been produced. The experience of the project reinforced the value of this approach. Across multiple activities, stakeholder contributions informed discussions on narratives, pathways, modelling assumptions, policy implications and the interpretation of findings, helping to contextualise results, identify implementation challenges and strengthen the relevance of project outputs.

Rather than engaging stakeholders only after research activities had been completed, CircEULAR sought input at multiple stages of the project. Stakeholders contributed to future vision development, participated in backcasting exercises, provided feedback on pathway assumptions and modelling approaches, shared implementation perspectives and reflected on the policy



relevance of emerging findings. This iterative approach created opportunities for stakeholder insights to inform, shape, and improve research activities as they developed.

A reciprocal rather than extractive model of engagement

A distinctive feature of CircEULAR's approach was its emphasis on reciprocity. Stakeholder engagement was not conceived as a process of extracting information from participants, but as a mechanism for mutual learning and exchange. Stakeholders contributed time, expertise, implementation experience, examples of strategies and practices, and perspectives on the feasibility of pathways and scenarios. In return, they were able to engage with emerging findings, explore modelling results and participate in discussions with researchers, policymakers and practitioners working on related challenges. Participants received tailored follow-up communications and summary reports after each activity, ensuring that engagement was not limited to one-off consultations. This helped maintain an ongoing dialogue with stakeholders throughout the project and fostered relationships based on continued exchange rather than solely on the formal roles of project partners and participants.

Many stakeholders engaged with CircEULAR through multiple activities or channels, including workshops, webinars, bilateral exchanges, policy discussions and the final conference. This facilitated ongoing dialogue throughout the project and provided opportunities for stakeholders to engage with emerging findings and successive stages of the research process. It also enabled project partners to maintain contact with stakeholders across different engagement activities where relevant.

Combining structured and flexible engagement mechanisms

The project benefited from combining planned engagement activities such as interviews, workshops and webinars with more flexible mechanisms including bilateral exchanges, strategic partnerships and ongoing policy dialogue. This allowed the consortium to respond to emerging research needs, access specialist expertise and incorporate different forms of knowledge when most relevant.

The project combined a range of engagement mechanisms, including interviews, workshops, webinars, bilateral exchanges, partnership activities and policy dialogue. These activities were undertaken at different stages of the project and supported different objectives, ranging from future vision development, backcasting and pathway design to pathway validation, policy discussion and dissemination. The use of multiple engagement formats reflected the diversity of stakeholders involved and the range of topics addressed within the project and gave each of them the possibility to find the most suitable format and timing for their engagement.

4.2 How stakeholder input influenced CircEULAR's research

As mentioned in sub-section 3.3, we conducted a livestream Menti poll during one of our last consortium meetings as a reflection exercise to collect further insight into how stakeholder engagement activities were perceived and integrated into consortium members' research activities. Feedback collected highlighted the wide range of ways in which stakeholder engagement informed CircEULAR's research activities. While different engagement mechanisms served different purposes, partner reflections pointed to three recurring functions. Furthermore, throughout the project we monitored, encouraged and targeted the use of stakeholder engagement outputs across research activities and research partners.

Refining narratives, framing and contextualisation

Stakeholder engagement played an important role in helping researchers contextualise findings and strengthen the framing of project outputs. Partners highlighted the value of stakeholder



perspectives in identifying narrative hooks, improving the communication of findings, refining the focus of analysis and helping define the boundaries and scope of scenarios and pathways. Stakeholder discussions also provided perspectives that informed the interpretation and presentation of results, particularly when translating technical findings into more policy-relevant messages. Several partners noted that engagement activities helped place modelling outputs and analytical findings within a broader societal and policy context, making them more meaningful and accessible to different audiences.

Informing modelling and pathway development

Stakeholder input directly informed the development of pathways and modelling activities. Partners noted that engagement activities helped improve modelling assumptions and scenario design, refine representations of recycling and reuse potential, identify more realistic implementation conditions and inform the modelling of circular pathways.

Throughout the project, stakeholders challenged assumptions, highlighted data gaps, provided examples of emerging practices and shared sector-specific expertise that improved the robustness of analytical work. Feedback obtained through pathway validation webinars, bilateral exchanges and expert discussions was particularly valuable in ensuring that modelling assumptions remained grounded in practical experience and implementation realities.

