



# RREUSE & the EU Social Economy

## Action Plan

Brussels, October 14th , 2022

Simone SCHIRRU

Social & Economic Policy Officer,

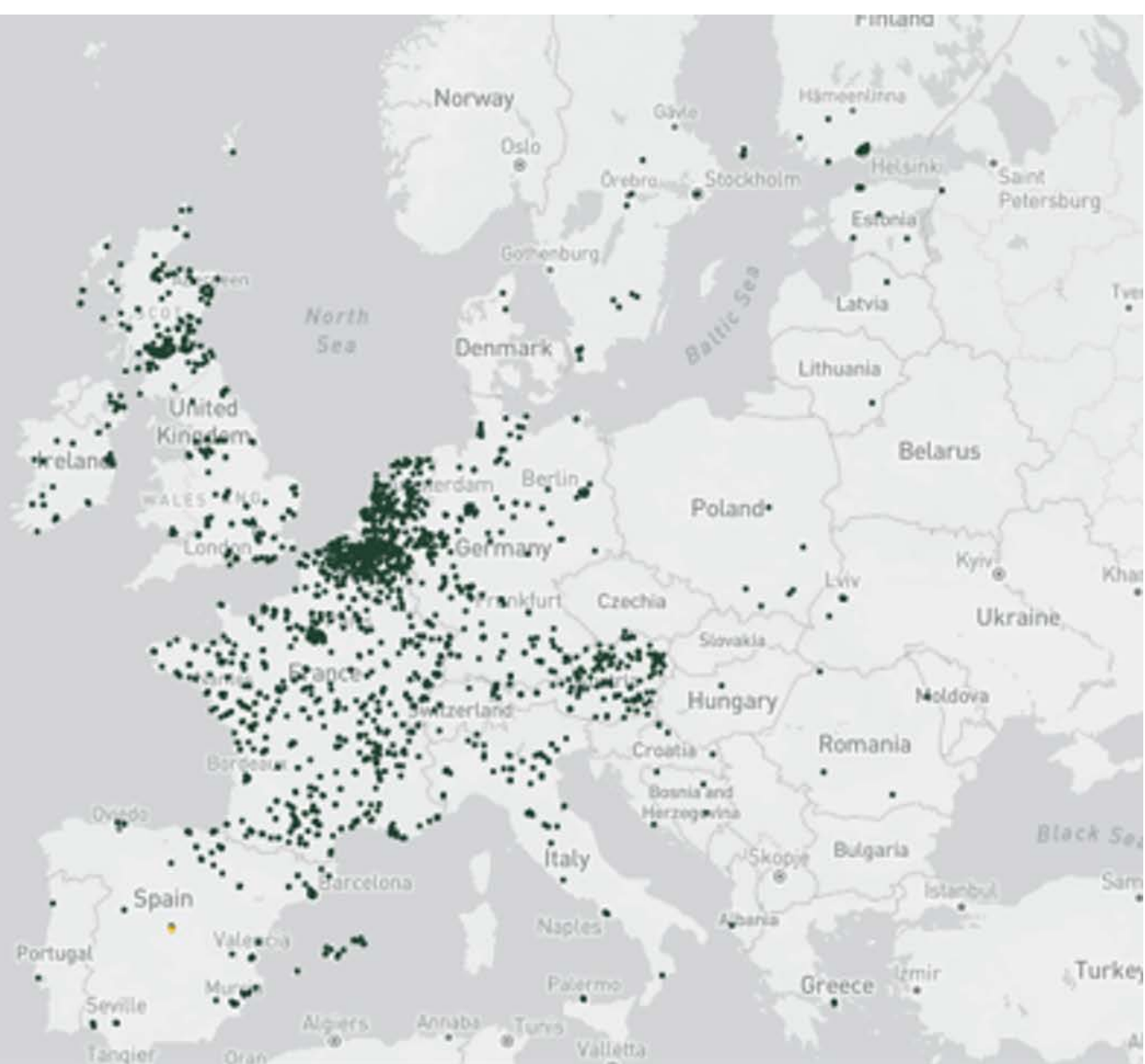
[simone.schirru@rreuse.org](mailto:simone.schirru@rreuse.org)



