



# THE ROLE OF CITIES AND REGIONS TO ACCELERATE THE TRANSITION TO A CIRCULAR ECONOMY

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# OECD Programme on the Circular Economy in Cities and Regions

1

Policy Dialogues



2

Benchmarking and  
sectoral reviews



3

Monitoring



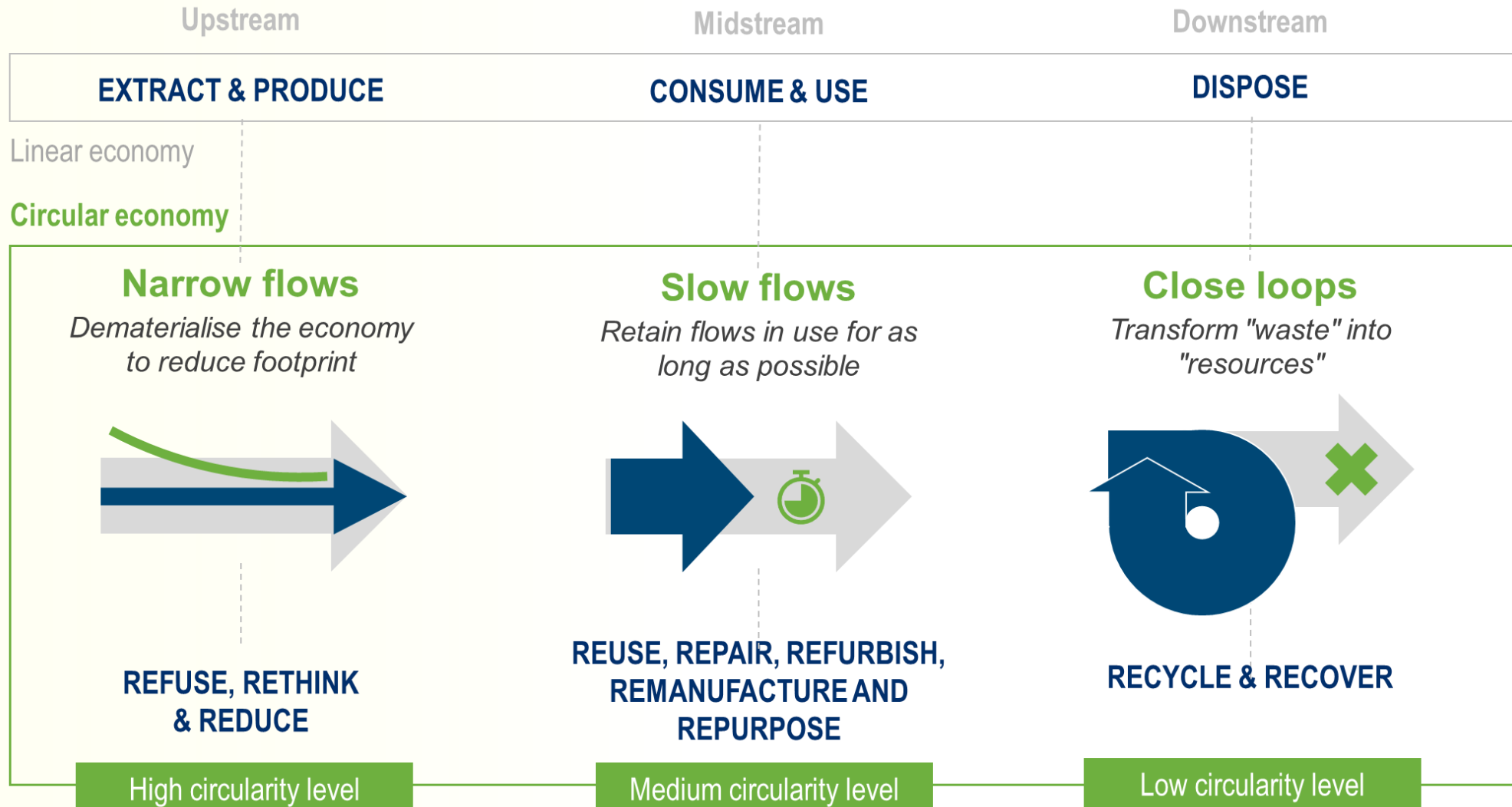
4

Roundtables





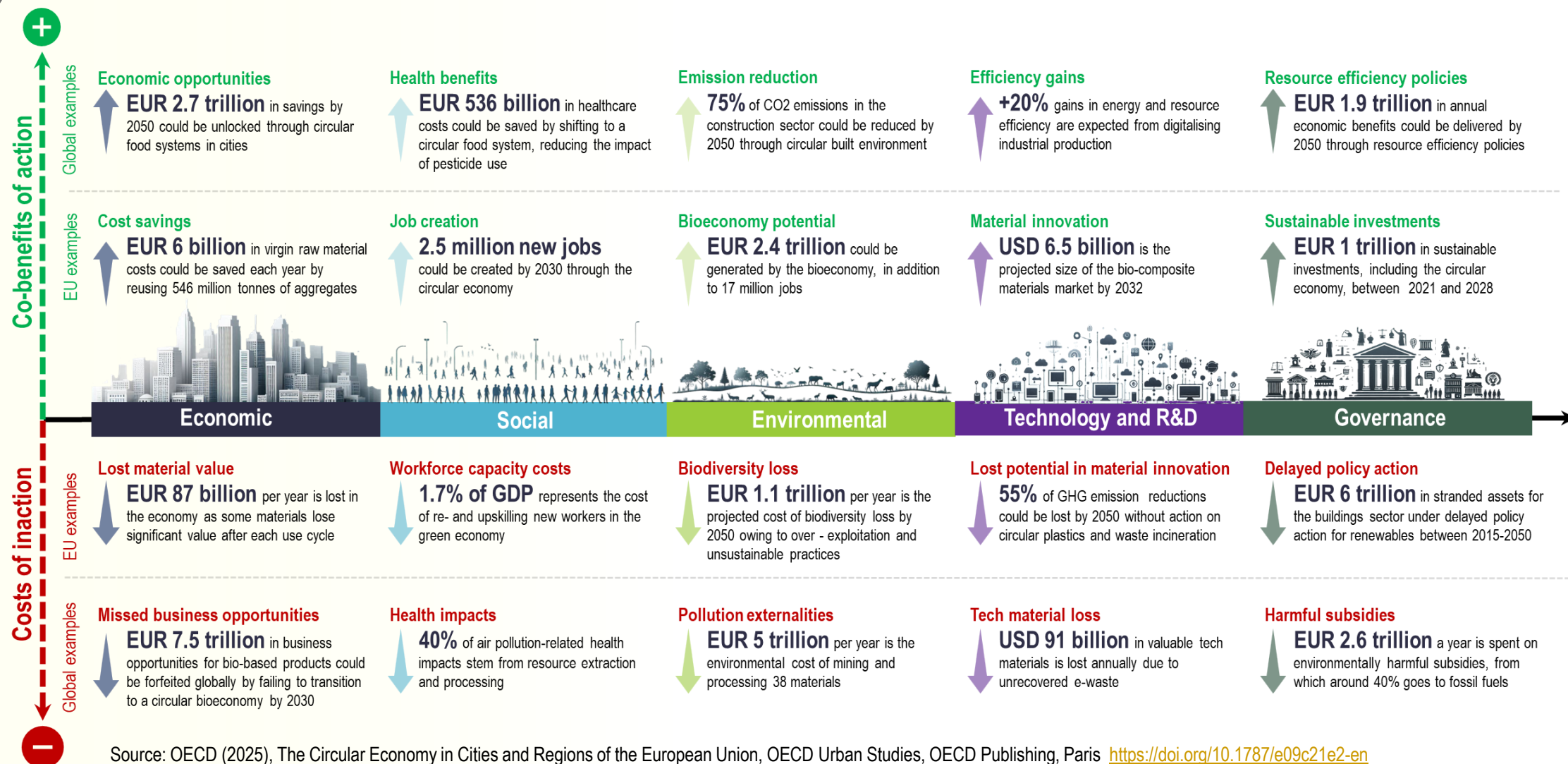
# Circular economy actions to close loops



Source: OECD (2025), The Circular Economy in Cities and Regions of the European Union, OECD Urban Studies, OECD Publishing, Paris <https://doi.org/10.1787/e09c21e2-en>



