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AWASTER – Adopting WASTE as Resource

D.2.2.1 Educational workshops on resource efficiency

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INTERREG ITALY-CROATIA PROGRAMME 2021 – 2027

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Project: AWASTER – Adopting WASTE as Resource

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Project website: <https://www.italy-croatia.eu/web/awaster>



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Introduction

AWASTER project

AWASTER – Adopting WASTE as Resource is three-years project financed under Priority 2 - Green and resilient shared environment, Strategic Objective SO 2.2 - Protection of nature and biodiversity of the Interreg Italy-Croatia program, with a total budget of 1.505.384 €.

AWASTER project, which started on 01/03/2024 and will end on 31/08/2026, aims to contribute to a **shift from a linear economic model to a circular economy model by minimizing waste generation** through awareness raising and exchange of experiences in the Italy-Croatia coastal areas.

The preservation of nature and biodiversity is vital for a sustainable environment in the program area, where waste production, especially plastic, poses significant ecological and socio-economic challenges. Coastal tourism contributes to this issue, with much waste ending up in the Adriatic Sea. To tackle this problem, a unified and transborder approach is needed; therefore, the project sees the cross-border collaboration of 3 Italian and 3 Croatian organizations in promoting circular economy and waste reduction in 5 coastal regions of Italy and Croatia through the organization of educational and awareness-raising programs targeting students (i.e. consumer side) and economic actors (i.e. economic side) and fostering cross-border exchange of knowledge and experiences.

Project specific objectives

- Analyse circular economy approaches, enhance the exchange of experience and use the best practices to develop guidelines, **Joint Strategy and Action Plan on sustainable use of resources** aiming to minimize waste generation.
- Conduct **educational and training courses** aiming to raise awareness and improve the knowledge base on the reduce-reuse-recycle circular economy approach, test innovative solutions on reusing the collected waste and promote low resource schemes through pilot actions.
- Ensure capitalization and transfer of project results by developing **recommendations and guidelines** and organizing a Final International Conference to disseminate project results and promote the **implementation of the circular economy approach**

Content of the document

This document is part of the project activity **A2.2 “Low resource schemes”**, which is focused on raising awareness of the economy sector by promoting ways and business schemes to increase



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resource productivity and decouple economic growth from resource use and its environmental impact.

The present report consists of a **qualitative description of the 10 educational workshops on resource efficiency** that have been organized by LP, PP2, PP3, PP5, PP6 in the five AWASTER pilot regions (2 workshops per each region), addressed to the economy sector.

The impact of the educational workshops on participants' knowledge and intentions regarding resource use and waste generation was assessed through a system of surveys and qualitative interviews administered by the organizing partners (see D2.2.2).

Objectives

The main aim of the activity has been the **engagement of the business sector to promote innovative and sustainable business models** which could minimize the direct and indirect costs on the environment by viable product and process designs.

This document is intended to **highlight the strategies implemented, collaborations established, challenges faced and lessons learnt** in organizing this type of awareness activities for the business sector, in order to evaluate, in the first place, their viability and efficacy, and, in the second place, the opportunity for their exploitation and replicability in other contexts.

Target

The workshops were aimed at engaging **business sector's representatives**, such as:

- business owners;
- persons responsible for development, production, technology, quality, logistics of production companies;
- clusters and/or business associations;
- public services providers (i.e. waste management services).

There was no restriction on the **economic sector of affiliation** of the participants. Any narrowing of the cohort in terms, for instance, of focussing on a specific industry, was an individual decision of each implementing partner, based on the specific economic features of the territory and on the opportunity to leverage local interests.



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In general terms, the workshops have been aimed to representatives from **enterprises and in particular SMEs** mainly coming from the following sectors:

- Manufacturing
- Tourism (including HORECA)
- Agriculture

Although addressing primarily business sector's representatives, the workshops also engaged other targets relevant for the AWASTER objectives, like:

- interest groups (including NGOs);
- public authorities (at regional, local and national level);
- education / training centers and schools;
- general public.

Methodology

In order to allow for smooth but efficient implementation of the activity in the different pilot regions, common guidelines have been developed by PP3 – SINLOC to provide guidance to project partner for what concerns:

- Target
- Format
- Content
- Engagement strategies
- Linkages/interdependence with other project activities and deliverable, to maximize impact and optimize effort

The complete set of developed suggestions are reported in **Annex 3: Guidelines for the organization and implementation of educational workshops**.

Although a specific format was not foreseen by project obligations, the consortium has worked towards the organization of **in-presence events** to guarantee the highest interaction level between the participants, in a **peer exchange form**.

Hybrid or virtual format has not been excluded but limited to specific cases and needs, to assure wider participation.

The decision on the **duration** of the events was left to each project partner's sensibility, proven that enough time was foreseen to ensure awareness raising on the circular economy topic, the conduction of ancillary activities (i.e. administration of survey, conduction of interviews) and the AWASTER project's presentation.



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For what concerns the workshop's **agenda**, the following topics were identified as essential to be covered, in order to keep a good balance between theoretical concepts and more practical approaches, while also giving visibility to AWASTER objectives and future activities plan:

1. Presentation of the AWASTER project
2. Introduction to the workshop's subject (theory)
3. Hands-on / workshop (practice, if foreseen)
4. Conclusion and presentation of the next activities of AWASTER project

Among the possible event formats, the following has been identified as more consistent to meet the needs and expectations of a business audience:

- **Design thinking workshop**, to support businesses in devising new Circular Economy activities and projects
- **Key-note speaker and/or best practice presentation**
- **Hands-on session / practical application** of circularity measurement using recognized standards (e.g. ISO or ESRS)

Although some sort of comparability was foreseen among the pilot regions, in the implementation phase the project partners adopted **different approaches tailored to their specific contexts and characteristics of the target group**, as described below in the chapter **Overview of the activities carried out**, especially for Dubrovnik-Neretva, Apulia and Istria.

Subjects

Achieving consistent SME engagement in capacity-building activities is far from straightforward, as SMEs often operate with limited time and resources, face competing operational priorities, and may perceive such initiatives as offering uncertain or indirect benefits in the short term.

Being this true also in the addressed area, the consortium identified the provision of **tailored and specific, interesting content during the workshops** as an essential, strategic element to foster interest and engagement of the target.

Although specific content varied according to the needs of each regional context and the type of sector targeted, some common approaches have been adopted throughout the AWASTER pilot regions:

- subjects covered were **not limited to basic concepts on circular economy** but have dealt also with **practical methodologies and real-life case studies** through which participants could observe successful examples and challenges a business may encounter;



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- the workshops focused on **specific business sectors or supply chain**, with concrete business applications and best strategies to follow;
- in order to provide specific and vertical knowledge, in most cases workshops have leveraged the **cooperation with specialists with vertical business knowledge and technical skills**.

It is worth to be mentioned, the workshops represented a good opportunity to disseminate some relevant AWASTER documents and outputs previously developed, in particular the [D.1.1.3 Best practice catalogue](#) and [D.1.2.2 Guidelines for low resource economy](#), with the aim of providing further practical guidance for the implementation of circular economy principles. According to the AWASTER values and approach, those documents have been made **digitally accessible** (e.g. QR code) before, during or after the workshops.

Overview of the activities carried out

During the period from March 2025 to February 2026, **10 educational workshops on resource efficiency** have been organized by LP, PP2, PP3, PP5, PP6 in the five AWASTER pilot regions (2 workshops per each region), addressed to business representatives coming from different economy sectors. Below there is a detailed description of the activities deployed in each pilot region. An overview of all the workshops realized is available in **Annex 1: Overview of AWASTER educational workshops**.