**RREUSE** is an international network representing social enterprises active in re-use, repair and recycling.

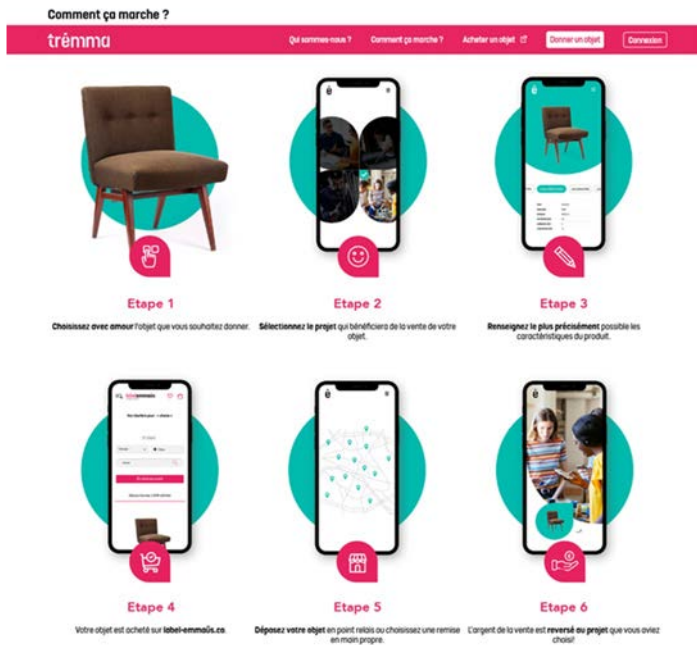


33 members  
29 countries



# Digital tools, upskilling, and embracing e-commerce

## Emmaüs France



# Kierrätyskeskus, Finland



Front page Customer service Just now! About us Subscribe to newsletter Brands Products sold

Kierrätyskeskus

Find products Retrieval Cart is empty Space

BICYCLES BOOKS CLOTHING AND ACCESSORIES HOME AND HOUSING ENTERTAINMENT & ELECTRONICS SPORTS AND HOBBIES HANDICRAFTS AND CRAFTS BUT NEW ARRIVALS

Sisusta kierrätyslöydöin

Uutuuksiin >>

A large hero image featuring a vibrant red tufted sofa on the left and a wooden cabinet with a vase of white flowers on the right, set against a light pink background.

Uutuudet

A small image showing a white candle in a silver holder, a white vase, and a glass of orange juice with a slice of orange.

Takuuhuolletut ja edulliset tietokoneet

Vaatteet ja asusteet

A small image showing a brown hat and a blue denim jacket hanging on a wooden rack.