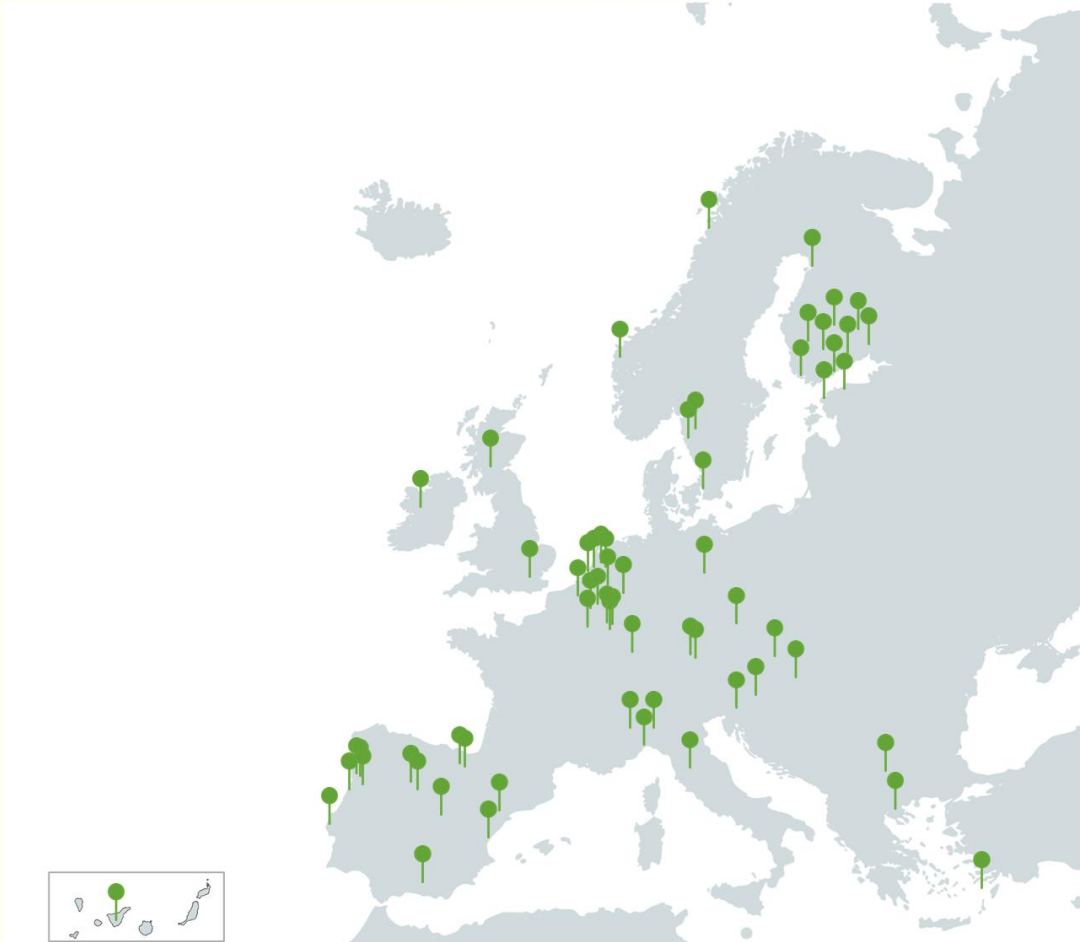
# Why the circular economy matters



Source: OECD (2025), The Circular Economy in Cities and Regions of the European Union, OECD Urban Studies, OECD Publishing, Paris <https://doi.org/10.1787/e09c21e2-en>



