



SCREEN Project

Synergic circular economy across European regions



circular economy

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Supporting the transition to a circular economy is one of Europe's political priorities, in line with the Europe2020 Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. The strengthening of synergies between the Horizon 2020 program and the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) has been emphasized in the 2014-2020 multiannual financial framework as a tool to exploit investments for political priorities and to strengthen the result-orientedness of the European budget.

The regions have a key role in the transition to a circular economy and have the potential to create new "circular" value chains. The development of shared strategies based on interregional complementarity and on the "strengths" of each region can be a valid tool for developing the individual and combined potential of the regions themselves. However, mutual knowledge of the strengths of each Region and of the available resources is often limited.



OBJECTIVES

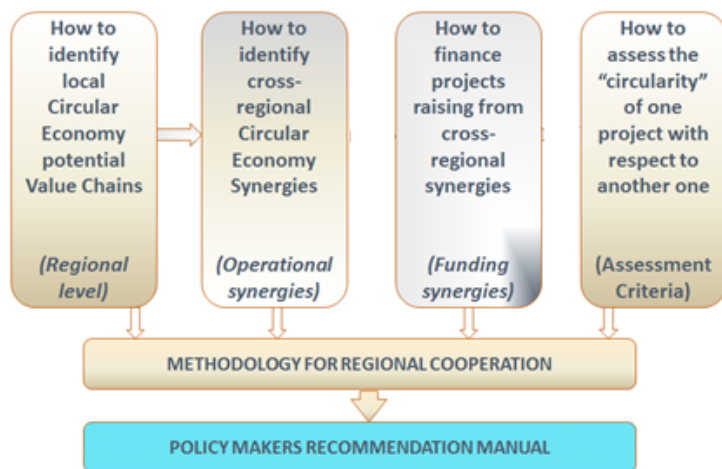
Against this background, the SCREEN project, funded by the Horizon 2020 program, brings together 17 European regions **in order to define a systemic and replicable approach to the transition to a circular economy in the context of the Smart Specialization Strategy**. The project also deals with the identification and implementation of inter-regional synergies between the investments in research and innovation favored by Horizon 2020 and by ESIF in order to guarantee the future spread of eco-innovation and horizontal business models, which are transversal to different value chains.

In order to develop inter-regional synergies, the project has leveraged (traditional and emerging) European industrial sectors with the aim of supporting the emergence of new actors in regional economies leading to the definition of new or renewed value chains. In fact, the project's strategy involved systematic investigation of the possible connections and complementarities between different sectors and value chains in the European regions.

PROJECT PHASES

The **4 phases** of the project are presented in Figure 1:

Figure 1.



- in the **first phase** a procedure was set up for the identification and mapping of real and potential circular value chains present in each Region at the local level. The identification of a common methodology represented the first success of SCREEN, considering the very varied characteristics and peculiarities of each of the 17 involved regions;

- in the **second phase** a synergistic approach was developed for the identification and connection of interregional circular value chains, in order to integrate the individual capacities in a reciprocal manner, with a view to establishing cooperation between economic actors operating in different regions. This system makes it possible to strengthen the cohesion policy and to consolidate the relationships between regional

administrations and local economic operators through the SCREEN "bottom-up" method, which collects the needs of stakeholders through a direct participatory relationship;

- the **third phase** of the project involved the analysis and discussion, through the policy laboratory (Policy Lab), of the existing financial instruments, outlining their characteristics and limits. This phase ended with the proposal and the definition of an **innovative tool** (called "Common Pot") capable of responding to the needs of the circular economy and suitable for promoting synergies between the structural and research funds;

- given that the agreements between the Regions for the synergic use of funds imply the need to have common criteria for the evaluation of the specific projects in the field of circular economy, in the **fourth phase**, through the same Policy Lab, this set of common project evaluation criteria was defined. To this end, SCREEN has developed a comparative methodology, initially tested on some regional projects already funded and subsequently discussed and redefined by the 17 Regions during the project.

PROJECT RESULTS

The SCREEN project has developed a methodology and several tools to support each of the 4 phases listed above.

The potential of local circular economy and existing value chains were identified, with a "mapping tool" developed to support the following objectives:

- assessment of regional capacities and virtuous practices in the involved regions, based on existing Smart Specialization Strategies (RIS3);
- identification of specific synergies and complementarities between sectors, value chains and markets in order to highlight and evaluate strategic activities that could significantly contribute to the transition towards circular business models.

The tool developed consists of a **methodology (guidelines – D2.1)** and a pre-formatted **spreadsheet** containing the metadata structure to map the regional competences with common criteria.