THE MOST WANTED

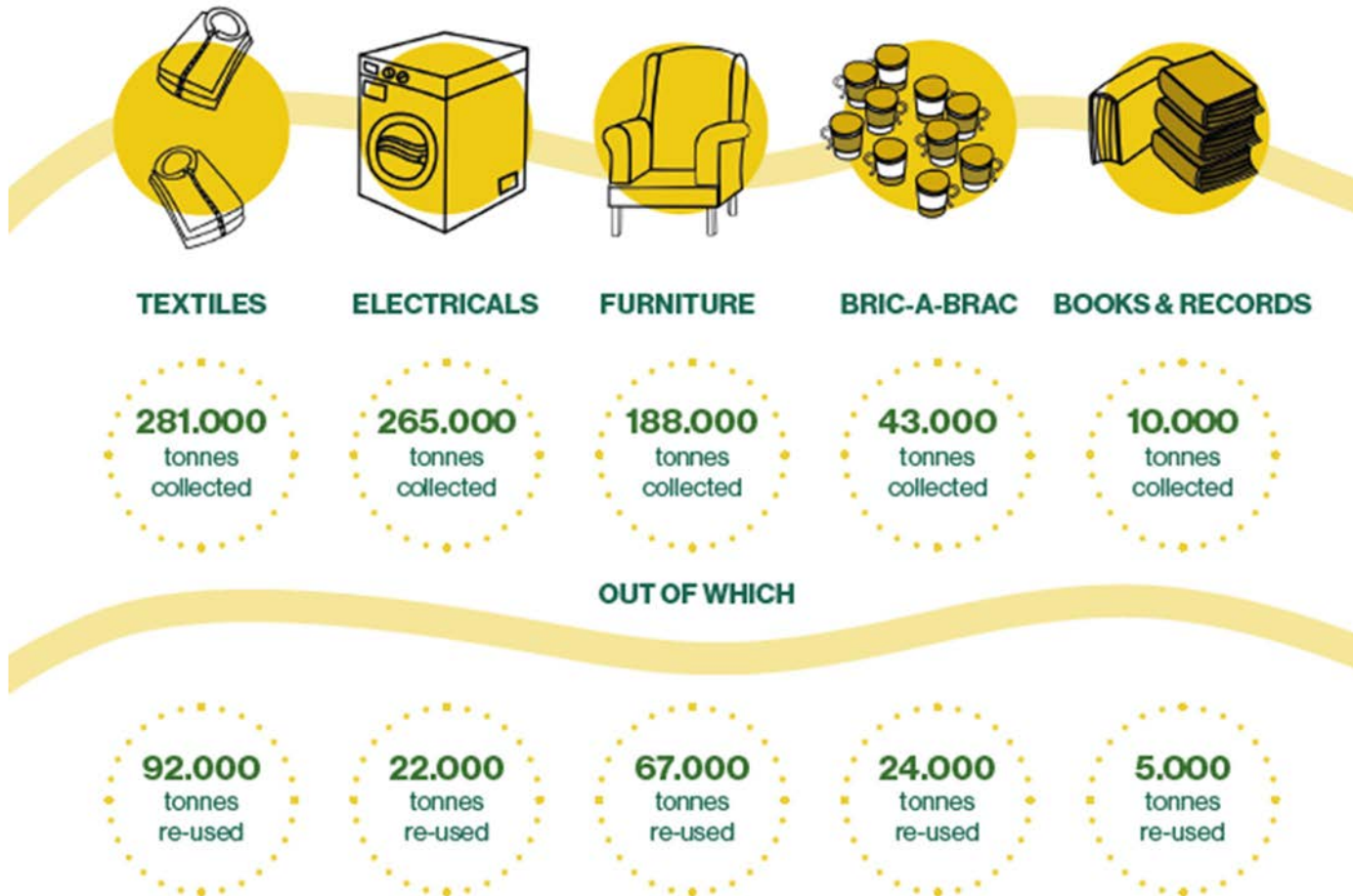
by

# Partnerships with the private sector: Carrefour Kringwinkel (HERWIN), Flemish Region Belgium



In the circle-wall you can donate cardboard, lamps and plastic as well as reusable clothing, shoes, table and bed linen. In this way, Carrefour and De Kringwinkel join forces to stimulate the reuse of clothing and textiles and thus reduce the amount of waste.

**1.100.000 tonnes of material collected**  
 by RREUSE members with the aim of being re-used, repaired or recycled included:



## JOB CREATION IN THE RE-USE SECTOR: INSIGHTS FROM SOCIAL ENTERPRISES



≈70 JOBS CREATED  
PER 1,000 TONNES COLLECTED

**LOWER BOUND:** ≈20 JOBS  
CREATED PER  
1,000 TONNES COLLECTED



**UPPER BOUND:** ≈140 JOBS  
CREATED PER  
1,000 TONNES COLLECTED

Most organisations create between 40 and 100 jobs per 1,000 tonnes of products collected for re-use oriented activities. This wide range is due to several factors, including labour intensity required for different product categories, workforce composition and policies on work integration.



# RREUSE MEMBER IMPACT 2020

## Environmental

## Social

## Economic

**1.100.000**

tonnes of waste collected

**950**

social enterprises within the wider network

**1.050.000.000**

EUR turnover of all activities

**270.000**

tonnes of goods re-used

**102.000**

employees, volunteers and trainees

**31.000.000**

customers in

**2.250**

second-hand shops

Equivalent of

**170.000**

EU citizens' CO2 emissions avoided through re-use

**70**

jobs created per 1,000 tonnes of waste collected with a view of being re-used



## Challenges:

- **Lack of coherent legislative framework**
- **Low visibility**
- Low recognition of social economy's work inter alia their **contribution to circularity** in a fair and inclusive way.
- Need for a stronger **socially responsible public procurement** across the EU and inclusion of **both social and green criteria within public procurement processes**.
- **Lack of adequate funding.**
- **Need of holistic environmental measures with social dimension of sustainability.** For ex., local employment target as one of the criteria.



# THE SOCIAL ECONOMY ACTION PLAN (SEAP)



## What is it?

In December 2021, the European Commission announced the European Social Economy Action plan, which is a **framework to help mobilise the full potential of the social economy that will run until 2030.**

The action plan also allows to implement the [European Pillar of Social Rights](#) - which sets out 20 key principles to guide reforms at national level for a fair and inclusive society - as well as [EU 2030 Social targets](#) such as increase of employment rate and reduction of the number of people at risk of poverty or exclusion.



# What does the SEAP mean in practice for reuse social enterprises?



**Increased visibility** of social enterprises and other social economy actors and their fundamental role for a more socially and environmentally sustainable economic model.

E.g. Social enterprises needs high in the policy agenda, EC long-term communication campaigns on the importance of social economy.

## **Enhanced capacity building support:**

- E.g. **EU Social Economy Gateway (2023)** will provide a platform for social economy stakeholders seeking information on relevant EU funding, policies, networks/platforms and initiatives. It will also simplify access to existing support.
- E.g. **exchange of good practices, trainings (state aid, taxation, etc.)** in Member States for both public officials and social economy actors, e.g. via call for tenders.

