

Policy priorities for scaling circular plastics across European regions

Regions are key to transforming EU circular economy goals into investment, jobs and stronger industrial value chains. Yet stakeholders consulted across Slovenia, Spain and France reported recurring barriers, including fragmented rules, uncertain demand, high upfront costs and limited access to technical support.

What needs to change?



Align the rules

Establish common EU standards for recycled plastics, including quality, recycled-content verification and end-of-waste criteria. **1**



Create market demand

Use public procurement and targeted incentives to increase demand for verified recycled materials and products designed for circularity. **2**



Make investment easier

Combine grants, technical assistance, guarantees and private finance to help SMEs move from pilot projects to industrial deployment. **3**



Turn data into trust

Support shared data, digital traceability and life cycle assessment to demonstrate quality, compliance and environmental performance. **4**



Build regional capacity

Develop the skills, technical support and industrial partnerships needed to scale circular plastics across regions. **5**

Regional actions to start now



Create an industrial symbiosis hub connecting waste holders, recyclers, manufacturers, technology providers and investors. **1**



Launch public procurement pilots using verified recycled plastic where technically appropriate. **2**



Improve local collection and material preparation so advanced sorting systems receive usable feedstock. **3**



Provide shared technical assistance for ecodesign, lifecycle assessment, permitting and investment preparation. **4**



Use pilot results to develop specifications, evidence and replication tools that other regions can adapt. **5**

Explore the full Policy Brief

To access the evidence, regulatory context, project examples and complete set of policy recommendations.

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