Istrian region

Workshop 1

Organization and partners: IRENA – Istrian Regional Energy Agency organised a thematic workshop as part of the Academy of Sustainable Tourism.

Venue, date and duration: 4–5 April 2025 in Nedeščina, Municipality of Sveta Nedelja

Format: the workshop was organised as a combination of presentations and practical exercises. The overall programme was designed as a modular training programme combining theoretical knowledge, practical applications, and follow-up mentoring dedicated to sustainable resource management and waste prevention.

Economic sector targeted: the workshop focused on the tourism sector, aiming to strengthen circular economy practices and resource efficiency within tourism, particularly in what concerns:

- Accommodation services (private renters, holiday apartments, holiday homes).



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- Rural and family tourism businesses (including agritourism and farm-based accommodation).
- Micro and small tourism enterprises involved in guest services and destination offer development.

The training content was tailored to tourism operators whose activities generate significant resource consumption and waste streams, especially in relation to:

- Energy use in accommodation facilities.
- Water consumption linked to guest stays.
- Municipal and packaging waste generation.
- Organic waste from hospitality and food services.

Participants: overall, 14 participants took part in the workshop, 11 of which represented 11 different SMEs and 3 of which represented 3 different interest groups and NGOs.

Type	Number of organisations	Number of participants (people)
SMEs	11	11
Interest group including NGOs	3	3
TOTAL	14	14

Agenda: four key modules included introduction to sustainable tourism, sustainable use of resources, sustainable waste management and the development of practical improvement measures and individual plans for participants.

Description of the event: the event brought together tourism stakeholders, particularly private accommodation providers and small tourism businesses, with the aim of strengthening their capacities in sustainable resource management and waste reduction. The programme focused on the practical application of circular economy principles in tourism operations, addressing efficient use of energy and water resources, environmentally responsible maintenance practices, and measures for preventing waste generation. Special attention was given to zero-waste approaches, reduction of single-use plastics, and management of organic waste, including composting solutions. Through expert lectures, case studies, and interactive discussions, participants were supported in identifying concrete actions to improve the environmental performance of their businesses and contribute to more sustainable tourism systems.

Workshop 2



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Organization and partners: IRENA – Istrian Regional Energy Agency, with the support of the Udruženje obrtnika Labin (Association of Craftsmen Labin), organized a thematic workshop titled “Manje otpada, više uspjeha – Zero Waste principi u HORECA sektoru” (Less Waste, More Success – Zero Waste Principles in the HORECA Sector).

Venue, date and duration: The workshop took place on 26 February 2026 in the City Library Labin (Gradska knjižnica Labin) located at Rudarska 1a, Labin. The event started at 17:00 and lasted approximately two hours, including the presentation and discussion with participants.

Format: The workshop was organised in the format of an expert lecture combined with practical examples and interactive discussion. The programme included a presentation by a waste management expert, followed by discussion with participants regarding the practical implementation of Zero Waste measures in hospitality businesses. The format allowed participants to exchange experiences and discuss challenges related to waste management in everyday operations.

Economy sectors targeted: The workshop targeted stakeholders from the HORECA sector, particularly:

- Restaurant owners and employees,
- Café and bar operators,
- Hotel representatives,
- Other hospitality businesses dealing with food preparation and service.

The participants were primarily members of the Association of Craftsmen Labin operating within the local hospitality and tourism economy. The workshop addressed operational activities that generate significant waste streams in the sector, including:

- Food preparation and food waste generation,
- Packaging waste from food and beverages,
- Organic waste and bio-waste management,
- Daily operational waste generated in kitchens and service areas.

Participants:

Type	Number of organisations	Number of participants (people)
SMEs	6	12
Interest group (including NGOs)	1	1
General public	/	1



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TOTAL	7	14
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Agenda: The workshop agenda focused on introducing Zero Waste principles in the hospitality sector and presenting practical measures for reducing waste generation in everyday operations. The programme included two main parts:

- Introduction to the AWASTER project. The workshop opened with an introductory presentation by Andrea Poldrugovac (IRENA – Istrian Regional Energy Agency Ltd.), who presented the objectives and activities of the AWASTER – Adopting WASTE as Resource project. The presentation highlighted the importance of transitioning from a linear economy model towards a circular economy, with a focus on reducing waste generation, improving resource efficiency, and strengthening sustainable practices within local economies. Participants were introduced to the project’s goals, planned activities, and the broader context of the Interreg Italy–Croatia Programme 2021–2027, under which the project is implemented.
- Zero Waste principles in the HORECA sector. The main lecture was delivered by Dejan Kosić, an expert in waste management with more than 15 years of experience in the field. The presentation focused on the application of Zero Waste principles in hospitality businesses, including:
 - Reduction of food waste in restaurants and kitchens
 - Optimisation of procurement and food storage practices
 - Proper separation of waste in hospitality facilities
 - Management of bio-waste and packaging waste
 - Examples of good practices from the hospitality sector.

The presentation was followed by a discussion with participants regarding the practical challenges and opportunities for implementing these measures in their businesses.

Description: The workshop “Less Waste, More Success – Zero Waste Principles in the HORECA Sector” brought together representatives of the local hospitality sector with the aim of strengthening their knowledge on waste prevention and sustainable resource management.

The event began with a presentation by Andrea Poldrugovac from IRENA – Istrian Regional Energy Agency, who introduced the AWASTER project and its objectives. Participants were informed about the project’s focus on promoting circular economy principles, reducing waste generation, and improving resource efficiency across the Italy–Croatia programme area. Following the introductory presentation, Dejan Kosić delivered a lecture focused on the practical implementation of Zero Waste principles in the HORECA sector. Participants were introduced to concrete examples and solutions for reducing food waste, improving procurement and storage practices, and managing bio-waste and packaging waste more efficiently. Special emphasis was placed on identifying measures that simultaneously provide environmental benefits and financial savings, which are particularly relevant for small and medium-sized hospitality businesses. The workshop also encouraged discussion and



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exchange of experiences among participants, who shared their current practices and challenges related to waste separation, food waste prevention, and waste management in hospitality facilities.

Split-Dalmatia

Workshop 1

Organization and partners: Association Sunce and ŠKMER Kuharska Akademija (Split)

Venue, date, duration: ŠKMER, Jobova 2, Split, Croatia, on 24.03.2025. Duration: 9:00 -14:00

Format: In presence (practical workshop – Zero Waste)

Economy sector targeted: HORECA and restaurant

Participants:

Type	Number of organisations	Number of participants (people)
Education / training center and school	1	1
SMEs	5	6
Interest groups (including NGOs)	1	3
TOTAL	7	10

Agenda: the objective of the workshop was to educate the business sector on zero-waste cooking, specifically to reduce waste generation in the hospitality sector by informing participants about the application of circular economy principles and sustainable cooking practices.

The training consisted of an introductory session and a practical cooking session.

During the introductory session, participants were introduced to the basic principles of the zero-waste approach and the circular economy, with a particular focus on reducing food waste in the hospitality industry. In the practical session, led by professional chefs, dishes were prepared to demonstrate how ingredients can be used efficiently and sustainably in the hospitality sector by fully utilizing all food products and applying zero-waste techniques in everyday kitchen operations.



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Description: zero-waste cooking workshop organized by the environmental NGO Sunce as part of the AWASTER project, aimed at representatives of restaurants in Split. During the workshop, professional chefs demonstrated creative techniques to use all parts of ingredients that are normally discarded, showing how to reduce food waste and apply sustainable cooking practices in their business.