# What does the SEAP mean in practice for reuse social enterprises?



## Improved access to funding

- **At least 2.5 billion euros over the period 2014-2020 were mobilised to support the social economy** from the EU budget.
- For the 2021 - 2027 period, **the Commission wants to increase the level of support.**
- Negotiations with the Member States for the next Multiannual Financial Framework 2028 - 2034 should start sometime in 2025.
- Some EU programmes with dedicated or indirect support for the social economy:
  - ■ **Employment and Social Innovation strand** of European Social Fund Plus
  - ■ **Horizon Europe**
  - ■ **Single Market Programme**
- EU funding at the national level:
  - ■ **Cohesion Policy Funds**
  - **COVID-19 Recovery and Resilience Facility**

## EU actions to look out for!

To be published in 2Q 2023



### Council Recommendation

to help policy-makers adapt policy and legal frameworks to the needs of social economy organisations

### EU Social Economy Gateway

with information on relevant EU funding, policies and initiatives

### Youth Entrepreneurship Policy Academy

to improve prospects for young entrepreneurs, especially social entrepreneurs

### European Competence Centre for Social Innovation

facilitating transnational partnerships, exchanges of experience, capacity building and networking

### “Buy social” initiative

supporting the creation of local partnerships between social economy organisations and mainstream businesses

### Financial products under InvestEU

aimed at mobilising private financing for social enterprises

On-going



Announcement end of 2022



**CALL FOR PROPOSALS by 7/12/22**

[Call page](#) and [Funding & tender opportunities portal](#)



# THE SOCIAL ECONOMY ACTION PLAN (SEAP)



## Council Recommendation for Framework Conditions

### *Why is it important?*

Strong encouragement to all Member States to develop a better and even legislative and financial framework for SE actors.

**Next steps:** Adoption of proposal before summer 2023.





## RREUSE calling for:

- Unambiguous impetus to Member States to **design targeted national strategies for social economy actors**.
- MSs to **make best use of VAT taxation regimes** for the support of SE that carry socially and environmentally sound activities.
- National public procurement rules should make **social and green criteria mandatory** whenever possible.
- Urgency of setting up single **entry-point mechanisms within national administrations** to ensure dialogue with social economy stakeholders both via **Social Economy Gateway (website in progress)** and **SE national coordinators**
- And more...



### RREUSE's Feedback on the Call for evidence: Framework Conditions Social Economy

October 2022



## Coming up Events and Calls:

- **BUY SOCIAL info session October 20th**

To enable local, regional or national “Buy Social: B2B markets” by building partnerships (local, regional or national) and facilitating trade relationships between SE entities and mainstream businesses (B2B). More details on the call are described in the [Call page](#) and on the [Call document](#).

The submission deadline is **7 December 2022**, 17:00 CET with expected grants start date in April 2023. For more information about the calls check the [Call page](#) and the [Funding & tender opportunities portal](#).

[Event page](#)

- **[Call for tenders on Socially Responsible Public Procurement](#)**

The tender will stimulate the integration of social considerations in public procurements, including raising awareness of incentives for social investments in public service provision, promote the involvement of social economy actors in tendering procedures and in value chains processes, and boost awareness raising for mainstream businesses to work more with social enterprises. It will be based on the successful results of the project 'Buying for social impact'.

- **Lot 1:** training of public procurers in the following MSs: Austria, Estonia, Belgium, Slovenia, Spain, Cyprus, Malta, Lithuania, Bulgaria, Luxembourg, Portugal and Finland
- **Lot 2:** to achieve a better understanding of the existing frameworks and scope regarding measuring methodologies, policies and practices in regard to social impact in public procurement across EU Member States.

## Social Economy Gateway initiative



- A website envisioned for 2023 for all social economy actors where to find relevant information in one place, such as **EU funding, policies, training, relevant networks and platforms, and initiatives.**
- Simplify access to existing support
- Enhance awareness about EU action in the sector. Facilitate access to relevant capacity building initiatives
- Provide specific guidance on EU funding opportunities (trainings, workshops, webinars, practical guides and tools)

## Challenges:

- **Lack of coherent legislative framework**
- **Low visibility**
- Low recognition of social economy's work inter alia their **contribution to circularity** in a fair and inclusive way.
- Need for a stronger **socially responsible public procurement** across the EU and inclusion of **both social and green criteria within public procurement processes**.
- **Lack of adequate funding.**
- **Need of holistic environmental measures with social dimension of sustainability.** For ex., local employment target as one of the criteria.

