

European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform

Aim and Structure of the Platform

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1. Background

Following the success of the European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform in 2017-2020, the European Commission (represented by DG ENV) and the European Economic and Social Committee will continue managing the Platform jointly.

This three-year period has seen three well-attended joint annual conferences, a Coordination Group that has delivered 50 initiatives, and a website that has received over 230,000 visitors, brought together over 350 Good Practices, 33 Strategies and a Knowledge Hub with more than 200 publications. The Platform has an active presence on social media with over 2400 Twitter followers and has recently launched its presence on LinkedIn.

The Commission has identified the European Green Deal as the EU's sustainable strategy for growth. The COVID-19 outbreak has exposed the fragility of the current economic model. In the longer term, this will likely translate into greater efforts on diversification and resilience, as well as greater focus on sustainability. In this context, the circular economy proposes an economic model that maintains resources in the economy for longer and brings production and consumption well below the planetary boundaries, minimizing waste. To achieve these objectives and continue with the transition, the Commission has adopted a new Circular Economy Action Plan¹ for a cleaner and more competitive

¹ New CEAP, launched on 11 March 2020 (COM(2020) 98)

Europe. This new plan announces a series of actions to change how Europe produces and consumes, putting the focus on preventing waste in the first place. The 35 initiatives announced aim to make sustainable products, services and business models the norm, not the exception. The action plan is at the core of the European Green Deal, leading towards a more resource efficient and clean economy that gives to the planet more than it takes, contributing to EU's climate neutrality ambition.

The Platform will focus on supporting the implementation of the new Circular Economy Action Plan through stakeholder engagement. As we look ahead to the post-COVID-19 recovery, the circular economy will contribute with increased resilience, job creation and an increased autonomy towards a new structure of the economy. The transition towards a circular economy requires the commitment and involvement of civil society, businesses, the knowledge community and public authorities. The Coordination Group will continue delivering on the circular transition and translating policy into action.

2. Objectives of the Platform

The European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform is a "network of networks" going beyond sectoral activities and highlighting cross-sector opportunities and challenges. It is a hub gathering knowledge, a place for dialogue and a bridge between existing initiatives. It contributes to disseminating the concept of the circular economy at national, regional and local level by making the information more easily accessible and by providing a frame for exchange and discussion.

The Platform aims to:

- Advance the circular economy concept in Member States, regional and local governments, civil society and businesses and also link to the global dimension;
- Strengthen the cooperation among stakeholders' networks to facilitate the exchange of expertise and good practices on the circular economy;
- Contribute to identifying social, economic and cultural barriers to the transition towards a circular economy, lead on existing or new remedy actions, and propose initiatives related to matters promoting the circular economy.

3. Structure of the Platform

The Platform will be an open platform structured as follows:

3.1 Stakeholder Policy dialogue (Pillar I)

The purpose of the stakeholder policy dialogue is to gather stakeholders' input (knowledge and experiences of the circular economy transition) and views.

- a) The Platform will hold an **annual two-day conference** organised jointly by the EESC and the Commission. This conference will constitute the major EU inter-institutional event for stakeholder engagement on the circular economy.

In addition, meetings gathering stakeholders such as businesses, trade unions, civil society organisations and public authorities may also be organised on an ad hoc basis to collect additional information on good practices and stakeholder views on specific topics.

- b) The platform will provide **an online meeting place** in its website. In order to promote further dialogue and interactivity more often and between more stakeholders all across Europe, the website of the platform will provide an online meeting place for stakeholders to exchange dialogue. This can be in the form of dialogue via webinars, web Q&A sessions and expert discussions.

3.2 Coordination (Pillar II)

The Platform's activities will be ensured by a Coordination Group assisted by the Secretariat. The Commission and the EESC shall be invited to participate in the work of the CG.

a) Coordination Group

A Coordination Group (CG) will be set up. Its primary function will be to contribute to the implementation of the objectives of the Platform. In this context, it may also express positions on matters promoting the circular economy, thus fostering the debate among the circular economy community. The Secretariat will facilitate the information flow between the CG and the Steering Group.

The CG will bring together circular economy-related:

- Multi-stakeholder networks/platforms;
- Groupings/organisations of businesses, of trade unions and from the civil society;
- Networks of national, regional and local public authorities/bodies;
- Organisations from the knowledge and research communities, think-tanks, universities.

Wherever possible, the CG will build on the experience of existing platforms and networks.

The mandate, composition and selection procedure of the CG are enclosed as an annex to this document.

The CG will meet physically at least once a year, with the possibility of a second physical meeting. Additional meetings will be encouraged to use electronic means.

b) Secretariat

The EESC secretariat will act as the Platform's secretariat. The Secretariat will oversee the preparation of meetings (including Day 2 of the annual conference), coordinate the Platform's activities and ensure business continuity.

The Secretariat will support the work of the CG and, together with the European Commission, will develop its Rules of Procedure based on the orientations expressed by the members of the CG.