Workshop 2

Organization and partners: the workshop was organized by the Association Sunce and ŠKMER Kuharska Akademija (Split), in collaboration with the Split Development Agency RaST

Venue, date and duration: Split Development Agency (RaST), Kneza Višeslava 3, Split, 10th December 2025, 17:00 - 19:30

Format: In presence

Economy sector targeted: manufacturing, HORECA, agriculture

Participants:

Type	Number of organisations	Number of participants (people)
Education / training center and school	1	1
SMEs	12	12
Interest groups (including NGOs)	4	7
General public	/	3
TOTAL	17	23

Agenda:

- 17:00 – 17:10: Gathering
- 17:10 – 17:25: Panel Moderator: Michael Freer, Director of Ensoco Consulting Services for Social Enterprises and Co-founder of the One Youth Association, a center for children and youth in Split focusing on informal learning and community development. Introductory Talk – 15 min: Overview of sustainability and marketing, with an emphasis on authenticity, recognizing impact, and clear communication with customers and the community



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- 17:25 – 17:40: Short Presentations – 3 to 5 min each (pitch format): Jelena Bikić – Silvan / Illirica: natural cosmetics and sustainable packaging, Ivan Božić – Humana Nova: inclusive employment through textile recycling, Danijela Mikuličić – Verdura Box: local cultivation and online store with domestic products
- 17:40 – 18:10: Panel Discussion – 30 min: Exploring together how to tell a sustainability story in a clear, convincing, and human way. The audience actively participates, with time at the end for questions and practical advice
- 18:10 – 18:20: Break – 10 min
- 18:20 – 19:25: Interactive Workshop: “How to Tell Your Green Story”. Facilitator: Zrinka Bilokapić, Director and Co-owner of Promocija BB Agency. She develops communication and digital strategies for brands and public institution projects, and through training encourages entrepreneurs to communicate honestly and sustainably, creating a space for collaboration rather than just sales. Workshop Content:
 - Analysis of three presented examples – “Three Stories of Responsible Business”: 15 min
 - Practical tools and tips, including storytelling, crafting a simple communication message, social media, and ways to avoid greenwashing: 40 min
 - Questions and networking: 10 min.

Description: Association Sunce, in collaboration with the Split Development Agency RaST, held the workshop “Sustainability as a Brand Identity: How to Tell the Story of a Sustainable Business”, bringing together entrepreneurs and experts to explore how business can be both profitable and sustainable. The event featured inspiring examples of authentic sustainable practices—from circular economy and social integration to local food systems and natural cosmetics—illustrating that sustainability is not just a marketing label but a meaningful business approach. Panelists shared insights on integrating circular economy principles into operations, while participants engaged actively and left motivated to apply what they learned in their own businesses or future ventures.

Veneto region

Workshop 1

Organization and partners: SINLOC in collaboration with VenicePromex - CCIAA Padova

Venue, date and duration: 14th October 2025, 9AM-1PM, 3 hours in PadovaHall, Via N. Tommaseo, 59 - Padua



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Format: Hybrid (both online and in presence)

Economy sectors targeted: Businesses and BMOs, coming mainly from manufacturing sector, specifically:

- plastics and polymers
- wood and furniture
- chemicals and materials
- textiles and fibres
- packaging

Participants:

The following table lists the participants in presence:

Type	Number of organisations	Number of participants (people)	Notes
Local public authority	3	/	3 CCIAA
Regional public authority	1	1	Veneto Region
National public authority	1	1	Central Europe Joint Secretariat
Education / training center and school	7	/	4 universities 3 business centres
Enterprise (except SMEs)	2	/	2 clusters
SMEs	1	/	1 SME
TOTAL	15	35	

- The following table lists the participants online, clustered by the country of origin:

Country	Number of participants (people)
Austria	5
France	1
Italy	9
Romania	1



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Slovenia	8
TOTAL	24

Agenda:

- 9:30 – 10:00 – Registration
- 10:00 – 10:15 – Introduction
- 10:15 – 10:30 – Project presentation
- 10:30 – 11:30 – Keynote speeches: Prof. Manzardo, University of Padua Prof. Eleonora Di Maria, University of Padua
- 11:30 – 11:45 – Presentation of results, Tobias Schwarzmüller, Chemie-Cluster Bayern GmbH
- 11:45 – 12:30 – Panel talk on activities carried out in the relevant sectors: Polymers/plastics, wood/furniture, chemicals, textiles, packaging
- 12:30 – 12:45 – Presentation of Cradle-to-Cradle best practices: AWASTER Project (Adopting WASTE as Resource), Sara Ferigo, SINLOC – Sistema Iniziative Locali S.p.A.
- 13:00 – Conclusions and networking lunch.

Description: The workshop was developed in the framework of the final conference of the EU Alpine Space CradleALP project, which brought together universities, businesses, and institutions from across the Alpine region to test innovative solutions in circular design and the replacement of fossil-based materials with renewable resources, with the aim to create greener, more competitive value chains in the sectors of plastics and polymers, wood and furniture, chemicals and materials, textiles/fibers, and packaging.

During the event the following topics were tackled:

- The concrete results of pilot projects, showing how companies can embark on circular transition pathways;
- Experiences and best practices developed at a transnational level;
- Future perspectives to accelerate the shift towards a zero-waste economy.

The program included keynote speeches by professors from the University of Padua, contributions from the business world, and a roundtable with international experts.

Workshop 2

Organization and partners: SINLOC together with CibuSalus and Veronamercato

Venue, date and duration: Friday, 16th January 2026 from 10AM to 1PM, in Auditorium Veronamercato, via Sommacampagna 63 D/E, Verona



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Format: in presence

Economy sector targeted: Businesses and operators in the agri-food supply chain

Participants:

Type	Number of organisations	Number of participants (people)	Notes
Local public authority	4	5	2 municipalities 2 chambers of commerce
Education / training center and school	1	42	
Enterprise (except SMEs)	10	17	
SMEs	9	12	
Interest group including NGOs	8	11	
General public	/	7	
TOTAL	32	94	

Agenda: the following table gives an overview of the workshop agenda:

Time	Subject	Speaker
10:00	Introduction and institutional welcoming	Andrea Martinez, SINLOC Marco Dallamano, Veronamercato President
	The three pillars of the food transition	Luca Lanini, CibuSalus
	Pillar 1 - Supply chain sustainability	Paolo Merci, Veronamercato Ugo Biasin, VRM srl Sara Ferigo, SINLOC Andrea Galeota, CCIAA Padova / Venicepromex
	Pillar 2 – Waste and solidarity	Claudio Bolcato, ACLI Verona



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	Pillar 3 – Food policy: circular economy and food governance	Isabella Ligia, Metropolitan City of Cagliari
12:00	Round table: the food at the core	Andrea Martinez, SINLOC Cristina Balbi, Councilor of the Municipality of Vicenza Claudio Bolcato, ACLI Verona Damiano Tommasi, Mayor of Verona Isabella Ligia, Metropolitan City of Cagliari
13:00	Conclusions	Marco Dallamano, Veronamercato President

Description: Sinloc, together with Veronamercato and CibuSalus, organized a conference named 'Food at the core – Institutions and businesses for a new food sustainability'.

The meeting was designed to offer businesses and operators in the agri-food supply chain a clear and concrete overview of the sustainable developments taking place in the sector, focusing on three strategic themes:

- Supply chain sustainability: tools to improve traceability, logistics, packaging and production processes, with a particular focus on financial opportunities and innovative business models.
- Waste reduction: real-life examples of the circular economy, collaborations along the supply chain and solutions that generate economic as well as environmental benefits.
- Governance and territorial strategies: how urban food policies and public-private partnerships can create new market opportunities, efficiency and reputation for businesses.