# The Circular Economy in Cities and Regions of the European Union

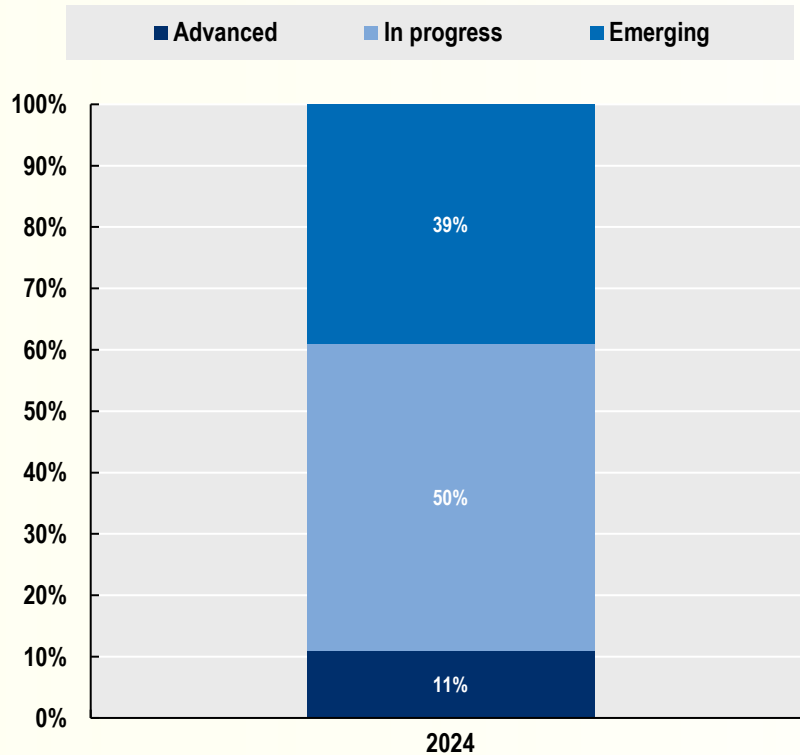


- Responses to a Survey from 64 cities and regions.
- 21 countries

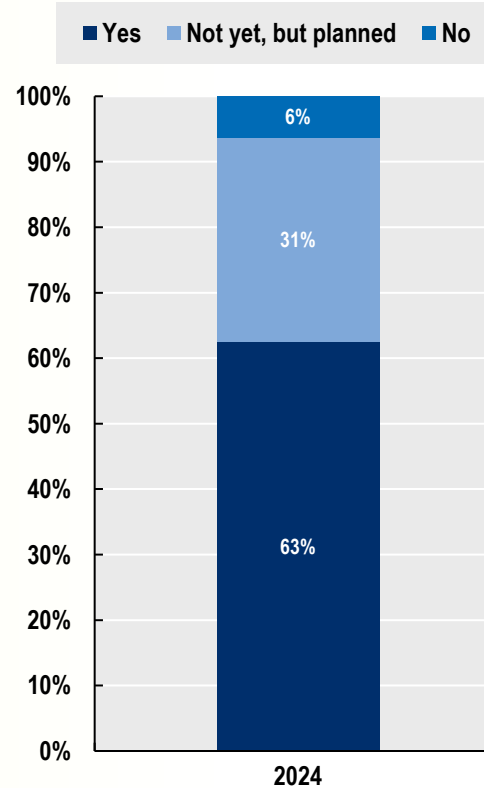


# Progress has been made, but more needs to be done

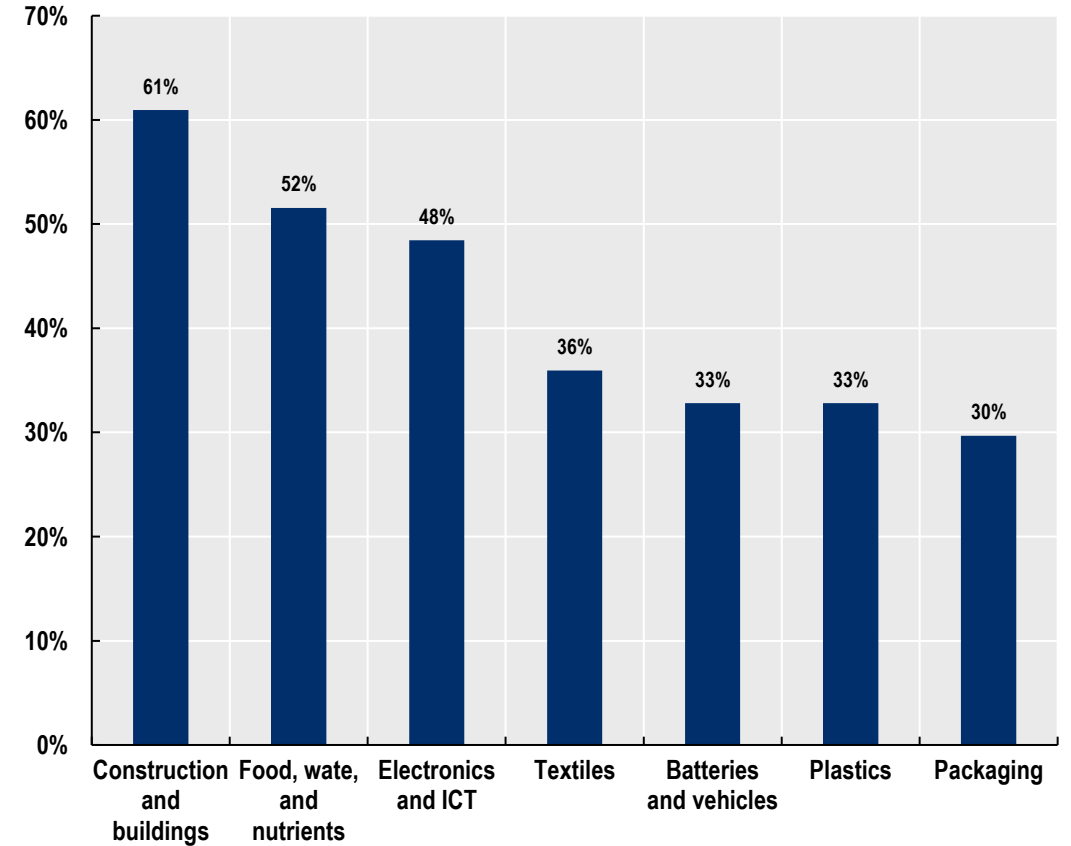
Cities and regions by stage of the circular economy transition