The Secretariat will:

- Be the contact point for the CG, providing active support to the CG and in particular to its Chair.
- Provide a common space for CG members to exchange directly. The institutions will be granted access to this space.
- Support the preparation and implementation of the CG work plan (mapping with the CG of initiatives to be included, fostering collaboration among CG members with the EESC acting as a bridge to civil society, reporting and monitoring of the implementation).
- Take care of the publication of the activities of the CG in the ECESP website.
- Facilitate the communication between the CG members and the institutions.
- Provide tweeting and other social media possibilities.

Standard working languages of the Platform will be English and French. Additional languages may be used on a case-by-case basis, especially for communication purposes.

c) Steering Group

The ECESP Steering Group (composed of the Commission representatives and EESC representatives) provides a coordinated strategy for the ECESP. Regular meetings of the group will ensure an open communication channel between the two institutions. The CG Chair may be invited to these meetings.

In the context of the Steering Group, both the Commission and the EESC take part in the work of the CG. The EESC members have a key role in facilitating the relations among the CG members. They also promote and communicate about the ECESP in different events. As representatives of different constituencies, they bring to the ECESP another dimension of the CE community.

Technical preparatory steering group meetings will be organised at desk-level for the strategic steering group meetings to be attended by Commission Heads of Unit, EESC Members and, where appropriate, the Coordination Group Chair.

3.3 Knowledge, national strategies and good practices (Pillar III)

a) Website

Circular economy-related content such as national strategies and good practices will be made available on the Platform's website. The website will also feature a dynamic database with contacts, published studies and events relevant to circular economy.

The website will be:

- A one-stop shop for **knowledge** on the circular economy. Stakeholders will find available up-to-date information on the circular economy (strategies, studies, policy initiatives, good practices, events). The website will showcase relevant information provided by different sources into a single, user-friendly forum. Stakeholders will be invited to present their contributions that will be made available to others on the ECESP website.
- An online meeting place for stakeholders to exchange **dialogue**. It will be participatory and user-friendly. It will be designed to foster the exchange of advice, experiences and good practices. Stakeholders will be invited to interact among them. This may be in the form of dialogue via webinars, web Q&A sessions and scheduled expert discussions.

b) Communication

The Platform has its own visual identity and a communication strategy to support the objectives of the Platform and a communication policy to coordinate messages, deliver them in a structured way to the intended stakeholders, and promote the ECESP brand.

The participants in the Platform will be encouraged to advertise their participation in the Platform both on their websites and in their own events related to the circular economy. They are also encouraged to promote the goals of the Platform and express their views on the development of the circular economy.

4. Duration and review of the inter-institutional cooperation

The present terms of reference are concluded for an initial duration of 2.5 years, with automatic prolongation of the terms of reference, unless the EC or the EESC request a revision three months before the end of the mandate. The activities of the Platform will be reported in the annual report on the implementation of the Circular Economy Action Plan (CEAP) as well as in the report five years after the adoption of the CEAP. Therefore, these terms of reference may be updated to reflect the outcome of these two exercises.

Annex: Terms of Reference for the Coordination Group



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

Directorate B – Circular Economy and Green Growth

Terms of reference for the Coordination Group of the European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform

These terms of reference describe the mandate of the Coordination Group (CG), Pillar II of the European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform, and its foreseen activities.

The Coordination Group will support the objectives of the Platform, as described in Chapter 3 of this document, Aim and Structure of the Platform.

I) Role and mandate of the CG

The mandate of the CG is to bring together all relevant circular economy-related stakeholders and actively promote their interaction with the aim of advancing the circular economy concept and practice. In particular, the tasks of the CG shall be:

1. **To act as the Ambassadors of the Platform and the Circular Economy transformation** by representing the Platform, disseminating the knowledge gathered by the Platform and actively inviting the circular economy community to engage in the Platform.
2. **To actively promote interaction in the Platform between stakeholders** active in the field of the circular economy by identifying specific needs for cross-sectoral and thematic dialogue and by organising effective interaction including via the Platform's website and the use of webinars, web Q&A sessions and expert discussions. In order to ensure better outreach, the results of such interactions shall be shared on the Platform's website (CG Activity page²).
3. **To promote and facilitate the exchange and mapping of good practices** for national, regional and local circular economy strategies as well as examples from businesses, trade unions and civil society organisations; whenever possible, the CG shall encourage the submission of such good practices from stakeholders other than the CG members themselves, on the Platform's website.
4. **To foster European debate among all relevant circular economy-related stakeholders** on issues related to the circular economy **and identify approaches that can help remove obstacles that are inhibiting** the transition towards a circular economy, by liaising with existing EU Platforms relating to the circular economy. This implies inviting stakeholders other than the CG members themselves (as indicated, all relevant circular economy-related stakeholders) to participate in the identification of such approaches. As a result of this dialogue, the CG may prepare synthesis documents and take positions. In line with the role of a Special

² <https://circulareconomy.europa.eu/platform/en/about/cg-activities-documents>

Group of the European Commission, these documents should be shared with the broader circular economy community.

The CG should help strengthen the cooperation among sectoral platforms and stakeholders and prevent overlapping activities that often rely on individual, non-structured initiatives.