During the event, case studies has been presented based on the experiences of Sinloc and CibuSalus with wholesale markets, businesses and Italian cities, as well as the experiences gained in the Interreg IT-HR AWASTER and Central Europe CIREVALC projects. The session concluded with a round table discussion dedicated to the centrality of food policies, attended by institutional representatives and stakeholders. At the end of the event, a lunch with local products served in compostable plates was offered to participants in order to foster further conversation and networking. In line with the concept of the event, the leftovers of the lunch have been collected and distributed to charities through the social initiative of the ACLI Verona.

Apulia region

Preparatory event

In the Apulia region, a first tentative workshop was organised by the local partner (Municipality of Casarano), but its implementation faced several operational challenges: stakeholder participation



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remained limited both during and outside working hours, as many actors did not perceive the strategic relevance of the initiative or fully recognise its potential added value.

To address this barrier, the Municipality of Casarano decided to host a **preparatory event**, where some initial information was provided, local examples of the circular economy across different business sectors showcased, and floor for discussion was opened. This approach allowed for much more practical and tangible conversation, which helped to engage the attendees in a more successful way, while also helping the organizer to collect the real needs of the stakeholders, therefore setting the basis for the organization of further initiatives that addressed tangible requirements.

Workshop 1

Organization and partners: the event was organized by the Municipality of Casarano. The organization of the event was carried out in close collaboration with the municipalities belonging to the ARO LE 9 area (Optimal Collection Area), namely Matino, Miggiano, Montesano Salentino, Parabita, Ruffano and Specchia, which supported the implementation of the activity and contributed to stakeholders engagement across the territory. This joint effort ensured broad local participation and strengthened cooperation among the municipalities in promoting circular economy practices and sustainable waste management solutions for the area.

Venue, date and duration: The event was held on 29 January 2026, at 17:30, in the Council Chamber of the Municipality of Casarano, a central and accessible location suitable for engaging local stakeholders. The meeting had a duration of approximately two hours, concluding around 19:30, and was structured to allow for both presentations and interactive discussions. The choice of venue, timing, and format was intended to facilitate active participation, encourage dialogue among attendees, and provide a comprehensive overview of circular economy practices relevant to local businesses and public stakeholders.

Format: the event was held in person, allowing for direct interaction and active participation among attendees. The in-person format facilitated face-to-face discussions, the exchange of experiences, and the presentation of case studies and best practices related to circular economy initiatives. This setup promoted engagement, networking, and the establishment of potential collaborations between local businesses, municipalities, and private citizens.

Economy sectors targeted: the event targeted a diverse range of sectors within the local economy, aiming to engage key stakeholders involved in promoting sustainable practices and circular economy initiatives. Participants included local associations, companies, and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) operating across several sectors, including manufacturing, tourism, agriculture, and other local business activities. By involving actors from multiple sectors, the event created a



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multidisciplinary environment where experiences and best practices could be shared, challenges discussed, and opportunities for collaboration identified. This approach ensured that the principles of circular economy could be disseminated broadly across the local economic fabric, encouraging both established businesses and emerging enterprises to adopt more sustainable production, resource management, and waste reduction strategies. The engagement of diverse economic actors also reinforced networking opportunities and facilitated the creation of synergies that could support long-term sustainable development in the area.

Participants: The session was attended by 27 participants, including representatives from the manufacturing, tourism, and agricultural sectors, as well as private citizens from the local community. The precise division emerges from the following table:

Type	Number of organisations	Number of participants (people)	Notes
Local public authority	7	9	Municipalities of ARO LE/9: mayors/technical staff
SMEs	14	15	Local companies from tourism, manufacturing, agriculture, construction and commerce
Interest groups (including NGOs)	2	2	Associations, cooperatives, non-profit organizations
General public	1	1	Individual participants
TOTAL	24	27	

Agenda: the event program included:

- 17:30 - Institutional greetings by the mayors of the Municipalities of ARO 9/LE
- 17:45 - Context and opportunities for the region: Introduction to the Awaster project and the role of the circular economy as a lever for local development
- 18:00 - Circular economy and production sectors: concrete examples (Reduction of food waste and good local practices, waste management and material recovery in the construction, agriculture and technology sectors)



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- 18:30 - Round table: opportunities for businesses (Discussion with administrators, local businesses, trade associations and industry experts to identify priorities and possible future collaborations)
- 19:00 – Conclusions.

Description: the event focused on raising awareness and promoting the practical implementation of circular economy principles, emphasizing how materials and products that would otherwise be considered waste can be recovered, reused, and transformed into valuable resources for other businesses or organizations. The meeting brought together a diverse group of participants, including local associations, companies, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and private citizens from sectors such as manufacturing, tourism, agriculture, and other local economic activities. The session began with an introduction highlighting the objectives of circular economy and the benefits of adopting sustainable practices for both environmental protection and business competitiveness. This was followed by presentations of concrete case studies and examples of best practices, showcasing companies and municipalities that have successfully implemented circular models. Particular attention was given to practical solutions aimed at reducing waste disposal costs, optimizing resource management, and creating new strategic partnerships. Throughout the event, interactive discussions were encouraged, allowing participants to share experiences, exchange knowledge, identify common challenges, and explore potential collaborations. The in-person format facilitated networking opportunities and direct engagement, fostering dialogue between different sectors and local stakeholders. The meeting also served as a platform to discuss the practical steps for integrating circular economy practices into business operations, including waste reuse, resource valorization, and innovative approaches to sustainability.

Workshop 2

Organization and partners: Municipality of Casarano, in collaboration with the municipalities belonging to the ARO LE 9 area (Matino, Miggianno, Montesano Salentino, Parabita, Ruffano and Specchia), which supported the engagement of stakeholders and facilitated the involvement of businesses from across the territory.

Venue, date and duration: The meeting was held on 27 February 2026 at the municipal offices of the Municipality of Casarano, in a dedicated meeting room suitable for operational and interactive activities. The session started at 17:30 and lasted approximately two hours.

Format: The event was conducted in person and structured as a follow-up working session. The meeting opened with a brief recap of the main topics and outcomes discussed during the first workshop, including the principles of resource efficiency, circular economy opportunities and



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potential collaboration among local stakeholders. Following the introductory summary, the focus shifted to the administration and completion of questionnaires designed to gather qualitative and quantitative information from participants. Municipal staff provided guidance and clarification to ensure accurate and comprehensive responses. This practical and participatory format encouraged active involvement and allowed for the collection of consistent data to support future planning and project activities.

Economy sectors targeted: The meeting targeted local economic operators and SMEs active in different sectors of the local economy. According to the questionnaires completed during the event, the participating businesses mainly belong to the micro-enterprise category (1–9 employees) and operate primarily in the following sectors:

- handicrafts and artisanal production (workshops and small laboratories)
- services and local commercial activities
- agriculture and agri-related activities

The participation of these small-scale operators provided valuable insight into the needs and perceptions of microenterprises with regard to circular economy practices, resource efficiency and sustainable waste management.