Circular economy criteria included into procurement



Circular economy criteria included into procurement by sector



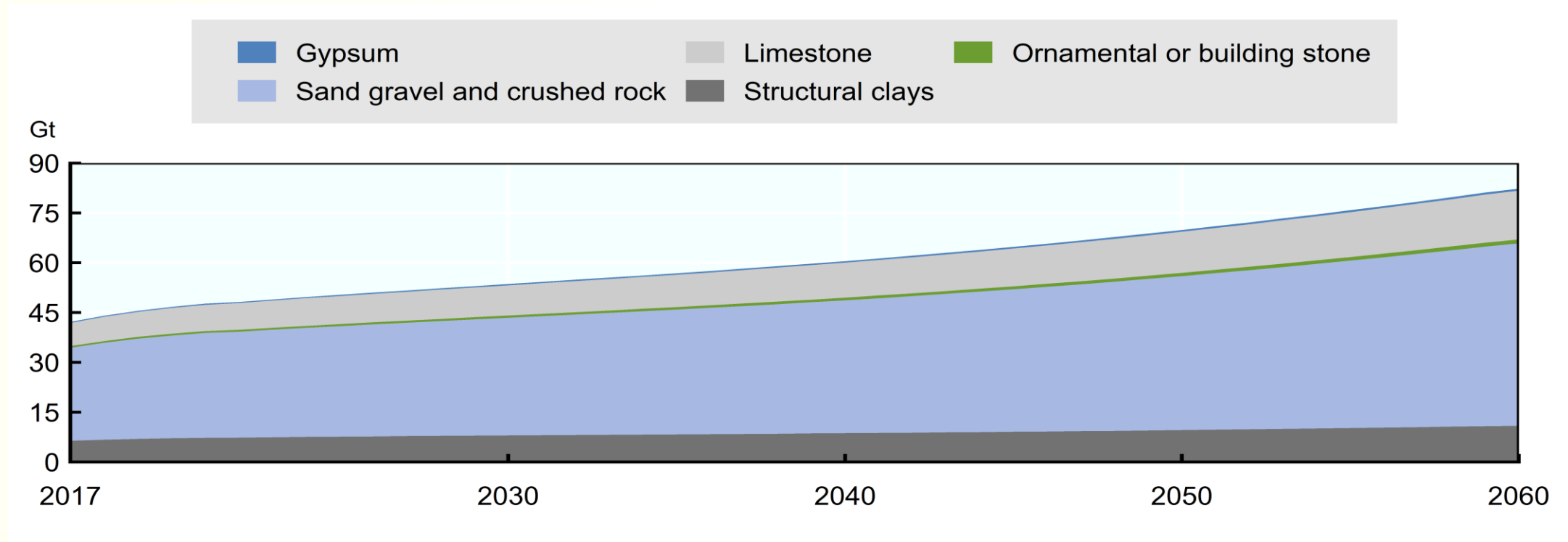
Note: Results based on a sample of 64 (2024) and 38 (2020, excluding non-European respondents) respondents that responded "Yes", "Not yet, but planned" and "No" to including circular criteria into procurement.