Strengthening policy relevance and research uptake

Stakeholder engagement supported the translation of research into more policy-relevant and practical outputs. Partners highlighted the value of stakeholder contributions in identifying policy examples, sense-checking recommendations and improving the relevance of findings for different user groups.

In several cases, stakeholder feedback was used to verify the relevance of research outputs, support dissemination activities and strengthen the connection between research findings and policy discussions. The policy dialogue strand, policy-focused events and the development of policy briefs further strengthened the project's capacity to translate research evidence into actionable knowledge for policymakers and practitioners.

Taken together, these reflections demonstrate that stakeholder engagement contributed not only to the validation of research outputs but also to their development, refinement, contextualisation and communication. Stakeholder perspectives therefore influenced multiple stages of the research process and supported the production of outputs that were both analytically robust and practically relevant.

4.3 Areas for improvement

While stakeholder engagement was widely regarded - by the CircEULAR team - as a valuable component of the project, participants also identified several opportunities for improvement that may inform future initiatives.

Strengthening continuity of engagement

Several reflections highlighted the value of maintaining relationships with the same stakeholders across multiple engagement activities. Research partners suggested that more consecutive follow-up meetings with existing stakeholders could strengthen continuity, deepen discussions and enable stakeholders to observe how their contributions influence subsequent stages of research. The Community of Interest provided one mechanism for sustaining engagement over time, but future projects may benefit from more structured approaches to stakeholder retention and longer-term involvement across different phases of research and validation.



Increasing opportunities for discussion and co-creation

Research partners consistently emphasised the value of interactive formats and expressed a preference for discussion-oriented engagement activities. Suggestions included reducing the proportion of time devoted to presentations, increasing opportunities for dialogue and providing background information in advance to support more informed discussion.

Several participants also highlighted the benefits of shorter, more focused online formats, like the online pathway validation sessions, allow stakeholders to engage with specific questions or outputs. These observations reinforce the importance of designing engagement activities around exchange and co-creation rather than information transfer alone.

Improving the integration of stakeholder insights across project activities

A recurring lesson concerned the importance of ensuring that stakeholder insights are communicated across the consortium in a timely manner and at points when they can most effectively inform ongoing work. CircEULAR generated a substantial volume of stakeholder feedback through workshops, webinars, bilateral exchanges and policy dialogue activities. These insights were shared through briefing notes, internal reports, deliverables and presentations at consortium meetings and dedicated bilateral exchanges. However, consortium research partners noted that the timing of engagement activities and research tasks did not always align, meaning that some insights were not fully considered within parallel work strands. Achieving this objective is important but not without challenges, particularly in a project as complex as CircEULAR, where multiple research strands, modelling activities and policy-related work are developed in parallel and thought all interconnected, they often operate on different timelines and require different types of data input.

This highlights the importance of engaging stakeholders early on, establishing clear processes for communicating engagement outcomes and identifying opportunities for their use across the project. Future initiatives could strengthen this process through clearer procedures for tracking how stakeholder feedback is considered within research activities and outputs, perhaps as part of the event feedback forms which were sometimes used in CircEULAR. Doing so would help ensure that insights generated through stakeholder engagement can be more readily incorporated across different work packages and stages of project development.

4.4 Conclusions

CircEULAR demonstrates that stakeholder engagement can play a substantive role in sustainability transitions research when it is embedded throughout the research process rather than confined to dissemination. Through a combination of interviews, workshops, webinars, bilateral exchanges, policy dialogue and strategic partnerships, stakeholders contributed to narrative development, pathway design, model refinement, policy reflection and research validation. Thereby improving the quality of the research as well as its practical relevance.

Perhaps the most important lesson emerging from the project is that stakeholder engagement is most effective when stakeholders are treated as partners in knowledge creation rather than recipients of research outputs. CircEULAR's reciprocal approach enabled stakeholders to contribute directly to the development and refinement of research while simultaneously benefiting from access to emerging findings, peer networks and opportunities for exchange. This strengthened both the quality of the research and its relevance to policy and practice.

The experience also highlights the importance of flexibility, continuity and effective knowledge sharing within stakeholder engagement processes. While future projects may benefit from stronger mechanisms for maintaining long-term stakeholder involvement and integrating engagement



outcomes across work packages, the overall experience demonstrates the value of iterative and reciprocal engagement approaches for supporting both research quality and societal impact.