Participants:

Type	Number of organisations	Number of participants (people)	Notes
SMEs	10	10	Local companies from manufacturing, agriculture, construction and commerce
TOTAL	10	10	

Agenda:

Description: The follow-up meeting was organized as a continuation of the participatory process launched during the first workshop with local economic operators. While the previous event mainly focused on presenting the project framework and discussing opportunities related to circular economy and resource efficiency, this second session had a more operational and data-collection purpose. The meeting opened with a short recap of the main topics and outcomes previously shared, in order to ensure continuity and alignment among participants. Particular attention was given to the principles of circular economy and to the potential benefits that resource efficiency strategies can bring to local businesses. The core activity of the meeting consisted of the administration of structured questionnaires aimed at collecting detailed information on the characteristics, practices



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and needs of local companies. The smaller and more focused setting encouraged direct dialogue between participants and municipal staff, facilitating clarification of questions and supporting the correct completion of the survey. The responses collected provided a useful snapshot of the local business environment. All participating organizations belong to the micro-enterprise category (1–9 employees) and mainly operate in the handicraft, services and agricultural sectors. The results also showed that while many businesses already implement basic sustainability practices—such as separate waste collection and, in some cases, the reuse of production scraps—the overall level of knowledge of circular economy policies and regulations remains relatively limited. At the same time, participants expressed a clear interest in the opportunities associated with circular economy approaches, particularly in terms of cost reduction, access to incentives and the creation of local partnerships among businesses. The information gathered during the session will support the identification of concrete actions, support measures and collaborative initiatives to strengthen the transition towards more sustainable and circular business practices at the local level.

Dubrovnik-Neretva

The initial plan envisaged two identical workshops with different groups of participants. LAG 5 team, taking into account the local context and the limited number of interested economic actors in Korčula, decided to modify the original concept.

Consequently, the workshops were organized as two successive sessions for the same group of participants, enabling continuity in learning and gradual development of knowledge and skills in sustainable business and the circular economy. This approach allowed for deeper understanding of the topics, progressive content development between workshops, and more concrete application of the acquired knowledge in participants' businesses.

However, due to various organisational and practical circumstances described later in this report, the same group of participants was not able to attend both workshops. To address this and ensure continuity, all participants were therefore provided with the full set of materials and presentations from both the May and October workshops, regardless of individual attendance. A total of 16 people participated in the workshops, not including the facilitators and organizers.

The first workshop included both theoretical and practical components. In the introductory part, key concepts of the circular economy and relevant best practices were presented (D.1.2.2 Guidelines for low resource economy, D.1.3.2 Best practice catalogue), while the practical part involved participants working in groups to analyse business model examples and engaging in discussions with representatives of successful circular business practices.

The second workshop focused on analysing the impacts of the circular economy, using self-assessment tools, and developing mini-strategies. Participants identified concrete steps and measures to improve their businesses in line with the principles of the circular economy.



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Workshop 1

Organization and partners: Local Action Group Dubrovnik-Neretva and led by Marina Stenek, an environmental protection expert. In addition, the panel discussion on examples of good practices in circular economy implementation in business featured contributions from Ana Farac – Family Farm (OPG), Mate Farac – Konoba Mate (Island of Korčula), and Marijeta Čalić – Holiday House for Wine Lovers - Križ Winery (Pelješac Peninsula).

Venue, date and duration:

- Date and time: 15 May 2025 (Thursday) at 18:00
- Venue: City Hall Korčula, Trg Antuna i Stjepana Radića 1, 20260 Korčula
- Mode: In-person
- Duration: 3 hours

Economy sectors targeted: the workshop targeted the economic sector of Korčula and its surrounding region, focusing on businesses directly or indirectly linked to tourism. Most participants were involved in hospitality, accommodation, food services, and agritourism, reflecting the central role of tourism in the local economy and the importance of promoting sustainable and resource-efficient practices in these activities.

Participants:

Type	Number of organisations	Number of participants (people)	Notes
Local public authority	1	1	
Regional public authority	1	1	
Education / training center and school	1	1	Workshop expert
SMEs	8	8	Predominantly private entrepreneurs, mainly engaged in tourism and service sectors
TOTAL	11	11	



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Agenda:

- 18:00–18:15: Project Introduction – brief introduction of the AWASTER project and workshop objectives & participants introduction
- 18:15–18:45: Introduction to Circular Economy: Circular economy and product life cycle, R-paradigm, EU policies for circular economy, Resource-efficient economy: perspectives from different sectors, Circular economy business models for companies
- 18:45–19:10: Panel: Examples of Good Practices in Circular Economy Implementation
- 19:10–19:25: Break
- 19:25–20:05: Practical Exercise 1: Analysis of Business Model Examples and Key Principles of Circular Economy – group work with facilitator guidance
- 20:05–20:40: Practical Exercise 2: Self-assessment of Own Business Model Using Key Circular Economy Performance Indicators – individual work with feedback
- 20:40–20:50: Preparation for the Next Workshop – participants receive a task to test or monitor progress of an idea in their business
- 20:50–21:00: Conclusions and Closing Discussion.

Description: The workshop opened with an introduction to Project AWASTER, its objectives, and the participants, establishing a framework for knowledge exchange. The theoretical section introduced the circular economy as an alternative to the linear model, focusing on the product life cycle from design to reuse, recycling, and disposal. The R-paradigm was presented, highlighting that circular economy prevents waste already at the design and business process stages. Participants were also introduced to key EU policies and legislation, with particular attention to 2024 regulations and their implications for SMEs in tourism, agriculture, and services. The workshop then explored the low-resource economy, showing through examples from industry, agriculture, and tourism how circular business models can reduce costs, increase resilience, strengthen local value chains, and create new opportunities. Key strategies included extending product lifespans, design for recycling, product ownership models, and digital tools for resource monitoring. A panel discussion with Ana Farac (OPG and Konoba Mate, Korčula) and Marijeta Čalić (Holiday House for Wine Lovers, Križ Winery, Pelješac) presented practical experiences of applying circular principles in small hospitality and agricultural businesses, including sustainable renovation, local and organic food production, efficient resource use, waste reduction, and cooperation with local producers. Two practical exercises followed. In the first, participants analysed hospitality and tourism business models, identifying existing circular practices and proposing improvements related to resource use, waste, energy, water, packaging, and stakeholder education. In the second exercise, participants conducted a self-assessment of their own businesses through a questionnaire covering resource efficiency, waste management, energy and water use, equipment longevity, local cooperation, and guest engagement. Based on 24 questions, they received a score indicating an initial, intermediate, or advanced level of circularity. Participants were then asked to test or monitor a circular practice in their business before the next session. The



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workshop concluded with a brief summary and discussion, with participants highlighting the relevance and practical value of the content for their businesses.

Workshop 2

Organization and partners: the workshop was organized by the Local Action Group Dubrovnik-Neretva and led by Marina Stenek, an environmental protection expert.

Venue, date and duration:

- Date and time: 23 October 2025 (Thursday) at 17:00
- Venue: Cultural Centre Korčula (Small Hall), Obala korčulanskih brodograditelja bb, 20260 Korčula
- Mode: In-person
- Duration: 2,5 hours.

Economy sectors targeted: the workshop targeted the economic sector of Korčula and its surrounding region, focusing on businesses directly or indirectly linked to tourism. Most participants were involved in hospitality, accommodation, food services, and agritourism, reflecting the central role of tourism in the local economy and the importance of promoting sustainable and resource-efficient practices in these activities.

Participants:

Type	Number of organisations	Number of participants (people)	Notes
Local public authority	1	1	Although Public Utility Company Hober d.o.o. is formally classified as an SME, it is 100 % owned by the City of Korčula and operates as a municipal utility company performing public service functions.
Education / training center and school	1	1	Workshop expert
SMEs	5	5	Predominantly private entrepreneurs, mainly engaged in tourism and service sectors
General public	/	1	



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TOTAL	7	8
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Contrary to initial expectations, the two workshops were not attended by exactly the same individual participants. A total of 16 people participated in the workshops, not including the facilitators and organizers. Despite partial changes in the composition of participants, both sessions targeted the same local economic context and core group of economic actors, primarily tourism-related businesses operating in the Korčula area. Continuity was ensured at the sectoral and organizational level, allowing for the progressive development of knowledge and skills in sustainable business practices and circular economy principles.