Source: OECD (2025), The Circular Economy in Cities and Regions of the European Union, OECD Urban Studies, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/e09c21e2-en>.



# Construction materials use is projected to almost double between 2017 and 2060

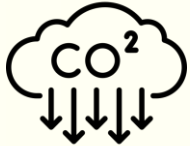
Materials use for materials directly entering construction in Gt



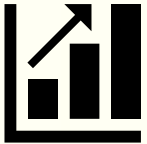
Source: OECD (2019), Global Material Resources Outlook to 2060: Economic Drivers and Environmental Consequences, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264307452-en>.



# The built environment holds a great circular potential



- 26% of global energy-related CO2 emissions
- 34% of energy-related GHG emissions in 2022 in the EU
- 35% of the EU's total waste generation



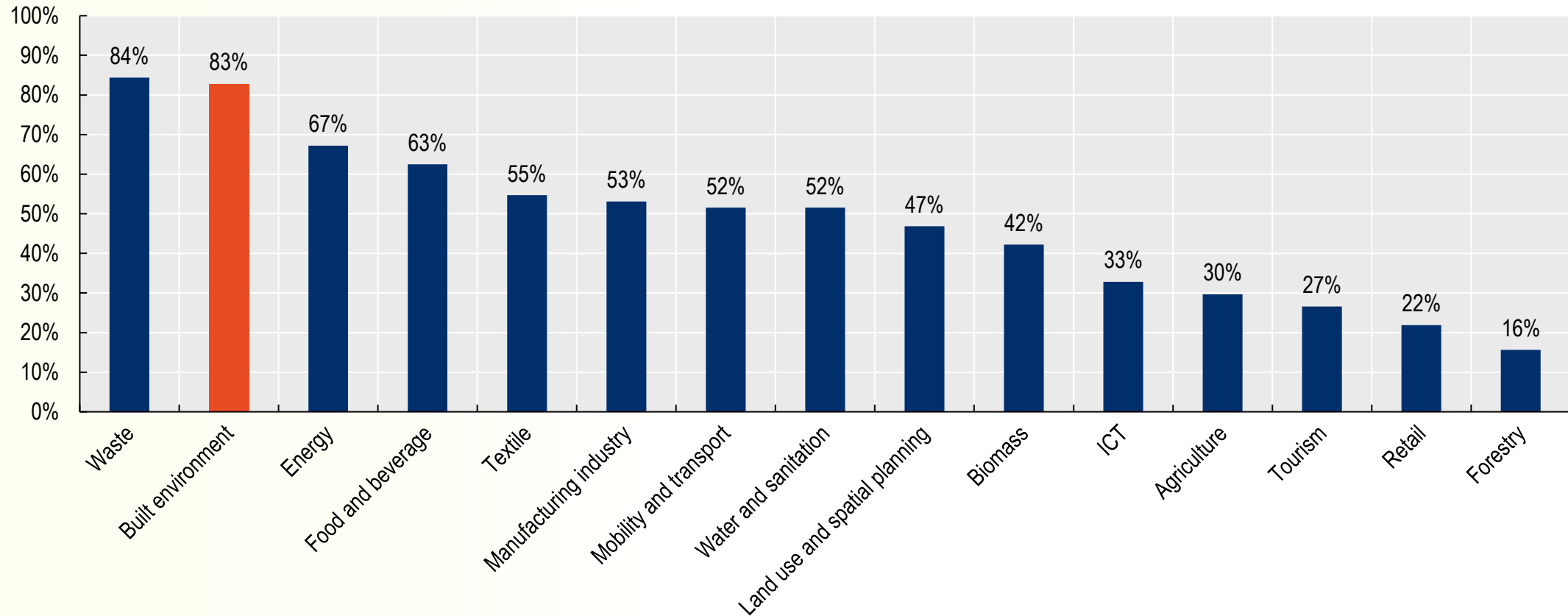
- + 60 000 new homes by 2050 in Umeå, Sweden
- + 10 000 new public housing units by 2028 in Valencia Region, Spain
- + 235 000 new homes by 2030 in Zuid Holland, The Netherlands



