CIREVALC E-NEWSLETTER #3

Spring 2025 Edition

Spring brings fresh energy—and inspiring updates from the CIREVALC community. Over the last months, we've shared ideas, visited inspiring places, and started real work with local pioneers. Let's take a look at what we've done-and what's coming next!

In late 2024 and early 2025, the CIREVALC community came together to learn, to connect, and to experience how circular economy principles work on the ground. These study visits in České Budějovice and Linz brought together project partners, local stakeholders, and SMEs from across Central Europe.



7-8 November 2024 Focus: Food and Packaging

Ceské Budějovice, Czech Republic

Hosted by JAIP - South Bohemian Agency for Support to Innovation

This two-day event combined an intensive study visit with the official Mid-Term Dissemination Event.

Key visits and experiences:

Mondi Bupak showed us how sustainable paper packaging is made, with a factory tour.

- At Budějovický Budvar, we explored how one of the country's most famous breweries implements
- environmental responsibility. The **University of South Bohemia** gave us a hands-on look into:
- Viscofan CZ presented their eco-friendly eFAN range—a packaging innovation that reduces fossil-based
 - materials and integrates plastic casings into a more circular production cycle, keeping resources in use

- Aquaponics systems and water purification - LCA tools that measure environmental impact



for as long as possible.





from INCIEN and the Circular Food Futures project delivered an inspiring keynote on how circular practices can transform the food industry. She shared: The environmental and economic costs of traditional, wasteful systems. How reducing waste and optimizing resources can create a sustainable food chain. Real-world success stories, like biodegradable packaging and community-driven food initiatives.

highlighted the project's progress and the growing importance of sustainability across regions. Jana Vítková

- The power of collaboration between businesses, governments, and communities to drive change. Two thematic panels offered practical tools and real examples:
 - 1. Boosting Circularity in Communities & SMEs Moderated by Katharina Schöps, experts from Slovakia, Hungary, Italy, and Croatia shared strategies, funding tips, and tested circular practices.

2. Policies & Support for Circular Practices - Led by Helena Cvenkel, panelists from Hungary, Poland,

sessions allowed participants to share ideas and build partnerships. Zoltán Bendó (LP, STRIA) and Michaela Novotná (hosting project partner, JAIP) wrapped up the day, thanking participants and highlighting the need for

Austria, and the Czech Republic discussed regulatory pathways and how smart policies enable innovation. The event provided great opportunities to connect with professionals, both in-person and online. Interactive

ongoing collaboration to advance the CIREVALC project.







Hosted by Business Upper Austria

2-4 April 2025 Focus: Food waste

from their pilot implementations—and to learn from each other. Across Central Europe, the CIREVALC pilot actions are well underway. Each partner is working with local pioneers—small businesses, NGOs, and experts—to test and apply circular economy principles in real-life

settings.

The study visit in Linz meeting was all about progress. Project partners came together to share real results







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tes like a voucher scheme, giving participants access to practical support in areas like waste management, financing, or communication. Feedback shows high satisfaction and clear demand for continued collaboration.

showcase local circular food products.

Croatia (Istria Region)

their core operations

Hungary

Slovakia

Poland

joint workshops and individual consulting. The topics range from legal updates on packaging regulation (PPWR), to business model transformation and LCA. Local companies received targeted advice to develop circular strategies and assess their materials and energy use. Startups like VEGADOKK and innovative refill concepts like RESPRAY benefited from expert sessions.

The Hungarian partners STRIA and MGFÜ are supporting SMEs in the food and packaging sectors through both

In Slovakia, the BIC Bratislava team has been working closely with pioneers from the regional food supply chain. They provided business plan consulting, financial advisory, and matchmaking with potential partners. The

RARR in Poland is focusing on awareness and capacity building. They organised thematic panels and workshops aimed at helping less-experienced SMEs understand circular economy concepts. Events like "Grants for Innovati-

legislation, tools for measuring environmental impact (including carbon footprint and LCA), and ESG marketing. In parallel, businesses could apply for tailored one-on-one consulting from selected experts. The program opera-

goal is to help companies redesign their models with circular economy principles in mind. Support is delivered via both online and physical sessions, ensuring flexibility for participating SMEs.

cooperated with social economy actors and adapted their support format to different audience needs. **Germany** The German partner RKW Sachsen delivered a creative mix of innovation and collaboration. Their pilot explo-

education can lead to real, fast impact. Slovenia

introduced, with experts guiding participants step by step through implementation challenges.

Austria Business Upper Austria built a multilayered pilot that includes circularity roadmapping, B2B consultations, and education. The pilot supports SMEs through tailored training modules and live events such as the Circular Bites gathering. Participating companies explored eco-design, LCA, and circular KPIs-tools they can now embed into

BSC Kranj developed a pilot to support circularity in gastronomy. Workshops helped chefs and food entrepreneurs explore how to reuse by-products and reduce packaging. Circular business planning and practical tools were



This was not just a technical meeting. It was about learning from practice, about seeing what works—and what

"The pilot projects are different, but our goals are the same. Together, we're building something lasting,"

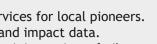
Among the 30+ participants were startups, business support organisations, and innovation actors engaged in circular solutions. The event was positively received and is seen as a model for future knowledge exchange formats beyond the project duration. Feedback highlighted the high value of peer learning and the practical

doesn't—and building confidence to move forward.

practical tools, and fostering new partnerships.

said Zoltan Bendo, lead partner.

All partners are now: What's Next? Finalising support services for local pioneers.



Anikó Kiss

(https://www.cirevalc.com) Communication Manager Michaela Novotna

Interreg

https://www.interreg-central.eu/projects/cirevalc Finance Manager

Preparing for the next joint review of pilot results. And yes—a full newsletter dedicated to pilot results is coming soon.

Project Manager

Zoltán Bendó

The half-day hybrid event provided a dynamic space for exchanging circular economy insights, showcasing relevance of shared experiences for business innovation and sustainability strategies.

on" brought together over 80 participants, including public authorities and private companies. The team also res how lavender production waste can be turned into paper and how fish skin can be upcycled into sustainable leather. They also ran workshops on energy efficiency and developed display furniture made from wood scraps to AZRRI focused on the food and catering sector by hosting a series of sustainability cooking workshops. Participants learned how to minimise food waste and integrate circular principles into daily practice. According to feedback, many restaurants started applying new practices immediately after the sessions, proving that circular

Circular Bites - Linz, Austria | 11 February 2025 The "Circular Bites" event, held in Linz on 11 February 2025, was a knowledge-sharing and networking occasion under the CIREVALC pilot activities. Organised by Business Upper Austria.

Collecting feedback and impact data.

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