



ACR+



ACR+ ACTIVITY REPORT 2023

The network of cities and regions
accelerating the circular economy
transition in their territories and beyond

ACR+ believes that

cities and regions are a game changer

to speed up the transition towards a circular and sustainable society.

We support them in raising their profile and playing fully their bridging role through:



ACR+ addresses the

main needs and priorities

of cities and regions especially in the following strategic thematic areas:



Built Environment



Sustainable Food Systems



Circular Lifestyles



Policy and Governance



Waste and Material Flows

Priorities and highlights 2023

On the eve of its 30th anniversary, 2023 brought to ACR+ the confirmation that the network has its place in today's world. In particular, it enables its members to develop local strategies and activities while at the same time being part of a global dynamic. This year has shown that ACR+ must continue to promote the role of decentralised authorities, and make cities and regions key players in all national and supranational environmental/climate policies, ensuring a sustainable and just transition.

Some numbers



42

Newslines
(weekly newsletter)

3

EU Digests

3

Updates

217

news from
ACR+ members
published

3 209

followers on X

2 794

followers on LinkedIn



3

technical reports
and studies published



6

project proposals
approved

4

project proposals
under-review



Global level



- Push for a collective answer to the current multi-crisis situation based on a dialogue between all actors
- Integrate the socio-cultural aspect in the circular transition insisting on sufficiency and inclusiveness and questioning our needs and consumption patterns
- Reinforce Euro-Med cooperation on local action plans and local policy design

Main activities:

- Organised several working groups on governance on topics such as the governance and financing challenges for circular bioeconomy (the BIOTRANSFORM project), supporting the production and use of alternative fertilizers (the Fer-Play project), circular resource management and circular systemic solutions (CCRI-CSO), and leading the Region and Cities Advisory Panel (H4C)
- The 15th edition of the European Week for Waste Reduction meets with success as 14 522 actions took place in 29 countries thanks to the support of 35 coordinators. The theme selected for this year was “sustainable packaging” reinforcing messages on sustainable consumption (and prevention).
- Following its objective of reinforcing Euro-med cooperation, ACR+ supported the first edition of the Euro-Med Weeks for Waste Reduction, acknowledging the work carried out by the five winning actions from Tunisia, Algeria, Israel and Jordan.
- To accompany the Mediterranean region in its circular transformation, ACR+ is active within the Interreg Euro-MED Innovative Sustainable Economy mission and contributed to several activities such as the Interreg Euro-MED Event “Connecting the Dots: The Path for a Smarter and Greener Mediterranean” in November.
- To “show by example” that it is necessary to work together, ACR+ collaborated with several initiatives or organisations (and not only representing public authorities) such as the Circular Plastics Alliance, Close the Glass Loop, Interreg Europe, etc. This led to the co-organisation of events (e.g. webinar with the European Space Agency on littering), the participation as speaker in conferences (e.g. webinar of the Interreg Europe Policy Learning Platform “Leading the way towards waste prevention”), or the publication of papers and manifestos.

Relevant partnerships and memberships



European level

- Anticipate upcoming EU obligations for public authorities (e.g. biowaste separation, textile collection) facilitating their understanding and suggesting possible tools and solutions adapted to local contexts
- Build a strong advocacy action on waste prevention targets



Main activities:

- ACR+ monitored and updated its members about EU policy development and implications for local and regional authorities. It also shared the voice of local authorities in several key files such as: the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation, the revision of the EU Waste Framework Directive regarding the environmental impact of waste management, the Soil Monitoring and Resilience Directive
- We shared with the European Commission an [open letter](#) including few concrete measures that could help the future Commission to better address decentralised authorities' needs and provide them with the right instruments and support, considering their specificities and local contexts.
- We joined a coalition in support of Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation and endorsed a position paper on packaging reuse, which represents the collaboration of various stakeholders.
- We reviewed the European Commission's proposal for the new Soil Health Law, providing comments on the draft text of the law, and distributed the document to the ENVE committee of the Committee of the Regions to facilitate an informed discussion at the regional and city levels across the European Union.
- Publication of the results of Belfast in the framework of our campaign [More Circularity, Less Carbon](#)
- Focus on the circular textile management through the work of the CISUTAC project, the publication of the report "Recommendations and good practices for local used textile management", the participation in a policy roundtable of the New Cotton project on collection and sorting of post-consumer textiles, a TAIEX workshop dedicated to textile waste separate collection, treatment and markets, and the Global Fashion Summit 2023, as well as the co-organisation with the EBCD of a conference on EPR and textiles.
- Focus on financing schemes for circular economy initiatives within local and regional public authorities through the DECISO and HOOP projects.
- Focus on bioeconomy and biowaste management, in particular indicators and strategy, through several activities of the projects LIFE BioBest, FOLOU, Biocircularcities. In addition, the development of the HOOP Network of Cities and Regions gave access and direct contact with other territories and HOOP experts on biowaste management and innovative recycling routes with several webinars and study-visits organised throughout 2023.