- - 75% of CO2 emissions in the construction sector thanks to circular practices
- - 1.0 Gt CO<sub>2</sub>/y globally by extending building lifespans through modular design beyond 2050
- + EUR 1.8 trillion/y in economic value in the EU through circular built environment
- - 30% in material demand per building globally through modular construction



# It is the 2nd most prioritised sector in CE strategies



Note: : Results based on a sample of 64 respondents that selected sectors responding to the question: "Which sectors are prioritised for a circular economy long term vision in your city/region?" .

Source: OECD (2025), The Circular Economy in Cities and Regions of the European Union, OECD Urban Studies, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/e09c21e2-en>.



# From sustainable buildings to a circular built environment

## END of LIFE

Creating a new life, where materials, components and structures are **dismantled and reused**

## PLANNING

Considering the **entire lifecycle** of a building from the beginning, **anticipating future uses** and ensuring that it can be adapted, dismantled or repurposed instead of being demolished.

## OPERATION

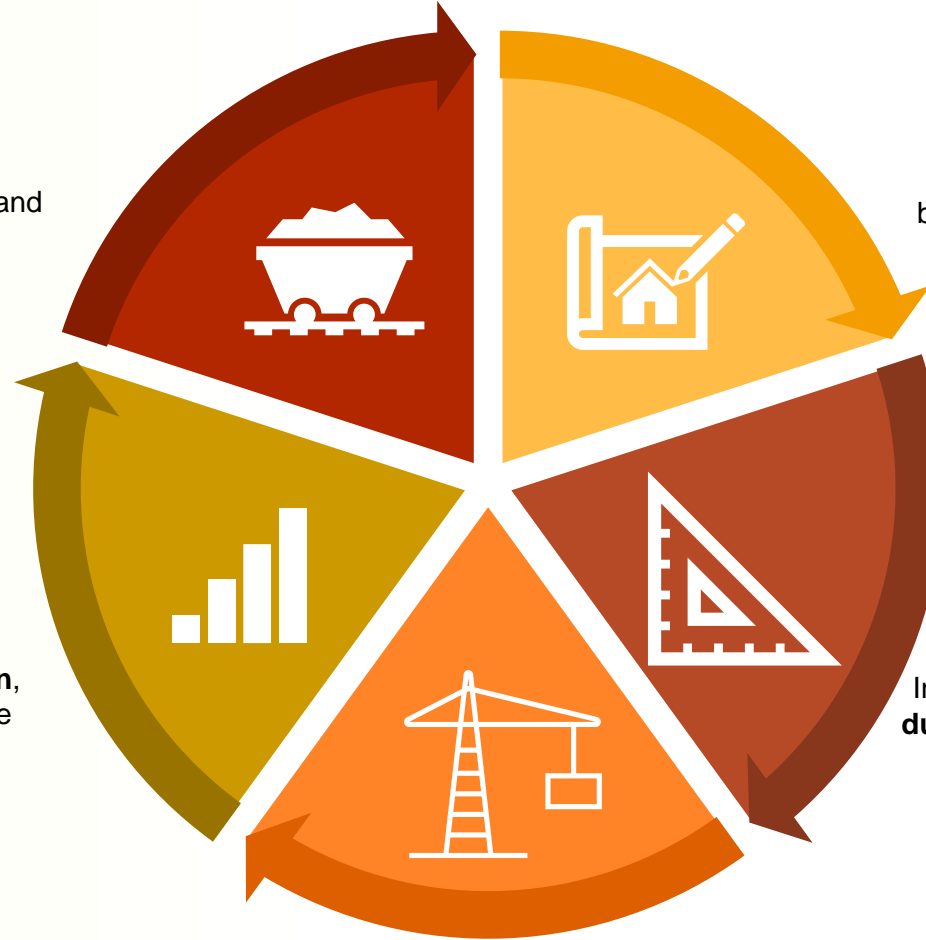
Managing the building efficiently and **extending its lifespan**, using renewable energy, smart technologies and preventive maintenance.

## DESIGN

Integrating principles of **modularity, disassembly** and **durability** into the building's form, structure and material choices.

## CONSTRUCTION

Building with **sustainable materials**, minimising waste and ensuring that components can be easily separated and recovered.