Agenda:

- 17:00–17:10: Project Introduction – Brief introduction of the AWASTER project, workshop objectives and participant introductions
- 17:10–17:15: Recap on Circular Economy and Resource Efficiency
- 17:15–17:25: Sustainability and the Tourism Value Chain• Tourist expectations: analysis of trends and sustainability-related demands• Value chain: direct and indirect environmental impacts of tourism across sectors – agriculture, construction, transport/mobility, energy and waste
- 17:25–18:00: Practical Exercise 1: Group analysis of Barriers to the Implementation of Circular Practices (based on self-assessment questionnaire results)
- 18:00–18:15: Break
- 18:15–18:40: Measuring the Impact of Circular Economy in Business• MFCA approach as part of the transition to a circular economy• Practical examples: mapping business processes in a restaurant, kayak tours, and workforce mediation and management services
- 18:40–19:00: Practical Exercise 2: MFCA Self-Assessment of Own Business Model – individual work on process mapping (inputs/outputs) and identification of hidden financial losses using the MFCA method
- 19:00–19:20: Practical Exercise 3: Supply–Demand Mapping and Business Matching
- 19:20–19:30: Conclusions and Closing Discussion.

Description: The workshop began with an introduction to Project AWASTER, its objectives, and the participants, establishing a framework for knowledge exchange. A brief overview of the circular economy and resource efficiency followed, highlighting the need to extend product life cycles, reduce waste, and retain material value. A thematic session addressed sustainability in the tourism value chain, noting growing tourist demand for sustainable services. The environmental footprint of tourism was discussed, including its estimated 14% contribution to global CO₂ emissions, both direct (accommodation, transport, energy) and indirect across sectors such as construction, agriculture,



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transport, energy, and waste management. Seasonal pressures, food waste, transport emissions, and waste management challenges in island and coastal destinations were also highlighted. The workshop then reviewed results from a previous self-assessment questionnaire. While many participants already apply basic circular practices (e.g., waste separation and cooperation with local suppliers), others face technical, organizational, or knowledge barriers. A group exercise analysed these barriers and identified potential solutions. The session continued with measuring the impact of circular practices, introducing the Material Flow Cost Accounting (MFCA) approach. Examples from restaurants, kayak tours, and service businesses illustrated how food waste, empty runs, and inefficient processes generate both environmental and financial losses. Relevant KPIs were also presented, including resource efficiency, waste, energy and water use, and CO₂ emissions. In a practical exercise, participants applied MFCA to their own businesses, mapping processes, identifying inputs, outputs, and losses, estimating costs, and defining priority areas for improvement. This led to the development of a mini-strategy for circular transition, including goals, measures, timelines, and monitoring indicators. An additional interactive exercise mapped supply and demand among participants, encouraging cooperation between tourism, hospitality, and agriculture businesses and highlighting opportunities to strengthen local value chains. The workshop concluded with a summary and discussion, with participants positively evaluating its practical relevance for everyday business operations.

Relevant information gathered

The implementation of the workshops enabled the gathering of some interesting insights from the stakeholders involved (especially the business sector) around the topic of circular economy.

In particular, the discussion with the business representatives highlighted that:

1. Awareness around the topic is growing, but still uneven

Circular economy concepts (especially advanced ones like Cradle-to-Cradle) are still not widely known or fully understood, particularly among SMEs and sector-specific actors (e.g. agrifood, tourism, hospitality). While knowledge levels vary significantly across sectors and regions, capacity building and awareness raising activities are generally perceived as effective tools to increase understanding and interest around the topic.

2. Practical, hands-on learning is the most effective approach

Real-life case studies, demonstrations, and interactive exercises were consistently identified as the most impactful learning methods. Participants better understood circular economy principles when they could connect them directly to their own business operations, while concrete and real-life



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examples (e.g. zero-waste cooking, certified circular businesses) helped translate abstract concepts into tangible practices, therefore demonstrating the opportunity for replicability.

3. Circular business practices are mostly basic; advanced solutions lag behind

Most businesses have implemented entry-level actions such as waste separation, while more advanced practices are less common, including:

- Composting systems
- Reuse/refill systems
- Circular design and upcycling
- Renewable energy integration

This particularly highlights a gap between awareness and full implementation.

4. Key barriers towards transition are organizational and knowledge-based (not just financial)

The dialogue established throughout the workshops unveiled that businesses often overestimate the difficulty of implementing circular solutions.

Although cost for implementing circular economy principles is perceived as an obstacle, the main barriers appear to be the:

- lack of knowledge and technical guidance;
- limited internal capacity (time, skills, staff);
- uncertainty and perceived complexity;
- insufficient infrastructure (e.g. composting, waste systems);
- regulatory and administrative constraints.

5. Strong interest and motivation to adopt circular solutions

Despite barriers, participants showed high willingness to adopt sustainable practices and interest in zero-waste, resource efficiency, and cost-saving solutions. Motivation increases in those contexts (geographical, sectorial...) where economic benefits are clearer.

6. Need for continuous support and practical tools

Specifically, the businesses involved in the discussions highlighted the need for:

- Step-by-step guidance and phased approaches
- Technical assistance and mentoring
- Assessment tools to measure circularity
- Access to financing and funding mechanisms

Also, the tools developed by EU initiatives are perceived as valuable but need wider dissemination.

7. Collaboration is essential but underdeveloped



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The business sectors representatives highlighted that in their respective regions and sectors of affiliation there is a strong potential for joint procurement, resource sharing and local circular ecosystems.

Although it is widely recognized that effective circular economy implementation depends on cooperation among different businesses and on the ability to build up partnerships with local suppliers, communities, and social actors, collaboration is still limited due to:

- Weak networks
- Lack of communication
- Perceived complexity

8. Circular economy creates both environmental and business value

Across the workshops, awareness of the benefits of circular economy implementation in business practice emerged; in particular, participants underlined the following:

- Cost savings and efficiency gains
- New business opportunities and innovation
- Improved brand image and competitiveness
- Environmental and social impact

9. Communication and storytelling matter

Participating businesses to the workshops recognize the potential of sustainability as a core part of business identity, but only if the latter is communicated authentically (avoid greenwashing) and use storytelling and branding to create value from circular practices.

10. Importance of policy, funding, and enabling frameworks

Existing EU and local initiatives play a key role in raising awareness and providing tools and funding; nevertheless, better visibility, accessibility, and alignment with business needs are required.

11. Gradual transition is key

Businesses need a **step-by-step, realistic approach** rather than radical transformation; in fact, pilot actions and small-scale initiatives help to reduce risk, build confidence and enable scaling over time.

Also, given the engagement of different economic sectors, more tailored and specific insights were collected, especially for the following sectors:

- **Agrifood**
 - Major contributor to emissions and waste, but **high potential for circular solutions**.
 - Food waste is a critical issue, with **significant inefficiencies across the supply chain**.
 - Growing policy attention and local initiatives support transition



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➤ **Tourism & Hospitality**

- Key impacts of circular economy implementation: **energy, water use, and food waste**.
- Circular practices are **in early stages**, especially in small businesses.
- Interest is high in:
 - Zero-waste approaches
 - Sustainable guest engagement
 - Operational cost reduction

Main obstacles encountered

In general terms, the **organization of the workshops** was generally **successful** and major logistical failures were rare.

Most workshops (especially in Veneto and in Split-Dalmatia) showed a good level of organization and management, thanks to:

- good preliminary planning and correlated dissemination strategies;
- effective contingency measures when issues arose (e.g. replacing speakers);
- strong engagement of participants.