Relevant partnerships and membership:



close the
glass loop



ACR+ level

- Strengthen knowledge exchange and support members on sustainable energy and material resources integrated policies
- Adapt to a growing network (members, team, topics, data) and need for expertise

Main activities:

- Annual General Assembly on 31 May-1 June in Dublin, hosted by the Eastern Midlands Waste Region in parallel to the Circular Economy Hotspot and the EWWR Awards Ceremony. Keynote speeches (Cillian Lohan from the European Social and Economic Committee, Sergio Pérez García from the government of Navarra, and Joan Prummel from Rijkswaterstaat) and interactive discussion groups highlighted the importance of continuing to work hand in hand to achieve a truly circular transformation. During the interactive session, ACR+ members exchanged on the five working themes that have been adopted at the beginning of the year: Built Environment, Sustainable Food Systems, Circular Lifestyles, Policy and Governance, and Waste and Material Flows. For each theme, they shared their vision, their current activities, and how the network can further support them.
- Support to members by assessing local and national waste management plans (Brussels Environment (BE), Connacht Ulster Waste Region (IE), Eastern Midlands Waste Region (IE), Southern Waste Region (IE))
- Acquisition of a new CRM system to facilitate data management, improve members' experience, ease the exchange of information
- Moving to new offices
- Our strategic partnership with Energy Cities came to life with the organisation of several joint meeting with Energy Cities members, and our presence at their General Assembly in Modena



Our technical reports

Recommendations and Good Practices for Local Used Textile Management



[Read the report and its executive summary online](#)

This report offers a detailed analysis and benchmark of current European practices, tips and recommendations on how to manage textile waste, and overall guidance for public authorities to get prepared for the upcoming obligation. It includes five key recommendations:

- Establish a local governance on textile management
- Strengthen existing collection methods, and identify alternative collection methods
- Promote textile waste prevention and second-hand buying
- Extend sorting instructions only when an EPR system is available
- Support circular tenders for professional textiles

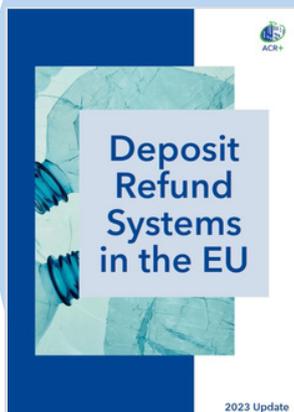
The Carbon Footprint of Waste of Belfast

This report assesses the carbon footprint of household waste of Belfast using the Carbon Metric International tool (amounting to 360 000 tCO₂eq in 2020). Based on the analysis, the report suggests scenarios to reduce this footprint by 90 000 tCO₂eq by 2025 and achieve the 25% reduction target of the ACR+ 'More Circularity Less Carbon' campaign. The efforts should focus on the most carbon-intensive fractions, namely reducing textile and food waste and increasing plastic recycling.



[Read the report online](#)

Deposit Refund Systems in the EU - 2023 Update



Five years after a first report on Deposit Return Systems for single use packaging, this new report emphasises changes at both the Member State and EU levels. It focuses on fourteen Member States with existing DRS and provides updated data, exploring the effectiveness of deposit systems in reducing littering, and delving into their interaction with Extended Producer Responsibility schemes. The study also incorporates publicly available information on system results.

The report focuses on contributing to the broader discussion surrounding deposit systems, examining their potential and limitations in addressing critical issues like waste reduction and plastic pollution.