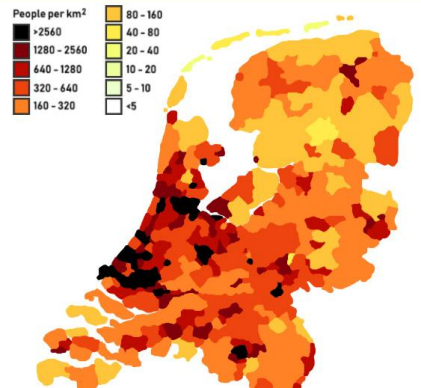


Source: OECD (2020), The Circular Economy in Cities and Regions: Synthesis Report, OECD Urban Studies, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/10ac6ae4-en>.



# Examples from cities and regions

## Zuid-Holland (Netherlands)



Shifting from “competition for space” to **shared, modular spatial planning**.

## Glasgow (UK)



**Repurposing** 800 vacant and derelict properties as hubs and workspaces for circular businesses.

## Groningen (Netherlands)



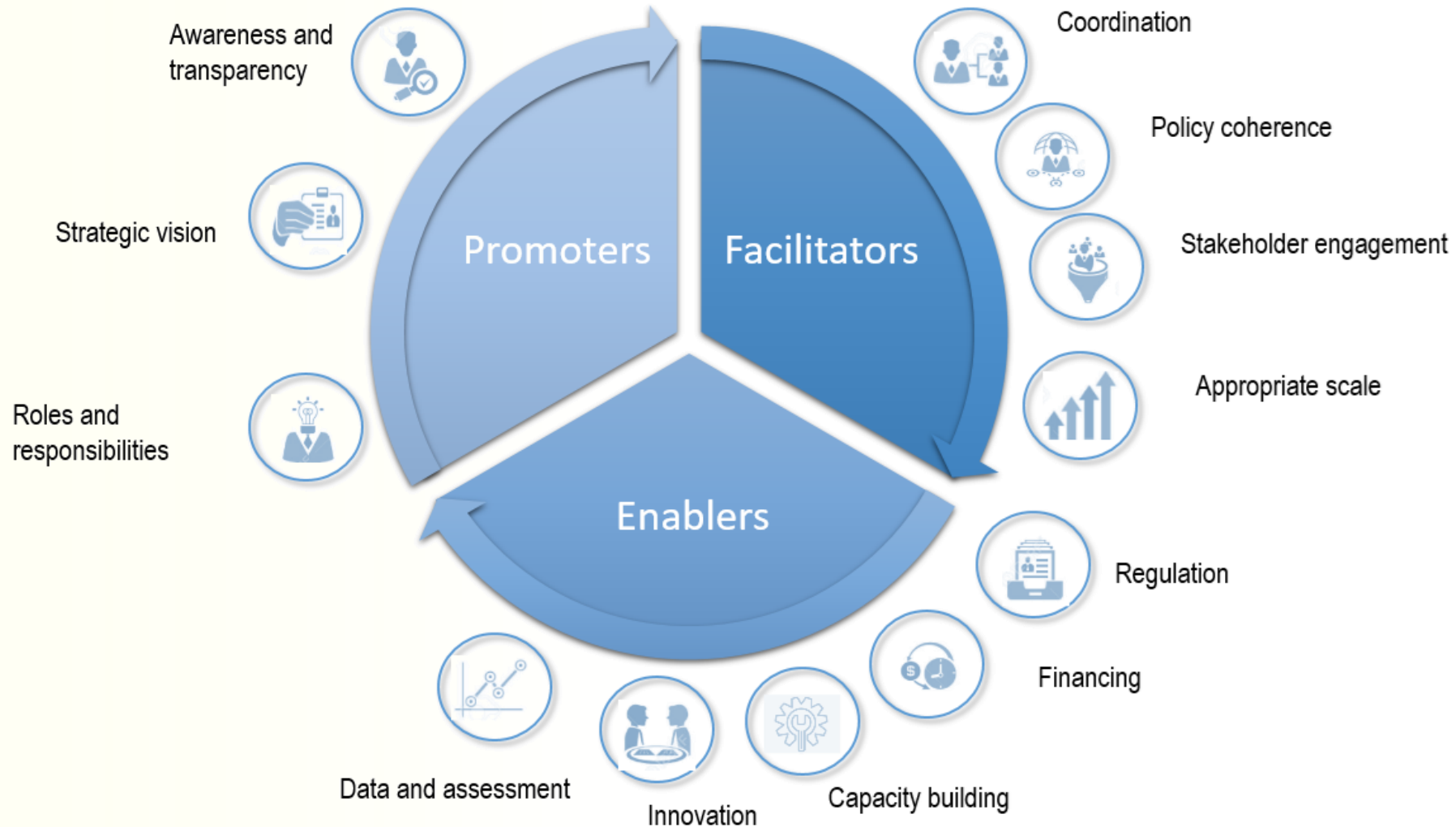
**Transforming** a former sugar factory (*De Loskade*) into a circular experimentation area.

Sources: OECD (2024), “The Circular Economy in Zuid-Holland, Netherlands”, OECD Regional Development Papers, No. 70, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/d568d66e-en>. OECD (2021), The Circular Economy in Glasgow, United Kingdom, OECD Urban Studies, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/7717a310-en>. OECD (2020), The Circular Economy in Groningen, the Netherlands, OECD Urban Studies, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/e53348d4-en>.