The **biggest challenge** towards the pilot regions was the **administration of the survey and the correlated data collection**.

Across almost all regions, survey implementation was problematic due to the following reasons:

- GDPR constrains, which limited post-event data collection in the first workshops held in Veneto;
- low response rates (especially in Dubrovnik-Neretva and Split-Dalmatia regions);
- failure to administer surveys, due to time or participant reluctance (especially in Apulia)
- missing baseline data when pre-surveys were not conducted (Istria)

The missing administration of the survey and correlated data collection significantly reduced the ability to measure the workshops' impact.

Also, **participation rates** varied widely across regions, specifically:

- in Veneto and in the first workshop in Split-Dalmatia high participation was registered;
- in Istria and in the second workshop held in Apulia a moderate participation was witnessed;
- the workshops held in Dubrovnik-Neretva and the first workshop held in Split-Dalmatia Workshop as well as in Apulia showed a low participation.

Potential **root causes of the low attendance** were identified by project partners, among which:



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- poor timing (e.g. pre-season in Dubrovnik-Neretva);
- limited sector representation (Apulia);
- low engagement from specific industries (HORECA in Split).

Also, it was noticed that awareness and therefore attitudes toward circular economy differ: while some participants were engaged and interested in practical strategies, others showed skepticism or limited knowledge, proving that **knowledge gaps and trust issues affect participation and interaction quality**.

Even when facing challenges and low participation, the activities carried out (particularly those structured in a workshop format) still proved to be effective opportunities to encourage discussion and exchange of experiences and fostered collaboration among local stakeholders, while contributing to raising awareness of circular economy principles.

Overall, qualitative and intangible impact was often stronger than measurable (quantitative) impact.

Lessons learnt and conclusions

In general, the feedback collected confirmed that circular economy requires a **systemic transformation**: representing not just a technical matter, but involving a deeper shift in mindset, business models, and policy frameworks, it requires solutions that must be sector-specific, as different industries (e.g. manufacturing, tourism, agri-food, HORECA) have different needs and challenges.

As cross- and intra-sector collaboration, networking and partnerships are perceived as critical factors towards circular transition, there is strong demand for **structured platforms to connect economic actors and stakeholders**, with the recognition of the **role of external facilitators** (e.g. business support organizations) to enable industrial symbiosis and matchmaking.

While interest and awareness are increasing in the business sector (especially SMEs and microenterprises), capacity gaps on circular economy principles and approaches remain, especially for what concern technical expertise, knowledge of regulations and tools and capacity for advanced implementation.

This highlights the **need for targeted training, mentoring, and accessible information**.

Also, the AWASTER experience proved that **practical, experience-based learning is far more impactful than purely theoretical sessions**; in fact, awareness initiatives worked best when they included real-life examples and case studies, interactive discussions and peer exchange and hands-on tools (e.g. self-assessment, practical methods).



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While awareness and capacity building is important, the AWASTER experience also highlighted the **need for concrete support tools** which must be paired with trainings to enable real change, among which:

- Financial incentives
- Technical consultancy
- Clear regulatory guidance
- Simple, actionable tools

Overall, the feedback collected across the regions highlighted that the **main barriers are mainly structural and organizational** rather than financial and that there is a strong need to clearly highlight the **environmental, social and economic benefits** connected to the adoption of circular economy practices to further foster the transition in the economic sector.

While **stakeholder engagement** has been identified as key factor towards effective learning and adoption, the activities proved that engaging the business sector in workshops is challenging due to intense time pressures, general skepticism regarding the ROI of training, and a preference for immediate, actionable solutions over abstract learning. Many organizations, particularly small-to-medium enterprises (SMEs), operate with tight budgets and prioritize daily operational output over staff development, making it hard to justify taking employees away from their roles.

Overall, the workshops were effective as awareness-building tools, but less effective in systematic impact measurement, mainly due to survey-related issues and inconsistent participation.

While the experiences highlighted the need for better survey design and administration strategies and **earlier and more targeted outreach** to participants, they also pointed out that successful capacity building and awareness initiatives must include **interactive and flexible formats, trust-building and open dialogue, inclusion of diverse stakeholders and adaptation to participants' knowledge levels**.

There is also a clear need for **more accessible and tangible information channels**, beyond online resources, which are often perceived as distant or overly technical.

Connected to this, the experience showed that **phased and continuous learning works better than one-off events**, as a step-by-step, multi-session approach often builds deeper understanding, while encourages gradual implementation and therefore moving participants from awareness to action.

As a conclusion, the activities demonstrated that the transition towards more circular business models depends less on financial investment alone and more on knowledge, practical support,



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collaboration, and accessible tools, with hands-on learning and real examples acting as the main drivers of change.

In conclusion, according to the feedback collected and discussion developed with the business sector representatives, real progress towards more circular business models and practices depends mainly on some key factors:

- **practical training and tools;**
- **strong collaboration ecosystems;**
- **tailored, sector-specific approaches;**
- **ongoing support and capacity building.**

Annexes

- **Annex 1: Overview of AWASTER educational workshops**
- **Annex 2: Overview of target groups involved**
- **Annex 2: Guidelines for the organization and implementation of educational workshops**



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Annex 1: Overview of AWASTER educational workshops

Region	Responsible PP	Date	Place	Format	Format	Economy sector target	Nr. of participants	Nr. of organizations
Istria	IRENA	4/04/2025	Labin	On-site	Workshop	Tourism and HORECA	14	14
		26/02/2026	Labin	On-site	Workshop	HORECA	14	7
Split-Dalmatia	SUNCE	24/06/2025	Split	On-site	Workshop	HORECA	10	7
		10/12/2025	Split	On-site	Workshop	Manufacturing, HORECA, agriculture	23	17
Veneto	SINLOC	14/10/2025	Padua	Hybrid	Seminar	Manufacturing	59	15
		16/01/2026	Verona	On-site	Conference	Agrifood	94	32
Dubrovnik-Neretva	LAG 5	15/05/2025	Korčula	On-site	Workshop	Tourism, HORECA	11	11
		23/10/2025	Korčula	On-site	Workshop	Tourism, HORECA	8	7
Apulia	Municipality of Casarano	21/02/2025	Casarano	On-site	Workshop	Manufacturing, tourism, agrifood	15	4
		29/01/2026	Casarano	On-site	Workshop	Manufacturing, tourism, agrifood	27	24
		19/02/2026	Casarano	On-site	Workshop	Manufacturing, tourism, agrifood	10	10
						TOTAL	286	149





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Annex 2: Overview of target groups involved

Number of organisations

Target group	ISTRIA		VENETO		APULIA		DUBROVNIKI- NERETVA		SPLIT-DALMATIA		TOTAL
	W1	W2	W1	W2	W1	W2	W1	W2	W1	W2	
Local public authority	0	0	3	4	7	0	1	1	0	0	16
Regional public authority	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2
National public authority	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Interest groups (including NGOs)	3	1	0	8	2	0	0	0	1	4	19
General public	0	0	0	0	1	0	8	0	0	3	12
SMEs	11	0	1	9	14	10	0	5	5	12	67
Enterprise (except SMEs)	0	0	2	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	12
Education / training center and school	0	0	7	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	12
TOTAL	14	1	15	32	24	10	11	7	7	20	141





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Number of participants

Target group	ISTRIA		VENETO		APULIA		DUBROVNIKI-NERETVA		SPLIT-DALMATIA		TOTAL
	W1	W2	W1	W2	W1	W2	W1	W2	W1	W2	
Local public authority	0	0	N/A	5	9	0	1	1	0	0	16
Regional public authority	0	0	N/A	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
National public authority	0	0	N/A	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Interest groups (including NGOs)	3	1	N/A	11	2	0	0	0	3	3	23
General public	0	1	N/A	7	1	0	0	1	0	0	10
SMEs	11	0	N/A	12	15	10	8	5	6	6	73
Enterprise (except SMEs)	0	0	N/A	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	17
Education / training center and school	0	0	N/A	42	0	0	1	1	1	1	46
TOTAL	14	2	59	94	27	10	11	8	10	10	186



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Annex 3: Guidelines for the organization and implementation of educational workshops

This document represents a **guideline for AWASTER project partners** to develop the workshop activity in a structured way and contains indications about the format to apply and the contents to address.