[Read the report and its executive summary online](#)

A year with ACR+

January

- The Euro-Med Weeks for Waste Reduction announce their first winners
- The FOLOU project on prevention and reduction of food losses kicks off
- We contribute to the WES desk study on Regional Activity on Management of Construction and Demolition Waste

February

- The ProCirc project opens its e-learning course on sustainable procurement
- The European Circular Economy Stakeholder annual Conference focuses on the role of the circular economy in driving sustainable recovery, open strategic autonomy and resilience
- We organise the 2nd workshop of the BRINC Network of Public Authorities on public procurement
- We share good practices on incentives to citizens' engagement in waste separation and on circular public procurement during a conference of the 3R2CE project in Lisbon
- We emphasise the significance of waste prevention in reducing the environmental and social impact of the textile industry during a policy roundtable of the New Cotton project on collection and sorting of post-consumer textiles

March

- We host a webinar on monitoring the transition to a circular economy with CCRI
- The EURE project organises its final conference
- We organise a policy roundtable in the framework of FOODRUS
- We join the EU Mission: A Soil Deal for Europe in Brussels
- We are honoured to receive an award from our member LIPOR for its 40th birthday for being the organisation that has supported them in this journey since 2005 and for helping them to become a reference at European level.

April

- We hold a lunch debate of the EPR Club on deposit return systems
- The RETHINK Waste project publishes its layman report
- The first part of the ProCirc project final conference takes place online
- We take part in the Zero Pollution Stakeholder Workshop to discuss concepts for an urban and regional scoring methodology for a Zero Pollution scoreboard

May

- During the second episode of the leading the way towards waste prevention series, hosted by the Interreg Europe Policy Learning Platform, we give a keynote speech on how to engage citizens in waste prevention activities
- The ProCirc project concludes with a in-person final conference that we organise at the Committee of the Regions
- We organise the CCRI Webinar on Circular Public Procurement
- A joint workshop of HOOP and DECISO focuses on financing local circular economy initiatives
- We participate in the discussion on the draft joint Roadmap to address SUPs in Jordan during the WES project consultation workshop and co-draft the roadmap
- ACR+ arrives in Dublin for its General Assembly and the EWWR 2022 Awards Ceremony
- SMART WASTE reflects on its outcome at a final conference
- The Portuguese municipality of Maia invites us to discuss PAYT as an instrument to address the current challenge of waste management in Portugal

June

- The EU Green Week is in full swing in Brussels, among all the side-events two are co-organised by ACR+: on sustainable sport with Green Sports Hub and on LCA with LCA4Regions
- The TOURISME project concludes with an event on the empowerment of SMEs for sustainable growth in tourism
- We cooperate with the European Space Agency for a meeting on illegal landfills and fly-tipping
- We attend the Sensemaking Workshop developing key performance indicators for industrial-urban circular economy initiatives organised by H4C
- We talk about organic waste collection schemes in Europe during the Waste Symposium organised by AMORCE
- We share our views on keeping textile waste prevention at the core of local policies during the roundtable entitled “Ambition to action: from textile waste to future resource” taking place during Global Fashion Summit 2023
- We discuss the Eco-design for Sustainable Products Regulation and circularity at an event at the European Parliament
- We participate in the Close the glass loop annual event to reinforce the collective commitment to achieving a 90% glass collection rate for recycling across the EU by 2030

July

- Following six other ACR+ members, Belfast assess the carbon footprint of its household waste, which amounted to 360 000 tCO₂eq in 2020, thanks to the More Circularity, Less Carbon campaign.
- The first two episodes of the Biocircularities trilogy gather more than 50 viewers

September

- We inaugurate our new offices!
- We organise the [final conference](#) of the Biocircularcities project
- We participate in a [conference](#) hosted by the Territorial Area Assembly of Ancona (ATA2) on reuse centres, a key tool in promoting sustainable waste management
- We provide a short [insight on disposable vapes](#), upon request of one of our members
- We publish and share our [review and comments](#) to the proposal text for a EU Soil Monitoring Law