# Mind the governance!

## A Checklist for Action



Source: OECD (2020), The Circular Economy in Cities and Regions: Synthesis Report, OECD Urban Studies, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/10ac6ae4-en>.

# A territorial approach to the circular economy

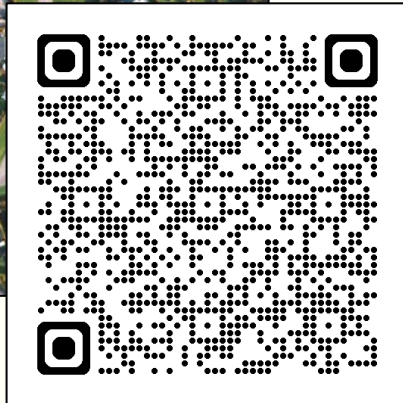
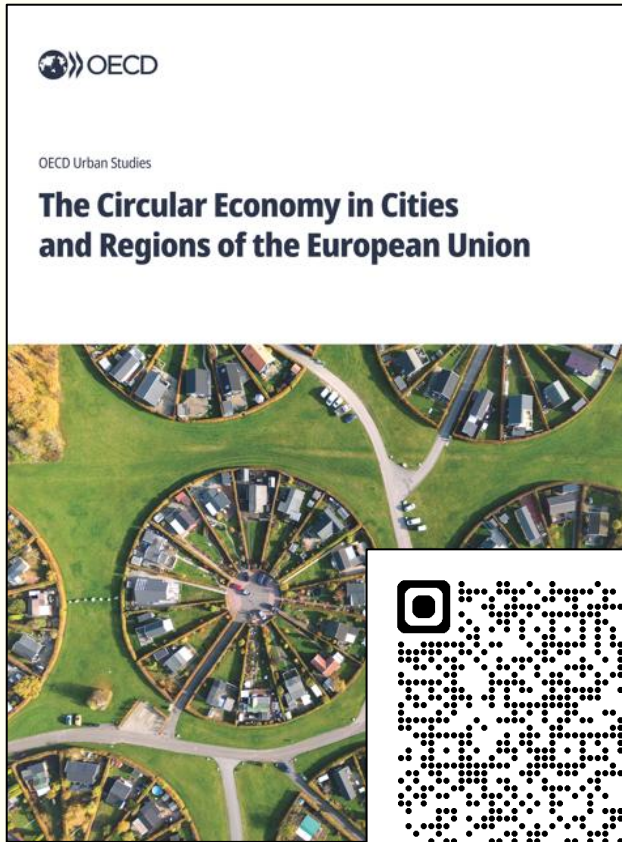
## 5 Must-do

- 1) Make circular solutions more accessible and affordable
- 2) Boost the competitiveness of circular businesses
- 3) Push circularity upstream
- 4) Set up a fair and regionally balanced transition
- 5) Collect granular data at subnational level

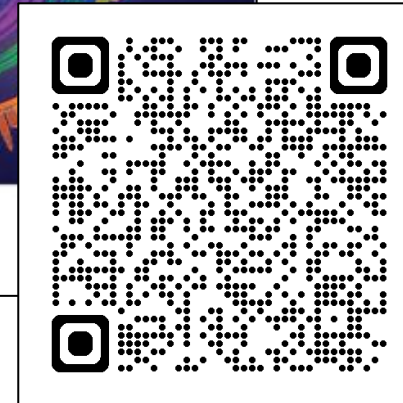




# Check out our reports



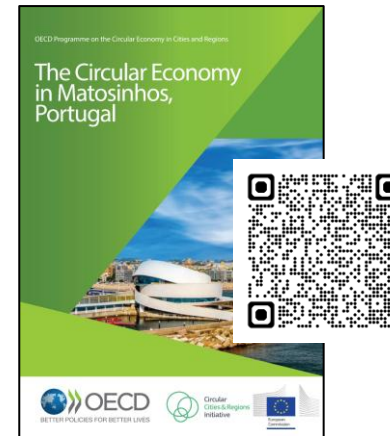
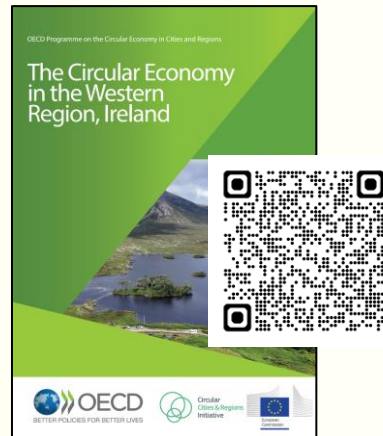
OECD (2025), The Circular Economy in Cities and Regions of the European Union, OECD Urban Studies, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/e09c21e2-en>.



OECD (2020), The Circular Economy in Cities and Regions: Synthesis Report, OECD Urban Studies, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/10ac6ae4-en>.



# Publication of 10 Circular Scans



# Publications on the circular economy



# Thank you!



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