The work of the CG will be supported by the Secretariat of the Platform, provided by the EESC. The Secretariat, together with the European Commission, will develop the Rules of Procedure of the CG. The draft Rules of Procedure will be presented for discussion and adoption during the first meeting of the CG. These Rules of Procedure will apply to elements such as the organisation and follow-up of meetings and the preparation of the agenda, background documents, memos, reports and minutes. The Secretariat and the European Commission shall make available all relevant documents, including the agendas, the minutes and the participants' submissions on the ECESP website.

II) Composition and selection procedure of the CG

Composition:

The CG shall be composed of up to 24 members:

- Public bodies;
- Businesses and trade unions;
- Knowledge community and civil society organisations.

The CG shall be composed of:

- Up to 6 representatives from existing national, regional and local multi stakeholder networks specialising in the field of the circular economy;
- Up to 6 representatives from circular economy-relevant business and trade unions groupings, and civil society organisations;
- Up to 6 representatives from existing networks of public authorities at national, regional or local level that are circular economy-relevant;
- Up to 6 representatives from circular economy-relevant organisations from the knowledge community, including universities, research organisations, think-tanks specialising in the circular economy.

EU institutions and bodies, and existing EU Platforms relating to the circular economy will be invited to participate in the activities of the CG. The EESC will appoint representatives from among its Members to participate in the work of the CG.

The members of the CG shall be appointed by the European Commission and the EESC on an individual basis on behalf of their organisation for a mandate of 2.5 years, renewable once within the current Terms of Reference period.

The CG will be chaired by one of its members, selected by the CG members.

The CG shall issue a rolling work plan within six months from the first meeting of the Coordination Group in cooperation with the Secretariat, following consultation with the European Commission and the EESC. The CG or its Chair shall report on an annual basis on the implementation of the work plan to the Commission and the EESC. CG members who are no longer capable of effectively fulfilling their mandate may be replaced by the European Commission and the EESC from the list of applicants resulting from the Call of Expression of Interest, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure to be adopted during the first CG meeting.

The CG may, in consultation with the European Commission and the EESC, set up sub-groups for the purpose of examining specific issues within a determined duration. Such sub-groups shall comprise at least one member of the CG.

The members of the CG shall receive no remuneration for their duties. Travel and subsistence expenses incurred by participants in the annual meetings of the CG shall be reimbursed by the European Commission and the EESC in accordance with the provisions in force at the European Commission and the EESC within the limits of the available budgetary appropriations.

Selection procedure:

The selection of the CG members will be conducted following an open and transparent procedure:

- It will be based on a list of candidates which will be compiled through an open call for applications;
- The European Commission and the EESC will select the members against the criteria identified in the following section;
- The European Commission and the EESC will appoint the members, according to the results of this selection.

The call for applications will not apply to members representing EU institutions and bodies.

Information on the results of the call for applications will be published on the Internet site of the relevant Directorate-General as well as on the Internet site of the European Economic and Social Committee.

Selection criteria:

The members of the CG will be selected according to the following criteria:

Individual criteria constituting a requirement for the organisation/network (the member):

- The member should have a cross-sectoral expertise and proven track record giving a broad vision for the circular economy;
- The member should have documented experience in identifying and exchanging good practices and be willing to share case studies and good practices which will be made publicly available free-of-charge through the Platform;
- The member should be willing and committed to participating proactively in the CG's activities and have sufficient time and resources to dedicate to the activities of the CG.

Individual criteria constituting an asset for the representative:

- The representative should have documented experience in representing his/her organisation or his/her sector in other relevant bodies/initiatives at EU level or at national level.

Global criteria for the CG:

- The CG should as much as possible be geographically and gender balanced;
- The CG should ensure an adequate representation of the main circular economy sectors and value chains (e.g. production, consumption, waste management, secondary raw materials, environment, economy, research and innovation);

III) Indicative timeline for the establishment of the Coordination Group of the European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform

Launch the call for application:	July 2020
Close call for application and select members:	September 2020
Member nominations and first CG meetings:	November 2020

IV) Submission of applications

Applications should be submitted by **31.08.2020** through the online application form at the following address:

<https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/call-for-expression-of-interest-coordination-group>

Applications must be completed in one of the official languages of the European Union.

An application will be deemed admissible only if it is sent by the deadline and includes the information requested. Registration of the organisation in the [Transparency Register](#) is required in order for the application to be considered.

The European Commission and the EESC reserve the right to ask for any supporting documents at a later stage, and to replace any member who has provided inaccurate or false declarations.

As concerns the group composition, the European Commission and the EESC will publish the names of the selected networks that will be part of the Coordination Group on the Internet site of the relevant Directorate-Generals as well as on the Internet site of the European Economic and Social Committee. The participation in the Coordination Group of the person representing a circular economy related network (as described in Pillar II) is subject to his/her permanence in the organisation he/she declares to represent in the application.

[Personal data](#) will be collected, processed and published in accordance with the provisions of Regulation (EC) No 45/2001³. Choice and usage of specific platforms for webinars, online conferences or other digital formats will take conformity with the Regulation into consideration.

For any further information please send your questions to:

CEStakeholderEU@eesc.europa.eu

³ Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data (OJ L 8 of 12.1.2001, p. 1).