**RREUSE analysis and position paper on the SEAP (available on [rreuse.org](https://rreuse.org))**



# A Plan for a Fair and Inclusive Circular Transition led by Social Enterprises.

Analysis of the EU Social Economy Action Plan from RREUSE and its members.

June 2022



RREUSE is grateful for the support of the EU Commission's Programme for Employment and Social Innovation "Erasmus+". The information contained in this publication does not necessarily reflect the position or opinion of the European Commission.



# SEAP Position Paper main demands:



## 1. Mainstream the social economy within circular policies and beyond.

- **Ensure holistic targets encompassing social and employment sectors** when designing EU circular policies. Ex. local employment rate.
- Mainstream the circular and social economy within the **European Semester Process** and **Recovery and Resilience Facility**, where possible.
- Enhance institutional cooperation of social enterprises across all levels and ensure the **Council Recommendation on Developing Social Economy Framework Conditions (2023)** acknowledges the role of the circular economy.

# SEAP Position Paper main demands:



## 2. Stronger recognition of social enterprises active in the circular economy.

- Ensure **effective implementation of social and green clauses in public procurement procedures and reserved contracts**, for the employment of disadvantaged workers and the creation of local green jobs.
- Ensure the implementation of Social Label schemes that **provide accessible and flexible criteria for social enterprises involved in the circular economy**.
- Broaden the visibility of social economy opportunities for effective and inclusive participation of the youth and recognition of female entrepreneurs.
- Ensure **data collection capacities and social measurement methodologies are proportionate and adapted** to the diversity of social economy actors.

# SEAP Position Paper main demands:



## 3. Improve access to funding for social enterprises.

- Boost the availability of **funding avenues specifically intended to incorporate the social and circular economy**, especially at local levels.
- **Earmark 10% of relevant EU funding to social enterprises involved in circular activities** and other social economy actors.
- **Set flexible labour market integration policies** to create more synergies with circular business models and support social innovation.
- Provide arrangements for adequate financial support for disadvantaged workers within the revision of the **General Block Exemption Regulation (GBER)** set for 2023.
- **Provide guidance on taxation to Member States** ensuring support for the activities of social enterprises in line with the newly amended EU VAT Directive.



# SEAP Position Paper main demands:



## 4. Acknowledge social enterprises' role in upskilling and reskilling to meet changing market needs.

- Ensuring close cooperation with social economy stakeholders active in the circular economy under the European Skills Agenda. [SKILLS FOR PARTNERSHIP](#)
- Ensuring an inclusive digital transition by emphasising digital education and skills among the capacity building measures proposed.
- Provide more business support to scale up social enterprises and their partnership with the private sector.
- NEW: Involvement of social economy actors within the 2023 EU Year of Skills.

## RREUSE resources on SEAP on our website:

[Initial Position paper ahead of the SEAP announcement](#)  
(March 2021)

[Press release](#) (December 2021)

[Full Analysis of SEAP from RREUSE and its members](#)  
(June 2022)

**NEW** [RREUSE answer to the call for evidence](#) on the EC proposal for a Council Recommendation to develop framework conditions for the social economy (October 2022)

**Policy Brief from OECD (in accordance with RREUSE's position) :**  
[Making the most of the social economy's contribution to the circular economy](#)



## A Plan for a Fair and Inclusive Circular Transition led by Social Enterprises.

Analysis of the EU Social Economy Action Plan from RREUSE and its members.

June 2022



RREUSE is grateful for the support of the EU Commission's Programme for Employment and Social Innovation "Erasmus+". The information contained in this publication does not necessarily reflect the position or opinion of the European Commission.



# RREUSE 2022 Annual Conference



Co-funded by  
the European Union



Abfallwirtschaft,  
Straßenreinigung  
und Fuhrpark

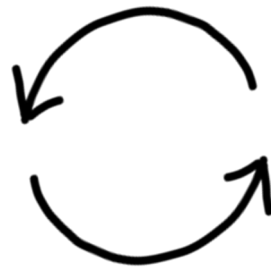


Bundesministerium  
Klimaschutz, Umwelt,  
Energie, Mobilität,  
Innovation und Technologie

Head to [rreuse.org](https://rreuse.org) / **Events** to find out on  
agenda and how to participate.

For info: [myrto.delkou@rreuse.org](mailto:myrto.delkou@rreuse.org)





SOCIAL & CIRCULAR  
SINCE 2001

**Simone Schirru**

Social and Economic Policy Officer

[simone.schirru@rreuse.org](mailto:simone.schirru@rreuse.org)

[www.rreuse.org](http://www.rreuse.org)