Ultimately, stakeholder engagement within CircEULAR functioned not simply as a dissemination activity, but as a mechanism for refining analysis, contextualising findings, informing modelling, strengthening policy relevance and supporting the co-production of knowledge. In doing so, it helped bridge the gap between research, policy and practice and contributed to the development of more robust, relevant and actionable insights on pathways towards a circular and climate-neutral economy.

Finally, the CircEULAR experience highlighted both the opportunities and challenges associated with meaningful stakeholder engagement. Such activities require significant time, dedicated expertise and careful planning from the proposal stage onwards. At the same time, engagement processes must remain sufficiently flexible to adapt to evolving research questions, modelling activities and policy priorities as projects develop as well as to the ever-changing portfolio, time-poor agenda and demanding needs of certain core policy stakeholders.

Beyond informing specific project outputs, stakeholder engagement helped establish channels for dialogue between researchers, policymakers, industry representatives and other societal actors. In doing so, it contributed to strengthening the connection and social capital between research, policy and practice and supported the wider objective of ensuring that research findings are accessible, relevant and capable of informing evidence-based policy-making.



5. Overview of outreach events

As mentioned in Section in a wider programme of activities as part of WP1 Stakeholder Engagement and Outreach, the events listed below form part of the project's outreach, dissemination and communication of results activities. While distinct from the formal stakeholder engagement process, they run in parallel and serve to broaden the reach and visibility of the project's work. Through conference presentations, workshops and public-facing activities, these events complement and enrich the stakeholder engagement offering by engaging wider scientific, policy and practitioner audiences beyond the core stakeholder network.

- Fifteenth IAMC Annual Meeting 2022, Integrated Assessment Modelling Consortium, 29th November – 1st December 2022, College Park, MD, USA (<https://www.iamconsortium.org/event/fifteenth-iamc-annual-meeting-2022/>)
- CIRCOMOD-CircEular Joint Project Meeting, 17th-19th April 2023, Venice (CMCC) (<https://circomod.eu/a-milestone-meeting-of-circomod-and-circeular-in-venice/>)
- ISIE2023 – 11th International Conference on Industrial Ecology, 2nd-5th July 2023, Leiden, Netherlands (CMCC) (<https://isie2023netherlands.nl/>)
- Vienna Energy Forum, July 2023 (IIASA)
- ISIE Presentation on Messageix Material, July 2023 (IIASA)
- ISIE Presentation on Battery Supply Chains, July 2023 (NTNU/IIASA)
- Israeli Environment Conference, July 2023 (IIASA)
- How Much Built-Up Floor Area Do We Have? Harmonising Disparate Estimates of Building Stocks, 14th July 2023 (TUB)
- Presentation on Petrochemical Industry Circularity at IMC, November 2023 (IIASA)
- Kurt Lewin Institute Conference, 25th-26th April 2024 (RUG)
- Presentation on Research at RUG's Heymans Symposium, 22nd May 2024 (RUG)
- Vienna Climate Summit – "Sensing Resonance with Borjana Ventzislavova", 24th-25th June 2024 (LMU)
- CircEular Joint Workshop on Circular Economy Economic Modelling, 1st July 2024, Leuven, Belgium (CMCC) (<https://circeular.org/circeular-is-organising-a-joint-workshop-on-circular-economy-economic-modelling/>)
- "Reduce & Refuse: Conditions for Sufficiency-Oriented Circular Consumption Practices", 35th International Geographical Congress, 25th August 2024, Dublin, Ireland (LMU)
- Special Session – "Future Earth Consumption in a Circular Society: Geographical Perspectives", 35th International Geographical Congress, 25th August 2024, Dublin, Ireland (LMU)
- ISWA World Congress 2024 – Waste to Wealth: Solutions for a Sustainable Future, 15th-18th September 2024, Cape Town, South Africa (<https://www.iswa.org/event/iswa-world-congress-2024/>)
- The Contribution of Circular Economy Strategies Towards Achieving Net-Zero GHG Emissions, EDITS, 8th October 2024
- ECEMP – European Climate and Energy Modelling Platform, 16th-17th October 2024, Brussels, Belgium (<https://www.ecemf.eu/ecemp-2024-the-return-to-brussels/>)
- Presentation of CircEular Research at the German PhD Conference, 24th-25th October 2024 (RUG)
- IAMC Annual Meeting 2024 (17th), 4th-6th November 2024, Yonsei University, Seoul, South Korea (<https://www.iamconsortium.org/event/seventeenth-iamc-annual-meeting-2024/>)
- Organisation of Research Meeting with Researchers of the University of Amsterdam, 11th December 2024 (RUG)