Description from AF

The activity is focusing on **raising awareness of the economy sector**, more specifically on the manufacturing and tourist one to **propose ways and business schemes to increase resource productivity and decouple economic growth from resource use and its environmental impact**.

The activity consists of **two regional educational workshops** (D.2.1.1), organized by LP, PP2, PP3, PP5, PP6 and coordinated by PP3, and will work on the **promotion of innovative and sustainable business models** which are minimizing the direct and indirect costs on the environment by **viable product and process designs**.

After each workshop, a survey will be conducted among the involved economic entities to assess the workshop's impact.

Project deliverables

2 deliverables are foreseen under this activity:

Title	D.2.2.1 Educational workshops on resource efficiency
Description	Organization of 2 regional workshops (10 in total) addressed to the economy sector (manufacturing, tourism)
Purpose	Propose ways and business schemes to increase resource productivity and decouple economic growth from resource use and its environmental impact
Title	D.2.2.2 Monitoring of resource use and waste generation report
Description	After each workshop, a survey will be conducted among the involved economic entities to assess the workshop impact on resource use and waste generation. Short interviews will be conducted with the participants
Purpose	Assess the workshop impact on resource use and waste generation

Period of implementation

According to AF: Period 4, M19-M24 (September 2025 - February 2026)

Agreed schedule by the Consortium: **M13-M24 (March 2025-February 2026)**



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Target

Number of workshops	Relevant business sectors/potential target	Invitees
10 (2 /each region)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manufacturing • Tourism (HORECA) • Agriculture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business owners • Persons responsible for development, production, technology, quality, logistics of production companies • Clusters/business associations • Public services providers (waste management services)

It is up to the implementing PP to decide which economy sector(s) to target during each workshop. The decision can be based on the specific economic features of the local territory and on the opportunity to leverage local interests.

Format of the workshops

The AF does not foresee a specific format for these workshops. Therefore, below there are some suggestions based on experience in similar activities that could be applied by the AWASTER consortium.

Ideally, the workshops should take the form of **in-presence events** to guarantee the highest interaction level between the participants, in a **peer exchange form**. **Hybrid or virtual format** is not excluded but needs careful planning and moderation to assure active participation.

Participants: the more the better. However, a minimum number of participants (i.e.15) should be sought, to ensure the value for money of the activity.

The overall duration should be **approximately 2 hours**.

As far as the agenda is concerned, it is up to each partner to decide how to use the 2 hours. However, please keep in mind that we **need to ensure awareness raise on the circular economy topic AND conduct ancillary activities** (i.e. survey, interviews). Moreover, do not forget to reserve some time for the AWASTER project presentation.

Here we provide some practical examples of events planning that could meet the needs and expectations of a business audience:

- **Design thinking workshop**, to support businesses in devising new Circular Economy activities and projects
- **Key-note speaker and/or best practice presentation**
- **Hands-on session / practical application** of circularity measurement using recognized standards (e.g. ISO or ESRS)

Here also an example of a possible agenda:



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- Welcome to participants
- Presentation of the AWASTER project
- Introduction to the workshop's subject (theory)
- Hands-on / workshop (practice, if foreseen)
- Conclusion and presentation of the next activities of AWASTER project

Contents

According to previous experience throughout the whole Programme area, the **business sector is quite hard to be involved** in; partners have similar experiences in low response rates to similar activities.

Therefore, to foster interest and engagement, **tailored and specific, interesting content should be provided during the workshops**.

Contents can vary according to the necessities of the regional context and the type of audience (i.e. business sector) targeted, but some basic requirements should be respected:

The subjects targeted should **not be limited to basic concepts on circular economy** but should be dealing also with **practical methodologies and real-life case studies** through which one can observe successful examples and challenges a business may encounter.

The workshop should focus on **specific areas or relevant functions**, with relevant business applications and best strategies to follow.

In order to provide specific and vertical knowledge, workshops should be organized in **cooperation with specialists with specific business knowledge and technical skills**.

Here, we provide some suggestions on potential content that could be targeted:

- **Circular economy and businesses' role for climate change**
- **New reporting obligations and the potential of sustainable management: Sustainability standards, ESG e EU regulatory framework**
- **Material and resource efficiency in production**
- **Circular economy for sustainable agri-food supply chains**
- **Circular economy assessment: Lifecycle Assessment (LCA)**
- **How to build a roadmap for sustainability based on circular economy**
- **Zero-Waste-Management in business context**
- **How to finance the circular economy?**
- **Circularity indicators and main frameworks**
- **Circular business models in practice: how to implement the circular economy principles**

Useful reference material

During the workshops we suggest disseminating the following AWASTER deliverables:

- **D.1.1.3 Best practice catalogue**
- **D.1.2.2 Guidelines for low resource economy**



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It would be useful to make those deliveries available for the workshops, either handing them out in a **printed form** or making them **digitally accessible** (e.g. QR code) before, during or after the workshop.

How to stimulate participation of businesses?

Since it is quite hard to gain the attention of the businesspeople, it is important to plan the event in a wise way. Below there are some hints that could help.

- **Plan carefully the timing, the date and the location of the event** (maybe the event in the late afternoon is better than in the morning, and Friday afternoon is better than Monday; choose a location which is easy to reach and close to the businesses you want to attract. Maybe ask some multiplayer actors to provide the location and advice, like chambers of commerce)
- Try to have some **attractive elements in your agenda**, like an attractive keynote speaker, or a networking aperitif session
- Leverage on local business associations and start the **event promotion** well in advance
- **Co-organize the event with other initiatives** having the same target group
- Provide advantages to those that register for the event, like the possibility of being quoted in social media promotion of the workshop or in press releases
- **Goodies, gadgets and takeaways** are sometimes appreciated (be aware of sticking to the program rules if you want to claim back the costs)
- Announce a **rewarding mechanism**, like e.g. the possibility of joining the AWASTER Final International Conference and present one's own business approach for the greener entrepreneur

D.2.2.2 Monitoring of resource use and waste generation report

To evaluate the impact of the workshop on resource use and waste generation, it is necessary to collect feedbacks from the participants involved in the workshop.

Methods:

- **Survey** (mandatory)
- **Short interviews** (at least 1 per workshop)

D2.2.1 Educational workshops on resource efficiency - Step-by-Step

BEFORE

- Read the guidelines
- Clearly define the purpose of each workshop and its target audience
- Define the timeline and venue
- Define an attractive program and invite keynote speakers
- Contact target audience
- Develop a targeted invitation



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- (Optional) Foresee a gadget /incentive to participate
- Define the roles (facilitator, support...) and the team responsible for implementing the workshops

DURING

- Make sure key insights are recorded visually or are gathered and posted on social media if possible
- Collect signatures to map significant contacts and key stakeholders to involve in other activities of the AWASTER project
- Foresee a questionnaire (e.g. online tool) for the collection of information

AFTER

Fill out the Report on educational workshop's development