After the mapping of regional capacities, a search for **inter-regional synergies** was performed based on a process of matching key/ critical points in regional value chains with emerging ideas/ strategies through the SCREEN partnership. To this end, the following have been developed:

- **methodology (guidelines – D5.1)** for the regional cooperation and identification of synergies (**guidelines – D3.1**);
- pre-formatted **spreadsheet** for the evaluation of input to the analysis of material flow;
- pre-formatted **spreadsheet** for the evaluation / description of critical points and emerging ideas.

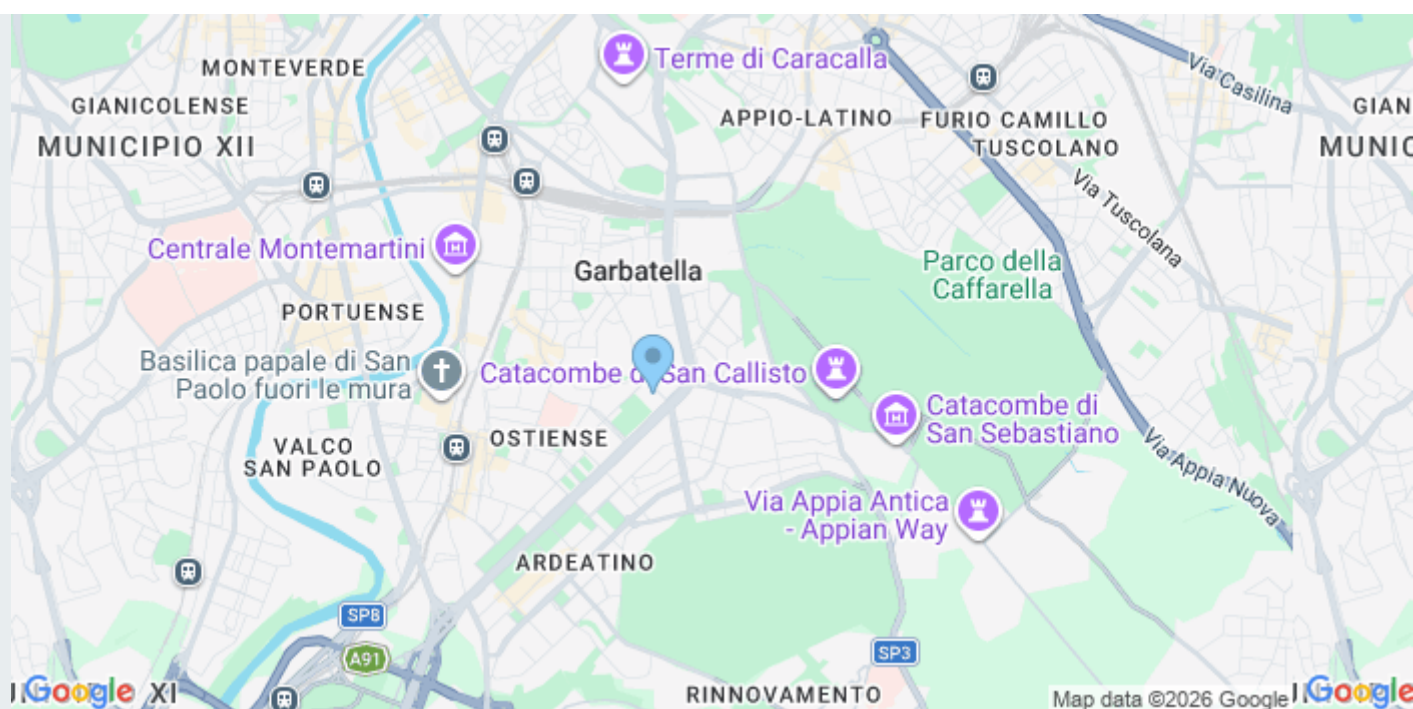
To apply for **financing of inter-regional projects**, the first step usually is the identification of inter-regional synergies. In the third phase of the SCREEN project, which involved the search for project funding taking in examination various available funds (principally ESIF and H2020), the 11 Regions have signed a Memorandum of Understanding for the synergic use of European funds in circular economy projects.



Once the regional projects and the related financing methods have been identified, it is necessary to define a set of **common criteria for evaluating "circular" projects** to be adopted by the Regions. The criteria to be defined, in addition to those already established by the regional authority that manages the structural funds, must be developed with the specific purpose of evaluating the *circularity* of the projects, allowing the evaluators to draw up clear and transparent rankings. To this end, [guidelines for the evaluation of the projects' circularity](#) were developed.

A "[Policy makers recommendation manual](#)" was also produced.

The project partners have decided to continue SCREEN in the form of a network of informal cooperation between European regions, **open to other regions and to all economic and social players operating in the circular economy**. The network is coordinated through the Policy Lab and uses [LinkedIn group](#).



Acronym
SCREEN

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[HORIZON 2020](#)

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1742747.50

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2018

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Region
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