October

- We publish the report "[Recommendations and Good Practices for Local Used Textile Management](#)"
- We endorse the [Packaging Reuse Position Paper: Maximising Benefits](#)
- We participate in the TAIEX workshop, offering Member States with technical, legal, and practical advice regarding the new legal obligation for municipalities to separately collect municipal textile waste
- We join the [Energy Cities General Assembly](#)
- The [WES Roadmap](#) to Address Single-Use Plastic Items in Jordan is published
- We organise a [HOOP workshop](#) as part of the European Week of Regions and Cities
- We organise the [WES regional workshop and study visit](#) in Sardinia
- The first [FOODrus policy roundtable](#) takes place
- We promote environmental sustainability in sports at the [2023 European Sport Platform](#) with the Green Sports Hub Europe project

November

- The [first training](#) of the ACCESS project on improved environmental management of sporting events kicks off
- We participate in a session on national strategies for a circular economy approach in the tourism sector of the [Toumali - Prevention of Tourism Marine Litter conference](#) and present case studies from our network and projects
- We take part in [Ecomondo](#) sharing about the DECISO and Hub4Circularity projects
- The [first general conference of CCRI-CSO](#) provides a forum for all interested circular economy stakeholders to come together to discuss and exchange on circular solutions. In our thematic working group, we delve into the comprehensive management of textile flows, covering everything from prevention to recycling
- The [15th edition](#) of the EWWR focuses on packaging waste
- We join forces with the European Biogas Association, the European Compost Network, and the European Biochar Industry Consortium to send to EU legislators a [joint letter](#) with 4 recommendations to improve the proposed Soil Monitoring and Resilience Directive
- We join the [first EU Soil Mission Week](#)
- We prepare the [WES report](#) on Peer-to-Peer exchange on Management of Construction and Demolition Waste
- We organise an [event on EPR for the textile sector](#) at the EU Parliament
- We share with the European Commission an [open letter](#) with suggestions for EU funding programmes to better meet the needs of local governments

December

- We publish a [report on DRS in Europe](#), updating an earlier work and deepening our knowledge on the topic
- We celebrate [World's Soil Day](#)
- With our partners we launch the [FER-PLAY database](#)

Our projects in 2023

These projects started



Interreg Euro-MED Co-funded by the European Union

Innovative sustainable economy

Interreg Europe Co-funded by the European Union

INERTWASTE

Interreg Europe Co-funded by the European Union

MINEV



Follow them and find out more on their upcoming actions

These projects ended



Interreg North Sea Region ProCirc European Regional Development Fund EUROPEAN UNION



SMART WASTE Interreg Europe European Union European Regional Development Fund

LCA4Regions Interreg Europe European Union European Regional Development Fund

EURE Interreg Europe European Union European Regional Development Fund



Have a look at their websites for an overview of their outputs

These projects are in full swing



The network

In 2023, ACR+ represented 83 members in 23 countries.

Although we are a network dedicated primarily to local and regional authorities, ACR+ welcomes all stakeholders having a role to play in the transition to circular economy. From decentralised authorities and city networks to NGOs, academics, private partners and consultancies.

Different membership types – effective, partner, invited, or supportive member – are available depending on the local context and specific needs. New members can join throughout the year.

a weekly newsletter

a virtual library

support to events or projects

increased visibility

exchange of experiences

are part some of our recurring and nonetheless essential daily activities and services to members



Welcome to the network



TUNÇ SOYER
İZMİR METROPOLITAN MAYOR



MÉTROPOLE
NICE CÔTE D'AZUR

The team

Management



Françoise BONNET
Secretary General



Francesco LEMBO
Deputy Secretary
General



Hélène KONOPSKI
Finance



Marie CARDON
Administration

Admin and finance

Projects



Jean-Benoît BEL
Waste and Material Flows



Agnese BOCCALON
Sustainable Food Systems



Tugce TUGRAN
Policy and Governance



Nuria CASES i SEMPERE
Policy and Governance



Ernest KOVÁCS
Circular Lifestyles



Serena LISAI
Built Environment



Lauriane NOIROT
Sustainable Food Systems



Anita LOMBARDO
Policy and Governance

Communications



Gaëlle COLAS



Solène PADELETTI



Virginia AMATE PADILLA



Rodrigo SOLAGNA

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