- Poster Presentation at the ASPO Conference (Association of Social Psychology Researchers), 12th-13th December 2024 (RUG)
- IAERE – Thirteenth Annual Conference, 20th-21st February 2025, University of Roma Tre, Rome, Italy (<https://www.iaere.org/copia-di-iaere-annual-conference-2025-1>) (CMCC)
- Poster on Material Mobilization, IRTC, Ljubljana, 19th-21st February 2025 (Empa)
- Verde Perto Exhibit, 24th March – 30th June 2025, Matosinhos, Portugal (INEGI)
- SCORAI Europe Conference, 8th-10th April 2025, Lund, Sweden (LMU)
- EGU General Assembly, 27th April – 2nd May 2025, Vienna, Austria (<https://www.egu.eu/news/1292/egu-general-assembly-2025-meeting-programme-and-provisional-press-conferences>)
- International Energy Workshop (IEW), 10th-13th June 2025, Nara, Japan (<https://www.internationalenergyworkshop.org/meetings/iew-2025/>)
- Building a Greener Future: Circular Economy Strategies for Climate Change Mitigation in the Built Environment. EU Green Week, 18th June 2025, online (IIASA, T6)
- EAERE – 30th Annual Conference of the European Association of Environmental and Resource Economists, 16th-19th June 2025, Bergen, Norway (<https://eaere-conferences.org/>) (CMCC)
- 5th ISA Forum of Sociology, 6th-11th July 2025, Rabat, Morocco (LMU)
- ISIE 2025 – 12th International Conference on Industrial Ecology, 1st-4th July 2025, National University of Singapore (<https://isie2025.sg/>)
- Scenario Forum 2025, 16th-18th July 2025, University of Leeds, UK (<https://scenariosforum.org/>)
- International Conference of Environmental Psychology (ICEP), 15th-18th June 2025, Vilnius, Lithuania (<https://www.icep2025.com/>) (RUG)
- Geographical Earth Futures Colloquium, 23rd July 2025 (LMU)
- Presentation at the 2nd International Conference on Circularity in the Built Environment (CiBEn 2025), 16th-18th September 2025, Tampere, Finland (INEGI) (<https://events.tuni.fi/ciben2025/>)
- Board Game at the European Researcher's Night, 26th September 2025 (RUG)
- Guest Speaker Presentation at EDITS Conference on "The Conditionality of Transformation", 15th October 2025 (LMU)
- Conference on Social Psychology (ASPO), 20th-21st November 2025 (RUG)
- Presentation to European Environment Information and Observation Network: Mapping the Links Between Circularity and Climate, 25th November 2025 (BOKU)
- Webinar for the Launch of Circular ReBoundary, 3rd December 2025 (CMCC, T6)
- Integrated Green Industrialisation Strategies Across the Energy, Material and Climate Nexus to Achieve Climate and Development Goals, International Vienna Energy and Climate Forum (IVECF) 2026, 10th April 2026, Vienna
- Participation in Workshop Hosted by the Chair of Environmental and Mineral Resources Economics (CEME), 2nd June 2026, Orléans (CMCC)
- 35th Meeting of the International Resource Panel Meeting, 8th-12th June 2026, Berlin (<https://www.resourcepanel.org/news-events/35th-meeting-international-resource-panel>) (IIASA)
- Invited keynote presentation at the 22nd International Conference on European Energy Market (EEM2026), 22-24 June 2026, Trondheim, Norway (<https://www.ntnu.edu/web/eem26/program>) (IIASA)
- Circular Economy Economic Modeling Workshop (CEE-Woop) Workshop, 29th June 2026, Lisboa (<https://sites.google.com/view/decep/cee-woop?authuser=0>) (CMCC)
- Presentation at the 2nd International Conference on Zero Carbon Built Environment (ZCBE 2026), 8th-10th July 2026, Lisbon, Portugal (<https://www.novaidfct.pt/events->



[news/events/2nd-edition-of-the-international-conference-on-zero-carbon-built-environment-zcbe-2026](#)) (INEGI)



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